

## jenaministries – Part 4 Bible Characters

### 6. The Life of Jeremiah the Prophet

Jeremiah was appointed to be a prophet before he was even born. He was not given a choice (**Scriptures 1. Jeremiah Appointed Prophet Before Born**). At a young age, God put words in his mouth to prophesy. If he tried not to prophesy, the words of the Lord burned in his bones. Therefore, he could not hold it in (**Scriptures 2. Jeremiah Could Not Hold Prophecy In**).

God sent Jeremiah out on very dangerous missions (**Scriptures 3. God sent Jeremiah on Dangerous Missions**). Jeremiah was a prophet when Jerusalem went into Exile (**Scriptures 4. Jeremiah Prophesied when Jerusalem was in Exile**). God's people were committing adultery with other gods. Jeremiah's prophecies were of wrath because of it. And that if they don't put away their idols, horrible disasters will happen to them. However, he also prophesied if they put away their idols and come back to the Lord, the Lord will take them back and it will be even better than before. But most of Jeremiah's prophecies were warnings of punishments, slaughters, desolations, famines, and disasters to come. He was pretty much a bearer of bad news.

God also had Jeremiah prophesy about God's temple not being a place of the Lord due to their wickedness. God did not reside in the temple and did not accept their offerings or prayers. And the prophets in the temple were false prophets telling lies.

As one can imagine, the people were not happy with Jeremiah's prophecies. Jeremiah suffered at the hands of God's people. They beat him, put him in the stocks (**Scriptures 5. Jeremiah Beaten and put in the Stocks**) (pieces of wood with small holes for head and hands), lowered him into a cistern (**Scriptures 6. Jeremiah Put in a Cistern to Die**), imprisoned him, and held him in chains for years (**Scriptures 7. Jeremiah kept in chains until Prophecy Fulfilled**).

Jeremiah's prayers to God were full of pain (**Scriptures 8. Jeremiah's Prayers**). He would beg God to fulfill the prophecies and pour out his wrath on those who do not acknowledge him. And to drag them off like sheep to be butchered.

He also complained (**Scriptures 9. Jeremiah's Complaints**) about his prophecies causing so much trouble and the word of the LORD has brought him insult and reproach all day long. Jeremiah cursed the day he was born!

Jeremiah was finally set free by Gedaliah who Babylon had assigned Governor over Judah. Jeremiah stayed with Gedaliah and his people. But Gedaliah was quickly assassinated (**Scriptures 10. Gedaliah Assassinated**). Some of the people still in Judah came and asked Jeremiah to ask God what they should do and where they should go. Jeremiah prophesied that they should stay in Judah and not go to Egypt. If they go to Egypt, disaster will happen. But they were arrogant and led away all the remnant of Judah (including Jeremiah, against his will) to Egypt anyway (**Scriptures 11. Jeremiah taken to Egypt Against His Will**). After arriving in Egypt, Jeremiah sent messages of prophesy to the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar and Hazor, Elam, and Babylon. Mainly messages of destruction to come. That is the last writings of Jeremiah in the Bible. What happened to him in Egypt or about his death is not mentioned.

One thing we can be certain of is that Jeremiah's life was hard and full of pain and suffering. God knew he wouldn't find a volunteer for Jeremiah's tasks, so he had to choose one unlucky person and not give him a choice. It's an honor hearing gods voice and be close to him. But consequences can sometimes seem unbearable. True prophets did not have it easy. We should be grateful for Jeremiah.

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### Scriptures 1. Jeremiah Appointed Prophet Before Born

Jeremiah 1:4-9 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” “Alas, Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.” But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD. Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth.

### Scriptures 2. Jeremiah Could Not Hold Prophecy In

Jeremiah 20:9 But if I say, “I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name,” his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

### Scriptures 3. God sent Jeremiah on Dangerous Missions.

Jeremiah 1:16-19 I will pronounce my judgments on my people because of their wickedness in forsaking me, in burning incense to other gods and in worshiping what their hands have made. “Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD.

### Scriptures 4. Jeremiah Prophesized When Jerusalem Went into Exile

Jeremiah 1:1-3 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. The word of the LORD came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah, and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.

### Scriptures 5. Jeremiah Beaten and Put in the Stocks

Jeremiah 20:1-2 When the priest Pashhur son of Immer, the official in charge of the temple of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things, he had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put in the stocks at the Upper Gate of Benjamin at the LORD’s temple.

### Scriptures 6. Jeremiah Put in a Cistern to Die

Jeremiah 38:3-13 And this is what the LORD says: ‘This city will certainly be given into the hands of the army of the king of Babylon, who will capture it.’ ” Then the officials said to the king, “This man should be put to death. He is discouraging the soldiers who are left in this city, as well as all the people, by the things he is saying to them. This man is not seeking the good of these people but their ruin.” “He is in your hands,” King Zedekiah answered. “The king can do nothing to oppose you.” So they took Jeremiah and put him into the cistern of Malkijah, the king’s son, which was in the courtyard of the guard. They lowered Jeremiah by ropes into the cistern; it had no water in it, only mud, and Jeremiah sank down into the mud. But Ebed-Melek, a Cushite, an official in the royal palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. While the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate, Ebed-Melek went out of the palace and said to him, “My lord the king, these men have acted wickedly in all they have done to

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### Scriptures 6. Jeremiah Put in a Cistern to Die - continued

Jeremiah the prophet. They have thrown him into a cistern, where he will starve to death when there is no longer any bread in the city.” Then the king commanded Ebed-Melek the Cushite, “Take thirty men from here with you and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies.” So Ebed-Melek took the men with him and went to a room under the treasury in the palace. He took some old rags and worn-out clothes from there and let them down with ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern. Ebed-Melek the Cushite said to Jeremiah, “Put these old rags and worn-out clothes under your arms to pad the ropes.” Jeremiah did so, and they pulled him up with the ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard.

### Scriptures 7. Jeremiah Kept in Chains until Prophecy Fulfilled

Jeremiah 40:1-6 The word came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard had released him at Ramah. He had found Jeremiah bound in chains among all the captives from Jerusalem and Judah who were being carried into exile to Babylon. When the commander of the guard found Jeremiah, he said to him, “The LORD your God decreed this disaster for this place. And now the LORD has brought it about; he has done just as he said he would. All this happened because you people sinned against the LORD and did not obey him. But today I am freeing you from the chains on your wrists. Come with me to Babylon, if you like, and I will look after you; but if you do not want to, then don’t come. Look, the whole country lies before you; go wherever you please.” However, before Jeremiah turned to go, Nebuzaradan added, “Go back to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has appointed over the towns of Judah, and live with him among the people, or go anywhere else you please.” Then the commander gave him provisions and a present and let him go. So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah and stayed with him among the people who were left behind in the land.

### Scriptures 8. Jeremiah’s Prayers:

Jeremiah 10:23-25 LORD, I know that people’s lives are not their own; it is not for them to direct their steps. Discipline me, LORD, but only in due measure— not in your anger, or you will reduce me to nothing. Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the peoples who do not call on your name. For they have devoured Jacob; they have devoured him completely and destroyed his homeland.

Jeremiah 12:1-4 You are always righteous, LORD, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and bear fruit. You are always on their lips but far from their hearts. Yet you know me, LORD; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter! How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished. Moreover, the people are saying, “He will not see what happens to us.”

### Scriptures 9. Jeremiah’s Complaints

Jeremiah 20:7-9 You deceived me, LORD, and I was deceived ; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. But if I say, “I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name,” his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

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### Scriptures 9. Jeremiah's Complaints – continued.

Jeremiah 20:14-18 Cursed be the day I was born! May the day my mother bore me not be blessed! Cursed be the man who brought my father the news, who made him very glad, saying, "A child is born to you—a son!". May that man be like the towns the LORD overthrew without pity. May he hear wailing in the morning, a battle cry at noon. For he did not kill me in the womb, with my mother as my grave, her womb enlarged forever. Why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?

### Scriptures 10. Gedaliah Assassinated

Jeremiah 41:1-3 In the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, who was of royal blood and had been one of the king's officers, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating together there, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him got up and struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, killing the one whom the king of Babylon had appointed as governor over the land. Ishmael also killed all the men of Judah who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, as well as the Babylonian soldiers who were there.

### Scriptures 11. Jeremiah taken to Egypt Against His Will

Jeremiah 43:4-7 So Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers and all the people disobeyed the LORD's command to stay in the land of Judah. Instead, Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led away all the remnant of Judah who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered. They also led away all those whom Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan—the men, the women, the children and the king's daughters. And they took Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch son of Neriah along with them. So they entered Egypt in disobedience to the LORD and went as far as Tahpanhes.