

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part I: God's Commissioning Of His Servant For Apostate Times (Jeremiah 1:1-10)

I. Introduction

- A. God calls us to minister for Him not only in good times, but also in apostate eras, so we must "be instant in season, out of season," serving Him devotedly even when the effort produces hardships, 2 Timothy 4:2 KJV.
- B. Jeremiah was called of God to minister in Judah's apostate era to prepare the nation for judgment followed by blessing, and God's commissioning of him to perform this task is very instructive for us in our apostate era:

II. God's Commissioning Of His Servant For Apostate Times, Jeremiah 1:1-10.

- A. God called Jeremiah to serve as prophet in the dark days of apostate Judah leading up to the nation's judgment:
 - 1. "Jeremiah was the premier prophet of Judah during the dark days leading to her destruction" by Babylon (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1123), called of God to expose Judah's sin (Ibid.) with the result that he suffered extensive, repeat persecution by his apostate countrymen, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1045.
 - 2. God commissioned him to serve as a prophet when "Judah was gripped by the idolatry that King Manasseh had promoted during his 55-year reign (2 Kings 21:1-9)," Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1125. Good King Josiah had since then come to the throne as Judah's last good king, but he had not yet begun the reforms spurred by the finding and reading of the scroll of the Law (Jeremiah 1:1-2 with 2 Kings 22:1-23:25). Besides, due to Manasseh's provocations, God had already decided to judge Judah by Babylonian invasion regardless of the bright spiritual light that would come under Josiah's reign, 2 Kings 23:25-28.
- B. Thus, when the Lord called Jeremiah to serve Him, He was causing him to face spiritually hard people and thus a spiritually difficult work, but God's commissioning instructs us on how to face such a difficult task:
 - 1. God told Jeremiah that before He formed him in his mother's womb He knew Jeremiah, and before he was born from his mother's womb God had set him apart, ordaining him as a prophet to the nations, Jer. 1:4-5. This information, given to Jeremiah at his call, was designed to cause him to handle later persecution he would face in Jeremiah 20:14-18 that would cause him to curse the day he had been born! In other words, God knew all about Jeremiah's coming sufferings, and yet He deemed it best to call him to face them!
 - 2. When the Lord gave Jeremiah the call to be a prophet to the nations, Jeremiah replied with an interjection, '*ahah*, "Alas!" (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 13), adding, "Lord God! Behold! I do not know how to speak for I myself (emph. pron.) am (only) a child," Jer. 1:6; Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 703.
 - 3. Significantly, the Lord did not counter Jeremiah's claim that he was young, but He **did** instruct him **not to SAY** that he was young, Jer. 1:7a. Jeremiah's human frailty would be eclipsed by **God's** equipping him to go to whom the **Lord** sent him and to speak whatever the **Lord** told him to say, Jeremiah 1:7b.
 - 4. Jeremiah's fear of persecution by idolatrous countrymen had caused his objection about being a child, so God directed Jeremiah not to be afraid of their faces, for the Lord was with him to deliver him, Jer. 1:8.
 - 5. Then, lest Jeremiah doubt he had God's words so as to speak authoritatively, the Lord touched Jeremiah's mouth with His hand, saying, "Behold! I have put my words in your mouth," Jeremiah 1:9 ESV.
 - 6. Commissioned by the Lord to be a prophet to the nations, told he was not to be intimidated by his human weakness in that God was sending Him and giving him God's words to say and having the Lord experientially signify how He was truly putting His words in Jeremiah's mouth, the Lord added, "See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant," Jeremiah 1:10. In other words, God was commissioning Jeremiah to be a prophet of change, moving nations from judgment to divine blessing in God's long-term plan!

Lesson: *To equip Jeremiah to minister to the apostate, persecuting people of Judah, God told him that He had set him apart for his prophetic work to the nations before He had formed Jeremiah in his mother's womb, that He was putting His words in Jeremiah's mouth and circumstantially signaling that He was doing so and sending him to those God wanted him to reach. God added that He was planning to deliver Jeremiah from his persecutors as he performed his ministry assignment of change, announcing God's judgment followed by blessing on the nations.*

Application: *May we like Jeremiah in his apostate era be assured that as we do God's assigned will, He already has planned for our ministry before He formed us in the womb, including all it entailed in all we we experience, that we heed His circumstantial signals that confirm these facts so as to keep on courageously serving Him in faith!*