

1. Although Jeremiah tells of the coming destruction and the deliverance God will bring, he does not keep mentioning the glory of the millennial kingdom as frequently as other prophets.
2. God called Jeremiah to remain single and therefore to remain celibate throughout his life. For most of us it is God's plan that we should marry and have children. However, some people are called to be single because of God's plan for their life and the times in which they are called to serve. Neither state is more holy or better.
3. Jeremiah revealed another characteristic of a servant of God. He understood God's vision for him, identified the values of that vision and then modeled them. He understood that in punishment for Judah's sin, God was going to bring terrible affliction. A key value in this situation is to keep yourself as free as possible from all entanglements.
4. God also told Jeremiah do not go to funerals or mourn because God would not show sympathy to Judah because of her sin. Jeremiah was to model God's attitude toward the people.
5. The vision Jeremiah got from God was very negative, but Jeremiah modeled its values. God has probably given you a vision with more positive values, but you are called to model that too.
6. In chapter 18 of Jeremiah, he visits the potter's house at the Lord's direction. The Lord is the potter and we are the clay vessels. In this context the vessels are the nation of Israel. Paul uses this analogy in the Book of Romans and applies it to individuals.
7. Does God change His mind? Jeremiah says, "If I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned." That is God mercy in action. It is consistent with His nature and how He responds to us as individuals. He does what He says He will do.
8. Jeremiah answers the question of why God is doing this now. He says it is because their fathers departed from God and did all kinds of evil things. He goes on to tell them that, "You have followed your parents and acted even more wickedly than them!" Finally God judges a whole generation for their own sins, which they have learned from their ancestors.
9. Jeremiah tells the people that God's judgment is going to fall and it will be terrible, but he closes with a statement about the purpose of the judgment and wrath of God - it is so the people will learn who God really is.
10. When God wants to teach His children an important lesson and they refuse to learn it, He does not just quit. He teaches it over and over again, each time with a larger hammer than the time before, until we finally learn. Israel finally learned - and after the Babylon exile they never played with idols again.
11. Jeremiah had memorized Psalm 1. This is a good Psalm to memorize. In Jeremiah 17, he paraphrases a major portion of Psalm 1. It is important to note that one of the things that made the writers of Scripture able to hear and discern the voice of God was the fact that their minds were steeped in the Scripture. We need to be immersed in the Word also.
12. Jeremiah 17:9 is worth memorizing: "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

1. Jeremiah was not a very popular person. The chief priest Pashhur had him arrested and beaten because of his prophecy. When Jeremiah was released he renamed the chief priest Pashhur “Magor-Missabib” which means “terror on every side.” This is what happened when the Babylonians arrived. There was terror on every side.
2. Jeremiah was branded a traitor to his country even though he endured much pain and humiliation to tell the truth. Even after Judah fell, he tried to stay in the city that he loved. Jeremiah was publicly displayed in stocks as part of his humiliation.
3. Jeremiah was labeled a traitor because he told King Zedekiah the truth. He told both the King and chief priest Pashhur that God would not help Judah. They took this to mean that Jeremiah was possibly a Babylonian spy and charged him with demoralizing Judah. Rather than repent they got angry at God’s prophet.
4. Jeremiah was also charged with being a traitor because he advised them to surrender to the Babylonians rather than fight. He knew that the results of resistance would be too catastrophic if Judah fought.
5. We read Jeremiah’s passionate prayer to God. Jeremiah is honest in how he feels and God does not rebuke him for his feelings. In his anger with God he says, “You’ve deceived me. You’ve let me down.” That was not true because God had told Jeremiah that no one in Judah would listen to him.
6. Jeremiah says to God that because of the persecution he has endured for giving the dooming messages to the people he will not bring any more dooming messages to the people. But he must because, “Your words are like fire in my bones and I just cannot keep it in.” Jeremiah says he wishes he had never been born.
7. Jeremiah is bitter and he tells God. There are three observations about this prayer that will help our relationship with God. Some people respond when they are angry by ventilating. They let everyone around them know they are angry. The best thing to do with anger is take it to God.
8. Another response to anger is to bottle that anger. These people will swallow their anger and hide it carefully. They never address the anger and it makes them cynical and sensitive.
9. The third response is to take it all to God and lay it before Him. God knows how we feel anyway and this lets us get a more objective view of what is happening. It is worthwhile to read Psalm 73 to see David’s response.
10. Jeremiah is honest with God about what is bothering him.
11. God did not punish Jeremiah for this prayer, nor did He punish David for his prayer, nor Jonah, nor Elijah for similar prayers. He let them vent and then God changes their perspectives. God wants to us to allow ourselves to be changed.
12. Jeremiah warned them how bad things would get in Jerusalem. He told them that to survive some would resort to cannibalism. And that is exactly what happened.

1. Jeremiah chapter 22 shows us that if the people of Judah had repented, even at the very last minute, God would have relented and spared the nation. That is the principle laid down in chapter 18. That principle still stands and applies even to individuals today.

2. Chapter 22 gives us a picture of some of the kings who followed Josiah, the last godly king. Jeremiah had some words of wisdom for Shallum, son of Josiah. Jeremiah's message to him and about him is not to weep for Josiah, but Israel should weep for Shallum who is exiled and will never return to his native land. Shallum was his personal name. This throne name was Jehoahaz.

3. Next Jeremiah speaks about Jehoiakim. He reigned 11 years and built luxury palaces using slave labor. Jeremiah says that this king will die unmourned and in disgrace.

4. Jehoiakim was succeeded by Jehoiachin, and Jeremiah told him that he would be handed over to the Babylonians, and his mother as well. Neither would ever return to Judah. None of his children would ever rule in Judah.

5. King Zedekiah would not have been happy to hear the message of Jeremiah either. Jeremiah has a vision of two baskets of figs. The good figs in one basket are those who were taken captive to Babylon. The bad figs in the other basket, represent Zedekiah, his officials and the people who stayed in Jerusalem or Egypt. They will not experience the blessings of God. Jeremiah tells the king they will be destroyed.

6. There were many false prophets in Judah during the time of Jeremiah's ministry. Some were probably prophets of Baal and other false gods. The majority were probably prophets who did not represent false gods but who claimed to speak for the Lord. They looked like they represented God, but they did not speak for Him. They told the people what they wanted to hear and did not confront the people with their sin.

7. False prophets are with us today just as they were in Jeremiah's day. The Apostle Paul tells us that as we approach the end of the age and the Second Coming of Christ, people will have "itching ears" and they will be increasingly led astray by those who tell them what they want to hear.

8. There is a note of hope in Chapter 23. This is a Messianic passage. God promises that He will maintain a righteous remnant during the captivity in Babylon and after that He will raise up a righteous branch, a king who will reign wisely and do what is right in the land. Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. The language is similar to Isaiah 11. In both cases, the prophets are speaking about Christ, the Messiah. Jeremiah promises a return from exile.

1. Jeremiah had been ministering for 23 years when he brought the prophecy which specifically identified both Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar as the instruments of God's punishment to Judah. Jeremiah says the duration of the captivity will be 70 years. After 70 years, God will judge Babylon for the violence and destruction she visited on other nations.

2. This prophecy would be a comfort to the next generation as they had the clear word of God that the exile would end after 70 years. God assured them of His plan and purpose. Daniel was one who took great courage from this promise.

3. At the end of the church age we may see a tribulation of seven literal years. (We will read about this later and discuss whether it is a literal seven years or a symbolic number.) Believers in that day will understand what Jeremiah and Israel felt in their day. God cared enough for Judah that he told her how long the punishment would last.

4. Jeremiah faced hostility from the religious leaders of the day, similar to the hostility that Jesus faced from the chief priests and Pharisees, and the common people. The majority view is very often not the godly view. On a certain day, most of the people in Jerusalem were for executing a man named Jeremiah because he spoke against a religious system they thought connected them to God.

5. We should be encouraged to hold on, even if we are the only voices speaking for God. Martin Luther is a good example for us. He almost recanted when challenged, but finally answered, "Unless I am convinced by Scripture itself or by the light of evident reason, I cannot recant. Here I stand. I cannot do anything else. God help me." We may one day need that kind of fortitude.

6. Jeremiah spoke of the judgment of God against the nation and that offended the feelings of the people of Jerusalem. The people were unable to separate their righteousness from nationalism.

7. Part of what saved Jeremiah was that Micah the prophet had said many of the same things and had gone unpunished. Micah was recognized and revered as God's prophet. The quote from Micah's Book, which is found in Jeremiah 26:18, is perhaps the only instance where an Old Testament prophet quotes another and names him.

8. Only in Jeremiah 26 do we read about another prophet, Uriah, who prophesied against Jerusalem in the time of Jeremiah and Jehoiakim. Other than these verses in Jeremiah 26 there is no other mention of him in Scripture. Jehoiakim sent agents to Egypt where Uriah was hiding and brought him back to Judah and had him murdered. Jeremiah lived with this same threat to his life. He said "Kill me if you want, but God has sent me to speak these words. If you kill me you will only succeed in bringing even greater condemnation upon yourselves."

1. Every prophet named in these chapters is a false prophet who claims Jeremiah is wrong and God will deliver them from Nebuchadnezzar now. "Ahab" and "Zedekiah" are mentioned. They are not the kings who were mentioned previously. They were false prophets who were executed by Nebuchadnezzar.
2. Jeremiah wrote to the Babylonians in exile not to listen to the dreams they encouraged these false prophets to have. The Lord did not send them. But the people continued to oppose the ministry of Jeremiah.
3. Hananiah was an important man. His name means: "The Lord is gracious." He brought the message that God was going to send back all the items that had been taken from the Temple and Nebuchadnezzar himself would be broken by the Lord. We do not know if Hananiah had ever been a true prophet of God, but this message was not from God.
4. Jeremiah was making a spectacle of himself by walking around with a yoke around his neck at God's instruction. This was to be an object lesson to the people of Jerusalem and the ambassadors of the surrounding nations. They should accept the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar or be obliterated.
5. Hananiah had enough. Jeremiah's words were demoralizing to the people and now the spectacle of him walking around with a yoke was extremely embarrassing. Hananiah confronts Jeremiah and rips the yoke from his neck. Hananiah then pronounces a message of comfort and peace. Jeremiah then leaves in humiliation.
6. The people are confused. Two prophets, who say they speak for God, are saying contradictory things. Jeremiah returns to court with a new yoke and a message for Hananiah - because of his arrogant opposition to the prophet of God and the Lord himself, his life will be required. Hananiah dies as Jeremiah had prophesied.
7. This should have settled the issue of false prophets, but it did not. They kept appearing and the people kept on believing them.
8. Jeremiah 29 is one of the great chapters in the Bible. God's words to the captives in Babylon contain magnificent promises important to the exiles and are still important today. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." This is important because it tells us that even people who haven't heard the gospel are given enough light to respond. If they respond to that light, God gives them more. "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your hearts."
9. Jeremiah tells the exiles to build, plant, marry and propagate in Babylon. He even tells them to pray for the prosperity of Babylon because it will mean prosperity for them. He wants them to be ready after 70 years to return home.