

## Power Hour Lesson Summary for July 16, 2017

### "Jeremiah"

**Lesson Text:** Jeremiah 1:4-10

**Background Scripture:** Jeremiah 1

**Devotional Reading:** Psalm 75

### Jeremiah 1:4-10 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup>The word of the Lord came to me, saying,

<sup>5</sup>"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,

before you were born I set you apart;

I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

<sup>6</sup>"Alas, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young."

<sup>7</sup> But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. <sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.

<sup>9</sup> Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth. <sup>10</sup> See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."

### TODAY'S LESSON AIMS

**Learning Fact:** To describe the Lord's intent for Jeremiah's prophetic ministry.

**Biblical Principle:** To explain how the gospel accomplishes the objectives given to the prophet in Jeremiah 1:10.

**Daily Application:** To respond to a call from God despite personal feelings of inadequacy.

### INTRODUCTION

#### When I Grow Up...

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

When children are asked that question, their answers are remarkably consistent. Occupations such as doctor, athlete, teacher, dancer, firefighter, and police officer are among the usual responses.

Of course, childhood fantasy becomes a consideration with the appearance of such goals as becoming a princess, a superhero, a dinosaur, a mermaid, etc. As people grow older, we expect the answers to that question to become more realistic. You can't major in Becoming a Superhero or Swimming Like a Mermaid.

We probably can recall being asked this same question many times as children. But how many of us were ever told, when you grow up, you're going to be \_\_\_\_\_. As far-fetched as this may sound, something of the sort *did* happen to a young man named Jeremiah. He was not asked what he wanted to be; he was *told!* Jeremiah came from a priestly background (Jeremiah 1:1), but God had other plans for him.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

**Time:** 627 B.C.

**Place:** Anathoth (3 miles northeast of Jerusalem)

The prophet Jeremiah began his ministry “in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah” (Jeremiah 1:2). By modern reckoning, that was about 627 B.C. These times were increasingly chaotic times in the southern kingdom of Judah. Although the Assyrian threat—which resulted in the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. (2 Kings 17:18)—no longer existed, it was being replaced by Babylonian aggression.

Godliness and holiness on the part of the Judeans, not military might, was the key to staving off disaster. Only reliance on and dedication to the true God would turn aside the threat of foreign invasion. In that regard, things may have looked hopeful for a time because of godly King Josiah’s dedication to the Lord (2 Chronicles 34:1-35:19). But the spiritual condition of Judah took a quick and fatal turn for the worse after he died in 609 B.C.

Four ungodly kings followed him, the final one being his son Zedekiah. It was he who was on the throne when the Babylonians sacked Jerusalem and destroyed Solomon’s great temple in 586 B.C. (2 Kings 24:18-25:7; Jeremiah 1:3).

Another issue of background is Jeremiah’s hometown of Anathoth (Jeremiah 1:1). This village was located in the tribal territory of Benjamin, about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. Anathoth was a Levite town, a convenient residence for workers in the Jerusalem temple. As a resident of this town, Jeremiah undoubtedly thought he would follow in his father’s footsteps as a priest in terms of career. But God had other plans. God gave young Jeremiah three wonderful assurances.

God’s electing grace (Jeremiah 1:4-5).

God’s protecting presence (vs. 6-8).

God’s effecting Word (vs. 9-10).

## What Do You Think?

- How does the fact that God knows people even before their birth affect your worldview?
- How can we overcome the habit of making excuses for not serving God more fully?
- In what ways should others see in us fearlessness (but not recklessness) in service to God?
- What are some specific steps to take to ensure that the words we utter are consistent with God’s Word (Psalm 39:1; 119:13)?

## POINTS TO PONDER

1. Before we are even born, God has created a plan and purpose for us! (c.f. Jeremiah 1:4,5)
2. Do not doubt what God's plans are for your life, and do not doubt yourself. Whatever His plans are, they will come to pass! (c.f. Jeremiah 1:6-10)

## CONCLUSION

### No Solos

With certain tasks, one's ability to go it alone without any assistance is the measure of success. A would-be pilot must fly his or her plane solo. A young driver takes great pride in being able to drive to and from school or work without mom or dad riding along. From youth, it seems, to do something "all by myself" becomes the standard of success in many areas of life. In contrast, God said that His presence, His words, and His purpose were to identify Jeremiah's ministry. Never would there be a time when he would have to go solo, even as he suffered perhaps more persecution and harassment than any other prophet in the Old Testament. "No solos" can be a difficult concept to accept and apply in many areas of one's life, but it is absolutely vital to apply in our service for the Lord.

Let us remember that there was never a self-made prophet or a self-made apostle. And there are no self-made servants of Jesus in the twenty-first century. We must draw our strength from the Lord! It was a go-it-alone philosophy that led humanity into the tragedy of sin in the Garden of Eden, the consequences of which still reverberate. If the temptation to "fly solo" spiritually grows as you gain skills and knowledge with the passing years, remember: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

## PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, help us avoid the extremes of fearful silence and go-it-alone arrogance! Let us rather be always and only Your instruments to speak the words of confrontation and comfort as You enable us. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

## THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

A Child of God is no mere child!

## ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week we will study the prophet "Ezekiel" who lived at the same time as Jeremiah. We will relate Ezekiel's experience with people who do not want to listen to our own experiences with difficult people—you know—the hard-headed. Study Ezekiel 1-3.