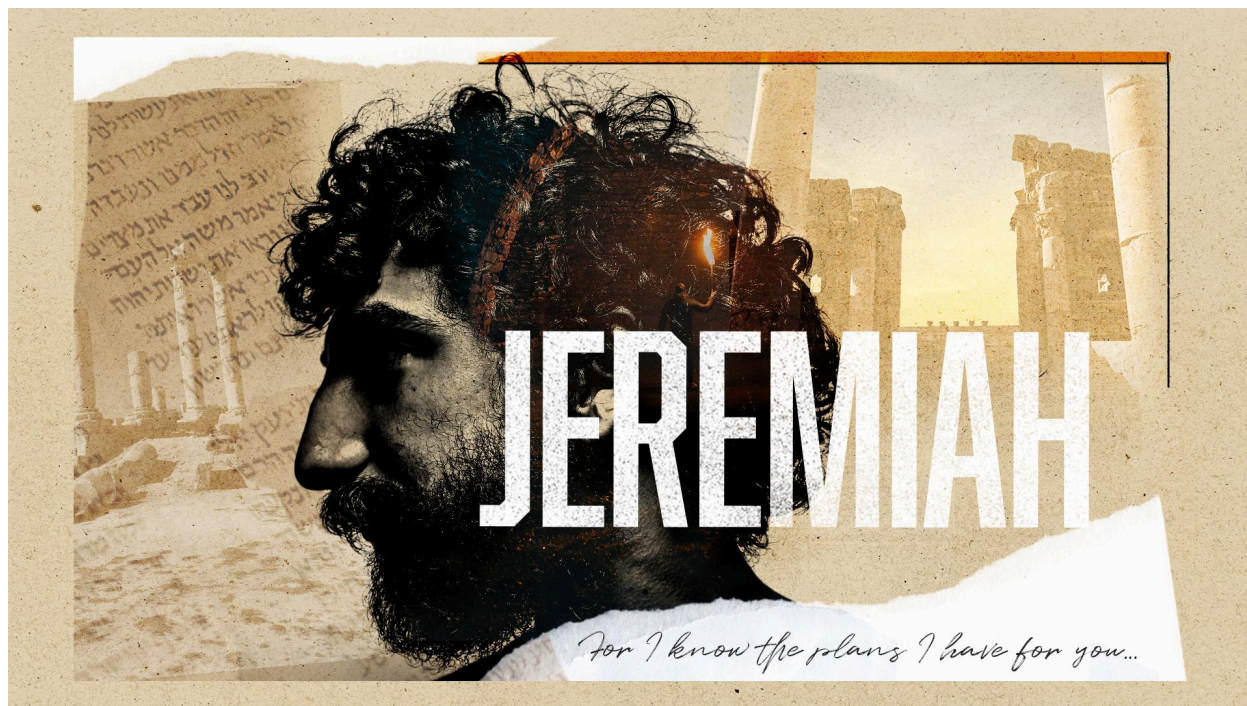


Jeremiah 40-45



Study Guide

Introduction

After the destruction of Jerusalem and the final deportation, a remnant in Judah tries to find their way. They struggle to trust God and to follow Him. As a result, they flee in fear to Egypt, where they die.

Big Idea: As you long for home, seek first the Kingdom of God.

1. Read 40:1-8. Notice that the Babylonian captain can see more clearly how Judah has sinned than they can see it in themselves. Discuss how secular people can see through Christian hypocrisy. Now discuss how hard it must have been for Jeremiah to choose to stay with the remnant rather than to enjoy the riches in Babylon. How are we easily led to 'make our home' here on earth rather than to seek first God's agenda?

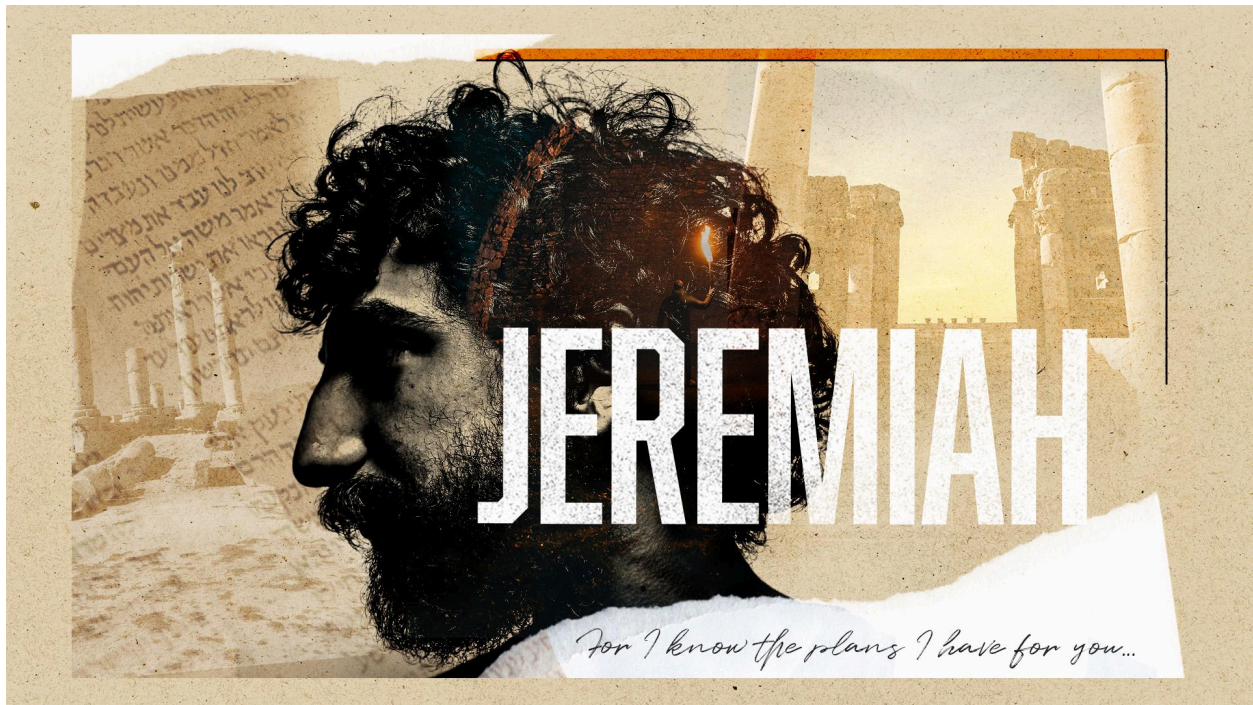
2. In Chapter 42 the remnant asks Jeremiah to pray for God to show them the way. Should they stay or go to Egypt? After 10 days Jeremiah receives an answer from God that they are to stay in Judah. But the people decide to go to Egypt despite the warnings that it will not go well with them. Discuss how our fears can at times skew our prayers. Share an example of how we can pray to God but not really be willing to surrender to His answer for us.

3. In Chapters 43-44 Jeremiah warns the remnant (now living in Egypt) about coming destruction. He tells them that they shouldn't worship idols. They admit that they have been praying and depending on the 'Queen of Heaven' (44:17), and they commit to continue doing so. Discuss what our substitutes are for God, and how we depend on 'functional saviors'. What might the 'Queen of Heaven' be for some of us today?

4. Read Chapter 45:1-5. Notice that Baruch (meaning "Blessed") is complaining about life. God reminds him that He is fulfilling God's purposes on earth, and that Baruch is not "*to seek great things for himself*" (v.5a). Share examples of how we can tend to seek great things for ourselves and not realize that we may be pursuing things that will lead to our frustration and damage. Notice (v5b) that God promises us 'life as a prize'. How meaningful is it to you that God has promised you eternal life in Christ? How does that change the way you live here on earth?

Application: Consider reading Psalm 23 each day this week and ask God to make you more aware of your identity of being under His divine shepherding for you.

Jeremiah 40-45



Sermon Notes

Jeremiah 31

"Joy, ...blessing, ...singing, ...abundance, ...satisfaction, ...security, ..."

"They will be radiant over the goodness of the Lord..."

Isaiah 19:25b "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria my handiwork."

Psalms 87:4a "I will record Rahab and Babylon among those who know me..."

Isaiah 35

"sorrow and sighing shall flee away...the eyes of the blind will be opened...deaf...mute...lame..."

"Water will gush forth in the wilderness"

Isaiah 11:6 "The wolf will lie down with the lamb."

Big Idea: As you long for home, seek first the Kingdom of God.

A. Free to Decide (40:1-12)

40 The word that came to Jeremiah... Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard ... bound in chains ... captives ... who were being exiled to Babylon. 2 The captain of the guard said to him, "The Lord your God pronounced this disaster against this place. 3 The Lord has brought it about, and has done as he said. Because you sinned against the Lord and did not obey his voice, this thing has come upon you.

4 Now, behold, I release you today from the chains on your hands. ...

5 "...go wherever you think it good and right to go."

A. Free to Decide (40:1-12)

9 Gedaliah ... swore to them ... "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you...gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and store them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken."

B. Anarchy and Fear (40:13-41:18)

13 Now Johanan ... came to Gedaliah..., "Do you know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take your life?" But Gedaliah ...would not believe them.

41 In the seventh month, Ishmael ... of the royal family, ...came with ten men to Gedaliah ...at Mizpah. As they ate bread together..., 2 Ishmael ...rose up and struck down Gedaliah ... with the sword, and killed him, ...3 Ishmael also struck down all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah ... and the Chaldean soldiers ...

B. Anarchy and Fear (40:13-41:18)

4 On the day after the murder ... 5 eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, and their bodies gashed, bringing grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the Lord.

C. Prayer and Fear (42:1-43:7)

42 ... pray to the Lord your God for us, for all this remnant—because we are left with but a few, as your eyes see us— 3 that the Lord your God may show us the way we should go, and the thing that we should do.”

C. Prayer and Fear (42:1-43:7)

10 If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up ... 11 Do not fear the king of Babylon, ... for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. 12 I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and let you remain in your own land.

13 But if you say, ... ‘No, we will go to the land of Egypt, ... 16 then the sword that you fear shall overtake you there ... and the famine of which you are afraid shall follow close after you to Egypt, and there you shall die.

D. Buried Stones (43:8-44:30)

44 1The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who lived in the land of Egypt...they make offerings and serve other gods...

7Why do you commit this great evil against yourselves?

D. Buried Stones (43:8-44:30)

“As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you. 17 But we will do everything that we have vowed, make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her...

... we had plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no disaster. 18 But since we left off ... we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.”

D. Buried Stones (43:8-44:30)

23 It is because you made offerings and because you sinned against the Lord and did not obey the voice of the Lord or walk in his law and in his statutes and in his testimonies that this disaster has happened to you, as at this day.”

... Then confirm your vows and perform your vows!...26 ... my name shall no more be invoked by the mouth of any man of Judah ...

27 Behold, I am watching over them for disaster and not for good.

Big Idea: As you long for home, seek first the Kingdom of God.

E. Blessed Life (45)

45 1The word ... to Baruch, ... 3 You said, ‘Woe is me! For the Lord has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.’ 4 Thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord: Behold, what I have built I am breaking down, and what I have planted I am plucking up—that is, the whole land. 5 And do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not, ... But I will give you your life as a prize of war in all places to which you may go.”

Big Idea: As you long for home, seek first the Kingdom of God.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters. 3He restores my soul. He leads me in paths
righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they
comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you
anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.