

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2025

October 5, 2025

Jeremiah's Call and Arrest

Printed Text: Jeremiah 1:6-10, 26:8-9, 12-15

Devotional Reading: Jeremiah 1:11-19

Background Reading: Jeremiah 1:1-10; 6:10-11; 8:18; 9:2; 26:1-24

October 12, 2025

Jeremiah's Message

Printed Text: Jeremiah 7:1-11, 21-23

Devotional Reading: Luke 6:40-46

Background Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-26

October 19, 2025

A Family's Example

Printed Text: Jeremiah 35:5-11

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:4

Background Reading: Jeremiah 35:1-19

October 26, 2025

Changes Promised

Printed Text: Jeremiah 31:2-34, John 1:17

Devotional Reading: Matthew 12:14-21

Background: Jeremiah 31:1-40; John 1:17; Hebrews :7-138

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 5 October 2025, 09:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

Pass Code: 669872

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Jeremiah's Call and Arrest

Printed Text: Jeremiah 1:6-10; 26:8-9,12-15

Devotional Reading: Jeremiah 1:11-19

Background Reading: Jeremiah 1:1-10; 6:1-10-11; 8:18; 9:2; 26:1-24

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Passion for God's Laws - 2 Chronicles 34:1-7
Tuesday: The Piercing Word of God - Hebrews 4: 12-16
Wednesday: Return to the Father - Jeremiah 3:12-19
Thursday: Cleanse Yourselves and Be Saved - Jeremiah 4:5-14
Friday: God's Discipline Proves God's Love - Hebrews 12:3-17
Saturday: God Is a consuming Fire - Hebrews 12:18-29
Sunday: A Defiant Prophet - Jeremiah 1:6-10; 26:8-9,12-15

LESSON AIM:

ACKNOWLEDGE that God's Call Transcends Human Limitations.

RECOGNIZE that youth is "Not a Barrier to God's Work"

FAITHFULLY speak God's truth, regardless of our personal feelings of inadequacy.

KEEP IN MIND:

"But the LORD said to me, 'Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. " (Jeremiah 1:7, NRSV).

BACKGROUND:

Jeremiah is one of the giants of Old Testament prophecy. The son of a priest, he was born in Anathoth, a village three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah received his calling as a prophet in 626 B.C. during the thirteenth year of King Josiah's reign. The Book of Jeremiah reveals a lot about the inner turmoil and conflict out of which Jeremiah delivered his prophetic burden. Jeremiah's life demonstrates the hardships that sometime accompany the task of bringing God's word to His people. Perhaps anticipating the difficulties of being a prophet, Jeremiah resisted his call to prophetic ministry, citing his youth as an obstacle (Jeremiah 1:6-9). But God's will cannot be resisted. Jeremiah followed his calling faithfully, but the road was hard. He was rejected by his people (Jeremiah 15:10). He was frustrated by their hardheartedness (Jeremiah 5:3). And he was cut off from the normal joys and pleasures of life (Jeremiah 16:9). Despite all of the difficulties that Jeremiah experienced, he found that he could not resist God's call to prophesy. He had to declare the word of the LORD as the LORD had directed him. It was a compulsion. It was a dynamic, powerful inner motivation that made him prophesy. "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jeremiah 20:9).

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Jeremiah's Call to the Prophetic Office (Jeremiah 1:6-8)

⁶Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy."

⁷But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."

Jeremiah's response is personal and direct. This interaction highlights the personal nature of God's call to His prophets. It reflects the biblical pattern of God initiating communication and the human response. Jeremiah expresses his inadequacy. God chooses those who feel unqualified, emphasizing that divine strength is made perfect in human weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). It underscores the idea that God equips those He calls.

The term "boy, youth, child" highlights the cultural context where age was associated with wisdom and authority, making Jeremiah's task daunting. It also heralds the New Testament teaching that God often uses the humble and lowly to accomplish His purposes (1 Corinthians 1:27). Jeremiah's youthfulness can be seen as a type of Christ, who also began His ministry at a young age and was often underestimated due to His age (Luke 2:46-47).

The prophet is reminded that his task is not self-appointed but divinely ordained. The prophet is not to alter or omit any part of God's message. Jeremiah's duty is to proclaim God's message, regardless of personal fear or opposition. Reflecting the prophetic responsibility to deliver God's truth, foreshadowing Christ as the ultimate Word of God (John 1:1).

God emphasizes the importance of courage in the face of opposition. Jeremiah was called to prophesy during a tumultuous period in Judah's history, facing hostility from kings, priests, and the people. Fearlessness is a recurring theme in Scripture. In Joshua 1:9, God commands Joshua to be strong and courageous. This command reflects the assurance that God provides His servants with the strength needed to fulfill their divine missions.

God's promise to deliver Jeremiah underscores His role as a protector and savior. This deliverance is not just physical but also spiritual, ensuring that Jeremiah's mission will be accomplished despite opposition. The concept of deliverance is prevalent in the Psalms, such as Psalm 34:17, where God delivers the righteous from their troubles. This deliverance can be seen as a type of Christ, who delivers humanity from sin and death. The authority of God's word is a foundational belief, as seen in Isaiah 55:11, where God's word is described as accomplishing what He desires.

1. How does Jeremiah's initial response to God's call reflect common human fears, and how can we overcome these fears in our own lives?
2. How can young believers today find encouragement in Jeremiah's account when facing their own callings or challenges?
3. How can we apply the principle of relying on God's strength rather than our own abilities in our daily lives and ministries?

Jeremiah's Consecration (Jeremiah 1:9-10, NRSV)

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

In order to assure him by overt act of His support, the Lord gives him a palpable pledge. He stretches out His hand and causes it to touch his mouth, as explanation of this symbolical act, He adds: I have put my words in thy mouth. The hand is the

instrument of making and doing; the touching of Jeremiah's mouth by the hand of God is consequently an emblematic token that God frames in his mouth what he is to speak.

God has consecrated him to be His prophet and endowed him for the discharge of his duties; He may now entrust him with His commission to the peoples and kingdoms, and set him over them as His prophet who proclaims to them His word. With the words of the Lord, he is to destroy and to build up peoples and kingdoms. The word of God is a power that carries out His will, and accomplishes that whereto He sends it, (Isaiah 55:10ff). Against this power nothing earthly can stand; it is a hammer that breaks rocks in pieces, (Jeremiah 23:29). Its power is to show itself in two ways, in destroying and in building up. The destroying is not set down as a mere preliminary, but is expressed by means of four different words, whereas the building is given only in two words, and these standing after the four; in order, doubtless, to indicate that the labors of Jeremiah should consist, in the first place and for the most part, in proclaiming judgment upon the nations.

(Jeremiah 26:8-9, NRSV)

⁸And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die!

⁹Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

Jeremiah was a prophet called by God to deliver His messages to the people of Judah. This phrase indicates the immediacy and urgency of Jeremiah's prophetic mission. The phrase "everything the LORD had commanded him to say" underscores the divine authority behind Jeremiah's words, emphasizing that he was not speaking on his own behalf but as a mouthpiece for God. This reflects the role of prophets in the Old Testament, who were often tasked with delivering difficult messages of warning and repentance. Jeremiah's faithfulness in delivering God's message, despite the personal risk, is a testament to his obedience and courage.

The reaction of the priests and prophets, along with the people, highlights the tension between Jeremiah and the religious establishment. The priests and prophets mentioned here were likely those who were aligned with the temple and the king, often opposing Jeremiah's messages of impending judgment. This reflects a broader theme in the Old Testament where true prophets of God often faced opposition from false prophets and religious leaders who were more concerned with maintaining their own power and status. The act of seizing Jeremiah indicates the hostility and rejection he faced, which is a common experience for many prophets, including Jesus Christ, who was also rejected by the religious leaders of His time.

The demand for Jeremiah's death reveals the severity of the opposition he faced. In the cultural and historical context of ancient Judah, blasphemy or speaking against the temple and the city could be considered a capital offense. The phrase "You must surely die" echoes the legal language found in the Mosaic Law, where certain offenses were punishable by death. This reaction also foreshadows the treatment of Jesus Christ, who was similarly condemned by the religious leaders of His day. The hostility towards

Jeremiah serves as a type of Christ, illustrating the pattern of rejection and persecution faced by those who faithfully deliver God's truth.

The gathering of the people against Jeremiah highlights the widespread rejection of his message. The house of the LORD, or the temple, was supposed to be a place of worship and truth, yet it became a place of confrontation. This opposition is reminiscent of the hostility faced by Jesus in the New Testament, particularly in the temple courts, as seen in John 2:13-22. The assembly against Jeremiah illustrates the resistance to God's true messengers and the challenge of delivering unpopular truths. It also foreshadows the persecution of prophets and, ultimately, Christ Himself.

A Strong Warning and Call to Obedience (26:12-15, NRSV)

¹²Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "It is the LORD who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard.

¹³Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you.

¹⁴But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you.

¹⁵Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

Jeremiah 26:12-13 is part of a sermon that Jeremiah preached in the court of the temple (beginning with verse 1). He makes it clear that this is a message the LORD has given to him. Announcing that his message is intended for this house and this city, he addresses the priests and prophets (the house) and the political leaders (the city). God is calling on the religious leaders and well-to-do citizens of Judah—as well as the common man—to turn from their wicked ways. To avoid God's judgment, they will have to demonstrate their sincerity by showing real change. At this point, Jeremiah is saying there is still time: "You can still avoid disaster if you just change." God did this very thing with the city of Nineveh. He had intended to destroy the city because of its wickedness. But after Jonah preached to the people, the Bible says, "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not" (Jonah 3:10).

There is no substitute for obedience in the Christian life. It is what God requires of us. Our failure to heed the warnings that God gives us through His preachers and teachers or directly from his Word usually brings heartaches and difficulties that we could otherwise avoid.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. Why do people tend to ignore the warnings that God puts in their lives?
2. Why does the Scripture say that "obedience is better than sacrifice"?
3. Warning labels, signs, and messages abound in our society. Yet many people ignore them without thinking of the consequences. Discuss the value of heeding God's warnings. What negative consequences can we avoid? What positive consequences may result?
4. How does Jeremiah's initial response to God's call reflect common human fears, and how can we overcome similar fears in our own lives?

LESSONS TO LIVE BY:

In today's lesson, we see how God sent His prophet Jeremiah to warn His people that because of their disobedience, they were on a collision course with His judgment. Perhaps part of the difficulty with God's people is that we refuse to really hear what is being said to us and about us in the Word. Instead, our own ideas about what God likes and doesn't like and what kind of "person" we think God has lure us into a false sense of security. Too often, we fail to realize that there is a difference between being a "hearer of the word" and being a "doer of the word" (James 1:22). Sitting in the pew on Sunday does not automatically mean that we live better, more faithful Christian lives.

Take inventory of your life and identify those areas in which you need to "amend your ways and doings." Ask God to forgive you for your disobedience. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to turn away from sin and turn toward God.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON: OCTOBER 12, 2025

Jeremiah's Message
Printed Text: Jeremiah 7:11, 21-23
Devotional Reading: Luke 6:40-46
Background Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-26

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 12 October 2025, 09:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

Pass Code: 669872

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84894230612?pwd=Zk1ESitzbGZwTlJyV21UZXY5aTVpZz09>

Jeremiah's Message
Printed Text: Jeremiah 7:1-11, 21-23
Devotional Reading: Luke 6:40-46
Background Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-26

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: Endure to the End - Mark 13:1-13
Tuesday: God will protect God's people - Mark 13:14-27
Wednesday: To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice - 1 Samuel 15:20-26
Thursday: Keep Christ's commandments - John 14:12-17
Friday: An Indestructible Temple - John 2:12-22
Saturday: The sacrifice That pleases God - Psalm 51 :15-19
Sunday: Amend Your ways! - Jeremiah 7:1-11, 21-23

LESSON AIM:

KNOW that there are consequences for trusting in a religious institution instead of trusting in God and obeying Him;
DESIRE to love and obey the Lord; and
PRAY that God will help us to be genuine in our heart attitudes as well as our deeds.

KEEP IN MIND:

"But this command I gave them, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you." (Jeremiah 7:23).

BACKGROUND:

Jeremiah, the author of the book that bears his name, was another preexilic prophet (i.e., he lived prior to the Babylonian captivity) and was a contemporary of Habakkuk. Jeremiah had a twofold ministry: As a prophet, he represented God before the people; as a priest, he represented the people before God. Because God is holy and cannot approach sinful man, He appointed prophets to speak for Him. God's holiness also prevented sinful man from approaching Him, so God appointed priests to approach Him on behalf of the people. Jeremiah was known as the "weeping prophet"; no matter how much his own people persecuted him for telling the truth, he still had compassion for them.

God gave Jeremiah a message to give to Judah at the temple gates (Jeremiah 7). The people of Judah were coming to the temple to worship God. God told Jeremiah to tell the people to amend their ways so they could continue to dwell in the Promised Land that He had given their fathers. Many things they were doing made God angry (vv. 4-10). What especially fueled God's anger, however, was that they felt they could do anything they wanted as long as they came to worship Him in the temple. Nothing evil could happen to them, they thought, because God was among them (Micah 3:11). They lived ungodly lives and worshiped other gods, but they thought that going to the temple would excuse their sinful deeds (v. 10).

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Standing Before God (Jeremiah 7:1-4, NRSV)

¹The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

²Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah, you that enter these gates to worship the LORD.

³Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place.

⁴Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

During the pilgrimage festivals, it would not have been unusual for pilgrims entering the temple area to be greeted by a representative of the temple asking them to examine their lives before going in for worship. On this particular day, that representative is Jeremiah. But his pleas on that day has a sense of urgency about them. Beyond the usual call for repentance, Jeremiah conveys that their words of repentance must be accompanied by actions of abandoning their evil ways. So great is God's anger against

them that their privilege of staying in the land is contingent on radical and immediate amending of their immoral ways. Additionally, in verse 4, he challenges them to examine the superficial nature of their worship and their false sense of security associated with the temple. They are convinced that God will never allow anything bad to happen to His temple or to the people who worship there. They put their faith in the temple of the Lord instead of the Lord of the temple.

The Longing for Change (Jeremiah 7:5-7)

⁵For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another,

⁶if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt,

⁷then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

Through His servant Jeremiah, God makes it very clear that continued blessings are conditional on the people's making drastic changes in their attitudes and actions. If the people stop their deeds, He will allow them to continue to live in the land and have access to the temple. It is clearly the people's choice: they must choose to do justice and treat those around and among them with respect and honor. So important is this issue of justice, and its conditional tie to living in the Promised Land, that it is included in the Ten Commandments: "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land of the LORD your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). God's requirements of justice comprise a large part of His elaboration on the Law in Exodus 20-23. The Israelites in Jeremiah's day are openly violating God's laws of justice, yet He still offers mercy (verse 7) if they will turn from their evil ways.

The Litany of Sins (Jeremiah 7:8-11)

⁸Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail.

⁹Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known,

¹⁰and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are safe!"—only to go on doing all these abominations?

¹¹Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the LORD.

The house God is speaking of here in verse 11 is the temple, and He calls it the Lord's house (v. 2)—not Judah's house, the prophets' house, the priests' house, the congregation's house, or even Jeremiah's house, but the Lord's house. This house is called by His name. He tells Jeremiah to ask the people, who are going in and out of the temple gates, if the house that has His name on it has become a "den of robbers" in their eyes. He adds that even He has seen it to be so.

Here God shows that He not only knows His people's evil deeds, but He also knows their corrupt view of the temple and their worship there. The People are guilty of violating at least five of the Ten Commandments, yet they confidently flock to the temple, where they believe their mere attendance and participation in rituals will atone for their sins. God is obviously angry both at their sins and at their attitude that temple worship give them indulgence to keep on sinning. He says they have turned His temple

into a “den of thieves” (Jeremiah 7:11). The prophet’s audience would have certainly known about the many limestone caves in the mountains surrounding Jerusalem where gangs of thieves sought temporary safety between their robberies. For the people to treat the temple as a place of sanctuary, where they think they are safe from the consequences of their sins, is such an abomination in God’s eyes that He will rain judgment down on them.

Not only was Judah ungodly outside the temple, but they had become ungodly in the house of the Lord, which kindled God’s anger even more. Verse 11 is also quoted several times in the New Testament (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46). In Jesus’ day, people were buying and selling in the temple. There were those who brought their tables to exchange currency and sell doves. Selling animals to be used for sacrifices was permitted, and people often had to exchange currency to make their purchases. But what made God angry was that the temple had been turned into a business. The moneychangers and merchants were cheating people, making exorbitant profits, and causing His house to become nothing but a “den” of robbers.

Jeremiah was opposing the corruption of the best and the holiest, saying that the Lord saw the situation and would deal with it accordingly (cf. Isaiah 56:7; see also Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46).

Useless Sacrifices (Jeremiah 7:21-23, NRSV)

²¹Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh.

²²For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to them or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.

²³But this command I gave them, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you."

The writer establishes the authority and divine origin of the message. "LORD of Hosts" emphasizes God's sovereignty and command over heavenly armies, underscoring His power and majesty. "The God of Israel" highlights the covenant relationship between God and His chosen people, Israel. This introduction asserts that the message is not from the prophet's own mind but from God Himself, as seen in other prophetic books like Isaiah and Ezekiel.

The ritualistic practices of the Israelites had become meaningless due to their disobedience and lack of true repentance. The historical context reveals that during Jeremiah's time, the people of Judah were engaging in idolatry and injustice, despite maintaining religious rituals. This critique of empty ritualism is echoed in other scriptures, (read Isaiah 1:11-17 and Amos 5:21-24), where God expresses disdain for sacrifices without righteousness.

By telling them to eat the meat themselves, God is indicating that their sacrifices are not being accepted by Him. God desires obedience and a contrite heart over mere ritual (1 Samuel 15:22, Psalm 51:16-17). Sacrifices were a central part of worship, but without genuine faith and obedience, they were rendered ineffective. True worship is in spirit and truth (John 4:24), and points to Jesus Christ as the ultimate sacrifice, fulfilling the law and rendering the old sacrificial system obsolete (Hebrews 10:1-10).

God tells them this is what I commanded, **“Obey Me!”**: Obedience is central to the covenant relationship between God and Israel. The Hebrew concept of obedience involves hearing and responding to God's voice. This call to obedience is echoed throughout the Old Testament, such as in Deuteronomy 6:4-5, where the Shema emphasizes loving God with all one's heart, soul, and strength. Obedience is not merely external compliance but involves a heart aligned with God's will. God promises His presence among His people which is foundational to Israel's identity and mission, setting them apart from other nations.

Being God's people implies a special status and responsibility. It involves living according to God's laws and reflecting His character to the nations. This identity is reaffirmed in 1 Peter 2:9, where believers are described as a chosen people and a royal priesthood, indicating continuity between the Old and New Covenants. Walking in God's ways implies a lifestyle of consistent obedience and faithfulness. The metaphor of walking suggests a journey or pilgrimage, highlighting the ongoing nature of the relationship with God.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. How does understanding the historical context of the Exodus enhance our comprehension of Jeremiah 7:22?
2. How does understanding the covenant relationship between God and Israel help us in our walk with God today?
3. In what ways can we prioritize obedience to God in our daily lives over ritualistic practices?
4. In what ways can we ensure that we are listening to God's voice amidst the noise of daily life?
5. In what ways can religious rituals become empty in our own lives, and how can we guard against this?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

We live in a society in which claiming to be a Christian is a cultural norm. The Christian religion is sometimes used by people without Christ's spirit to oppress, control, and exploit others. Be sure to develop a personal relationship with God that is cultivated through worship, the study of His word, and obedience to the Holy Spirit. Church attendance should not be perceived as a way of affirming our relationship with God, validating our faith, or securing our salvation. Treat God as a visible and tangible person with whom you spend time walking and talking because you want a closer personal relationship with Him.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON: OCTOBER 19, 2025

A Family's Example

Printed Text: Jeremiah 35:5-11

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:4

Background Reading: Jeremiah 35:1-19

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 19 October 2025, 09:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

Pass Code: 669872

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84894230612?pwd=Zk1ESitzbGZwTlJyV21UZXY5aTVPZz09>

A Family's Example

Printed Text: Jeremiah 35:5-11

Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:4

Background Reading: Jeremiah 35:1-19

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: The Dangers of strong Drink - Proverbs 23:29-35

Tuesday: Keep Earthly Pleasures in Perspective - Ecclesiastes 9 :4-10

Wednesday: Be Filled with the Spirit - Ephesians 5:11-19

Thursday: The Nazirite Vow - Numbers 6:1-8

Friday: Called to Holiness - 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

Saturday: Keep Awake! - 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10

Sunday: A Vow of Holiness - Jeremiah 35:5-19

LESSON AIM:

CONSIDER a family tradition that might remind family members to be faithful to God;

COMPARE AND CONTRAST the decision to abstain from wine with similar and dissimilar decisions elsewhere in Scripture; and

PRAY that God will help us to be genuine in our heart attitudes as well as our deeds.

KEEP IN MIND:

“and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their ancestor's command. But I myself have spoken to you persistently, and you have not obeyed me.” (Jeremiah 35:14b, NRSV).

BACKGROUND:

Jehoiakim was the son of Josiah and reigned as king of Judah from approximately 609 to 598 BC. His reign was marked by political turmoil and shifting allegiances, particularly with the rising power of Babylon. Jehoiakim's reign is significant in biblical history as it was a time of increasing threat from Babylon, leading to the eventual exile. This period is crucial for understanding the context of Jeremiah's prophecies, as they often addressed the impending judgment and call for repentance. The historical context of Jehoiakim's reign is also detailed in 2 Kings 23:36-24:7 and 2 Chronicles 36:5-8.

Josiah was one of the most righteous kings of Judah, known for his religious reforms and efforts to restore the worship of Yahweh, as recorded in 2 Kings 22-23. His legacy

is one of faithfulness to God, contrasting with the subsequent decline under his successors. The mention of Josiah serves as a reminder of the covenant faithfulness expected of Judah, which Jehoiakim failed to uphold. Josiah's reforms and the rediscovery of the Book of the Law are significant events that set the stage for the prophetic messages of Jeremiah.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Ancestral Practice (Jeremiah 35:5-6, NRSV)

⁵Then I set before the Rechabites pitchers full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, "Have some wine."

⁶But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us, 'You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children;

The Rechabites' adherence to Jonadab's commands serves as a model of faithfulness and respect for godly traditions. The Rechabites' lifestyle was a testimony to the people of Judah, demonstrating the power of living according to God's principles. How well can you as a Christian resist cultural pressure? The Rechabites' refusal to drink wine, even when offered by a prophet, illustrates the importance of standing firm in one's convictions despite societal pressures.

God uses the Rechabites as an example to teach Judah about obedience, showing that our lives can serve as lessons for others. The Rechabites' faithfulness to Jonadab's command serves as a model for honoring and upholding godly traditions and teachings passed down through generations. Like the Rechabites, Christians are called to live distinctively, often in ways that contrast with societal norms, reflecting their commitment to God's commands.

The Rechabites' adherence to a seemingly small command (abstaining from wine) underscores the importance of faithfulness in all areas of life, as small acts of obedience can have significant spiritual implications. The Rechabites' example challenges believers to consider the impact of their own lives and the legacy they leave for future generations. Just as Jeremiah tested the Rechabites, believers may face tests that reveal the depth and authenticity of their faith and commitment to God's commands.

1. In what ways can we resist cultural pressures that conflict with our Christian values, as the Rechabites did?

2. In what ways can you live a counter-cultural life that reflects your commitment to Christ, similar to the Rechabites' lifestyle?

Full Obedience (Jeremiah 35:7-10, NRSV)

⁷nor shall you ever build a house, or sow seed; nor shall you plant a vineyard, or even own one; but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you reside.'

⁸We have obeyed the charge of our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters,

⁹and not to build houses to live in. We have no vineyard or field or seed;

¹⁰but we have lived in tents, and have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us.

Christians are encouraged to uphold biblical teachings passed down through generations. The Rechabites' lifestyle reminds believers of their temporary status on earth. Christians are called to live with an eternal perspective, prioritizing spiritual over material pursuits.

The Rechabites' faithfulness contrasts with Judah's disobedience. Believers are challenged to remain faithful to God's commands, even when surrounded by a culture that does not. The Rechabites' simple lifestyle encourages Christians to find contentment in God's provision and avoid the distractions of materialism. Jeremiah uses the Rechabites as an example to teach Judah. Believers are reminded of the impact their lives can have as a testimony to others.

Like the Rechabites, Christians are called to live distinctively, often in ways that contrast with societal norms, reflecting their commitment to God's commands. Jonadab's influence on his descendants highlights the lasting impact one person's faithfulness can have on future generations.

Like the Rechabites, Christians are called to live as pilgrims and strangers in this world, prioritizing spiritual values over material possessions and comforts. The Rechabites' lifestyle encourages us to embrace simplicity and contentment, focusing on spiritual growth rather than accumulating material wealth.

Their nomadic lifestyle reminds believers of the call to live as sojourners in this world, focusing on eternal values rather than earthly comforts. The Rechabites demonstrate that true faith is evidenced by actions, encouraging believers to live out their faith in practical, tangible ways.

1. In what ways can we honor the godly heritage and teachings passed down to us, similar to the Rechabites' obedience to Jonadab?
2. Reflect on a time when your faith was tested. How did you respond, and what did you learn from that experience?

Necessary Relocation (Jeremiah 35:11, NRSV)

¹¹But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon came up against the land, we said, 'Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans.' That is why we are living in Jerusalem."

Jonadab's descendants had obeyed everything he had commanded. They had never drunk wine or built houses to live in, nor had they ever cultivated vineyards, fields, or crops. In fact it was only because Nebuchadnezzar had invaded the land that they had come to Jerusalem.

The Rechabites' decision to seek refuge in Jerusalem demonstrates their faithfulness to their ancestral commands even in times of crisis. Believers are encouraged to remain steadfast in their faith and values, regardless of external pressures. Just as the Rechabites sought safety in Jerusalem, Christians are called to seek refuge in God during times of trouble. This involves trusting in His protection and guidance.

The Rechabites' move to Jerusalem highlights the importance of community and support during difficult times. Christians are encouraged to find strength and encouragement within their faith communities.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER:

1. How does understanding the historical context of Jehoiakim's reign enhance our comprehension of Jeremiah 35:1?
2. In what ways does Jeremiah's role as a prophet during a tumultuous time inspire us to be faithful in our own callings?
3. How can we discern and respond to the "word of the LORD" in our lives today, similar to how Jeremiah received and acted upon God's messages?
4. What lessons can we learn from the political and spiritual climate of Judah under Jehoiakim that apply to our current societal context?
5. How do other scriptures, such as Hebrews 1:1-2, help us understand the continuity and fulfillment of God's communication through prophets like Jeremiah?

LESSON TO LIVE BY:

Like the Israelites of Jeremiah's day, each of us faces temptations to perpetuate injustices and commit sinful acts on a daily basis. We must make choices and face their consequences. This text should also inform our attitudes and practices concerning worship and redemption. Sometimes we treat our church the way the Israelites treated their temple. We are sometimes focused on appearances and rituals rather than the God who is supposed to be the object of our worship.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON: October 26, 2025

Change Promised

Printed Text: Jeremiah 31:29-34; John 1: 17

Devotional Reading: Matthew 12:14-21

Background: Jeremiah 31:1-40; John 1:17; Hebrews :7-13

Zoom Sunday School Classes – 26 October 2025, 09:00 AM EST

Meeting ID: 848-9423-0612

Pass Code: 669872

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84894230612?pwd=Zk1ESitzbGZwTlJyV21UZXY5aTVPZz09>

Change Promised

Printed Text: Jeremiah 31:29-34; John 1:17

Devotional Reading: Psalm 103:17-22

Background Reading: Jeremiah 31:1-40; John 1:17; Hebrews 8:7-13

Daily Bible Readings

Monday: A New Salvation – Joel 2:28-32
Tuesday: A New Heart – Ezekiel 36:25-35
Wednesday: The Law's Essence – Deuteronomy 10:12-21
Thursday: A New Covenant – 2 Corinthians 3:1-6
Friday: A New Spirit – 2 Corinthians 3:7-11
Saturday: A New Freedom – 2 Corinthians 3:12-17
Sunday: A New Relationship with God - Jeremiah 31 :27-34

KEEP IN MIND:

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:33, NRSV)

LESSON AIM:

EVALUATE Jeremiah’s message about the new covenant;

ASSESS how the new covenant makes a difference in our relationship with God; and

DECIDE to live in accordance with the law written on our hearts.

BACKGROUND:

The book of Jeremiah is prophesying the Israelites Babylonian capture, period of captivity, and return to the Promised Land. In chapter 31, Jeremiah not only offers them the hope of freedom, but also a new covenant that is more than just following rule; it is covenant that changes the heart. This new covenant, Jeremiah explains, will be with them even when they are absent from one another and serve as a permanent reminder of God’s grace and redemptive power.

LESSON COMMENTARY:

Payback for Disobedience (Jeremiah 31:29-30)

²⁹In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.

³⁰But everyone shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Jeremiah talks about the days when God will repopulate the land of Israel and Judah. A re-population is needed because their sins will ring about God’s judgment and punishment. Their idolatry and injustice will cause them to be conquered by the Babylonians and taken into exile. But after this, He would restore them. Their land would be repopulated, and He would not allow them to be afflicted anymore. The Lord watched over them to discipline and afflict them in order for them to repent. In the coming days, when they are brought back from the exile, there will be a different kind of watching; the Lord will watch over them to restore them and help them rebuild their broken nation.

God reminds them of a popular proverb about sour grapes. This proverb was used to explain how children suffered the consequences of their parents' disobedience. The Lord said that this dynamic would no longer be in effect. In the days when He brought Israel back. Every person would pay for his or her own sinful ways. This means that He would treat each person's sin individually. A person's sin will be their own responsibility, and they will reap the consequences of their good or bad choices.

1. What do you do when you feel like giving up on a commitment you have made?
Even when our relationships with each other and God get tough, we can remember the loving covenant God graced us with to keep moving forward.
2. When facing troubling news, how can we convince others there is hope for the future?
3. When confronted with their sins, what excuses do some people create to justify their wrongdoing?

Restoration Through a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

³¹ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

³² Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

³³ But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

God's new covenant with Israel was unprecedented. He had made covenants with their ancestors in the past and recalls how the covenant He made with Israel had been broken. This happened in spite of God pursuing and loving them with the same force and intensity as a husband who loves his wife. The children of Israel and Judah broke this covenant time and time again. By detailing how His people broke the old one, God shows the need for a new covenant.

While covenants with people like Abraham and Noah or even the people of Israel had power, this covenant was a new development in God's relationship with His people. It required Israel to stop focusing so much on habitually following rules. Verse 32 says the new covenant would not look like "the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." God is noting that the covenant He had made then required spoon feeding the Israelites, giving one rule after another for them to follow and prove their love toward God. This new covenant, written on the hearts of people, is about a shift in attitude and proximity. God says no matter where you are, no matter what you do, His presence is with you in your heart.

A Change in Mediator (John 1:17, NRSV)

¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

As to the order of time and entrance on his work, Christ came after John, but in every other way he was before him. The expression clearly shows that Jesus had existence before he appeared on earth as man. All fulness dwells in him, from which alone fallen sinners have, and shall receive, by faith, all that renders them wise, strong, holy, useful, and happy. Our receivings by Christ are all summed up in this one word, grace; we have received "even grace," a gift so great, so rich, so invaluable; the good will of God towards us, and the good work of God in us. The law of God is holy, just, and good; and we should make the proper use of it. But we cannot derive from it pardon, righteousness, or strength. It teaches us to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, but it cannot supply the place of that doctrine. As no mercy comes from God to sinners but through Jesus Christ, no man can come to the Father but by him; no man can know God, except as he is made known in the only begotten and beloved Son.

Thoughts to Ponder:

1. How can our relationship with God be restored so we can develop a new life of faithfulness?
2. What examples do you see of people being judged prematurely based on their appearance or background?
3. This portion of scripture is widely believed to have been written while the people were still in captivity. Why do you think God wanted them to hear this before they were released?
4. When we accept Christ, He responds, "Henceforth, I call you not servants ... I have called you friends" (John 15:15). What should be our response to Christ as believers? Does your relationship with Christ reveal that He is your friend?
5. How does the proverb about sour grapes in Jeremiah 31:29 challenge the idea of generational punishment?

Lesson to Live by:

In a world where rules matter, we can easily take a rigid approach to developing our relationship with God. We can begin to tout how much of a "better" Christian we are because we are in line with the rules and regulations of church and society. But when we take this approach, we run the risk of ostracizing and marginalizing people who might be new to the faith or have a different understanding of God. Jeremiah's prophecy was important because it helped shift social and cultural understanding of what it meant to be in obedience to God, obedience in the heart made for outward expressions of obedience.

Many times in our churches, we can mistake the outward expressions and appearances as a measure of what's going on in a person's heart. For example, if someone is dressed nicely in a suit or wears a big "church hat," that we assume that they are in a good place with God. We listen to how a person talks with certain religious tones and assume this is the way a holy person talks. This is not necessarily the case. God is more concerned about what goes on in the heart than these outward expressions.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON: November 2, 2025

Jeremiah's Rescue
Printed Text: Jeremiah 38:7-13
Devotional Reading: Romans 13:1-10
Background Reading: Jeremiah 20:1-6; 37:28; 43:1-7

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