

WEEK THIRTY-THREE INTRODUCTION

The Lord, Yahweh, charges His people with covenantal infidelity. This aspect of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry cannot be missed, but the charge is not the only thing God speaks through the prophet. In the face of the people's unfaithfulness and amid the assurances of defeat to the Babylonians, the Lord speaks of something desperately needed, *hope*. Jeremiah's task is to be the bearer of unpleasant and inconvenient truth regarding the short term future while pointing to God's gracious working in the future. The hope ahead is one that Jeremiah himself will not participate in. The prophet does not stand outside of the experience of the people. Rather, he suffers as they suffer. Even more, he suffers for preaching truth. Jeremiah is treated with shameful violence not by self-identified unbelievers, but by *priests* and *prophets*. His commitment to God and His truth led to suffering.

KEY SCRIPTURE

'This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days'- the LORD's declaration. 'I will put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.'

—Jeremiah 31:33 CSB

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Jeremiah 17:9 states, *The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable— who can understand it?* Reflect on how Jeremiah's testimony here, along with passages such as Romans 3:9-20, conflicts with the common advice, "Just follow your heart." What dangers lie in that advice? What would be better counsel?

What is the Lord's declaration in Jeremiah 23 regarding the shepherds who have been leading His people? What does He promise to do?

In Jeremiah 26, the prophet preaches in public standing in the courtyard of the temple. What does God tell him to say? What is the invitation in Jeremiah's message? Describe the response.

What is the fate of Hananiah in Jeremiah 28:12-17? Why do you think that happened to him? What caution should we take from that episode?

Jeremiah 29:11 is a well-known verse. What is the context surrounding it? What is the promise of verse 12-13? How will this promise shape this upcoming week for you?

Jeremiah 31 is an important chapter in the Old Testament. Verses 31-34 introduce the *new covenant*. Here Jeremiah's prophecy takes a decidedly hopeful turn. What are the conditions and promises of the new covenant? Read Hebrews 8-9 for how the New Testament picks up this theme.

God's hopeful new covenant promise, while fulfilling and going beyond the Mosaic covenant in chapter 31, extends through the Davidic covenant in chapter 33:14-22. Is this covenant breakable? Who is the key figure of this covenant, what is His name in verse 16?

What does Jehoiakim do in chapter 36:19-26? Why do you think he does so? Is God's Word changeable or avoidable? What is the right posture toward God's Word?

What happens in Jeremiah 39? Why does it happen? What becomes of Jeremiah in chapter 40:1-6 after his years of difficulty and suffering?

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

“Obey the LORD in what I am telling you, so it may go well for you and you can live.” **-Jeremiah 38:20 CSB**

To follow Jesus, you must obey Jesus. What is one new step of obedience you can take this week? Ask the Lord and sit in silence. Examine Scripture and tell someone else who will help hold you accountable.