

# Jeremiah 1 ● A life known and called by God

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We're going to start a new book study tonight, so open your Bible to the Book of Jeremiah. We're continuing our study through the Old Testament and can I be completely honest with you tonight and tell you that part of me was dreading starting Jeremiah? Not just because it's a very long book; it is, it is, but that's never bothered me before. Here I am, turning though Jeremiah for the last... It's because I think it hit so close to home.

The Book of Jeremiah is about a man who had a prophetic ministry to his nation at a time when it was deteriorating rapidly and he was made to witness that deterioration, and he spoke to it. And he spoke to those who were in charge and they didn't accept his message. And his beloved nation not only continued to spiral into moral collapse, but it was eventually invaded by the Babylonian army. Many, many people were killed and the rest of the people essentially were taken off into exile to the Babylonian Empire, which is the way the Babylonians basically treated the people they conquered.

And Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet. His book that follows this one immediately, Lamentations. The word Lamentation means to cry, to weep and he wept, he wept over the demise of his nation. And the reason that I was not looking forward to doing this book to be completely honest with you, is because I have been in a period of mourning for my own country. I've been, I've literally been grieving and it's bothered me. And I've gone, you know, to the Lord and I've talked to Sue about it and I've struggled with my emotions, frankly. Going back and forth from anger, to disappointment, to discouragement and probably everything in between and it has been a challenging journey, to say the least.

And so now we're going to go through Jeremiah where he does the same thing with the nation of Israel, his beloved nation. The focus of his prophetic insights were directed mainly to the southern kingdom of Judah. You'll remember that David's grandson, Rehoboam, was a very foolish young man when he took the throne, following his father's rule. Now, his father was Solomon and Rehoboam tore the nation of Israel into 2 parts. There was a civil war and they divided into a northern kingdom, which retained the name of Israel. The capital of the

northern kingdom was Samaria and then the southern kingdom, the kingdom of Judah, which had the capital of Jerusalem.

The kingdom of Israel, the northern kingdom, fell first to the Assyrian Empire and then the Assyrians were conquered by the Babylonians. And then finally, the Babylonians, many years later, conquered the southern kingdom of Judah and Jeremiah lived during that entire decline. He saw it coming, he saw it end with an invasion of the land.

As we look at the first 3 verses of the Book of Jeremiah, we are given kind of an introduction of both the man and his ministry. If you look with me in your Bible, it says, *“The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, <sup>2</sup> to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. <sup>3</sup> It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month.”* (ESV)

And so in just these first 3 verses of the book, we've learned actually several important things about Jeremiah and about his ministry at this time. First of all, we learned that he was born into a priestly family, did you notice that? He talks about the fact that he was the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests and that means he was a descendant of Aaron, the brother of Moses, alright. We know also that he came from the city of Anathoth, it was actually not a city, it was a village and it was about 3 miles from Jerusalem. We know that the city of Anathoth was a Levitical village within the tribe of Benjamin.

Now remember, the Levites and the priests didn't get their own land allotments and so they had to live in cities or villages that were given to them, that existed within other tribal regions. And this particular small village was in the tribe of Benjamin and it was not only a Levitical village, it was also, interestingly enough, one of the cities of refuge. You'll remember that those cities were set aside, one in each of the tribal units to be a place of refuge if someone accidentally killed someone else. They could run to a city of refuge and there be safe from the avenger of blood until their situation was resolved in whatever way it was resolved.

We also see from these first 3 verses that Jeremiah began his prophetic ministry during the reign of king Josiah and that his ministry lasted all the way until the Babylonian invasion, which took place during the reign of Zedekiah, who was the last king of Judah.

Actually, Jeremiah leaves out 2 different kings when he mentions the kings during which he had a prophetic ministry. He leaves out Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, both of whose reigns only totaled 6 months together. So, that's probably why he left them out; their reigns were insignificant. And then you'll remember that Josiah, the first king during which Jeremiah had a prophetic ministry, was the last of the good kings.

Josiah was a godly man, for the most part and he died very early on. I think he was in his forties, probably early forties when he passed away. And after he died the kingdom, the southern kingdom of Judah, was led into a time of just moral chaos and as we've already said, ultimate captivity.

So beginning in verse 4, if you look with me in your Bible there, Jeremiah begins to record his own calling from the Lord. And he says in verse 4, *"Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, (and this is an interesting message) <sup>5</sup> 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; (which means I set you apart, right, for this particular ministry and He says) I appointed you a prophet to the nations.'"* That last statement is very interesting.

Jeremiah was a man who prophesied specifically to the southern kingdom of Judah, but the Lord calls him a prophet to the nations, which is very interesting in light of the fact that his prophecies involve not just Judah, but the surrounding nations as well.

But these 2 verses also give us some very important insights into helping us understand how God sees us before we're born. Yeah, you heard me right, how God sees us before we're born. Because we see in these 2 verses the timeless existence of God, that He is not bound by time, as you and I are bound in time.

We all in this room have a birth date, which is a month and a day and a year in which we were born. And our parents probably waited anxiously for the day of our birth or they dreaded it, I don't know which might be the case. But I was the last of 4 kids that came in 5 years and I don't think they were necessarily looking forward, well, I shouldn't say that. Anyway, my parents had a lot going on, suffice it to say. God doesn't have to wait however, for someone to be born to know them, isn't that cool?

My parents had to wait, your parents had to wait to get to know you. God doesn't have to wait for you to be born to get to know you or even to call you into the area of ministry that He has set aside for you to function in, isn't that cool? Because we see it in these verses that the Lord speaks to Jeremiah and

says, before I even formed you in the womb, I knew you, I knew you. And before you were even born, I set you apart to do this work of prophetic ministry, even before you were born.

Now, it's important to understand, and this is, I want to really underscore this. It's important to understand that just because God has a foreknowledge of events, that doesn't mean He fixes those events. There are way too many Christians that I hear from who make the assumption that because God foreknows an event, He fixes that event. In other words, it is predetermined.

People, do you understand there's a huge difference between predestination and predetermination? Something that is predetermined would be determined before time, it's going to happen that way. The Bible doesn't say that about the way God treats you and I. It does say we're predestined, but that's not the same thing, it says that we are predestined according to God's foreknowledge.

God doesn't have to wait for things to happen to see how they're going to turn out, He knows how everything is going to turn out. He's seen your birth, He's seen your death, He's seen your beginning, He's seen your end, and that includes everyone. He knows exactly how the end is going to take place because the end, He doesn't have to wait for the end. Because God exists outside of time, God created time, He is not limited by it. Very important for us to understand as Christians, it's difficult for us to understand as Christians because we are captive to time.

I cannot tell you what's going to happen an hour from now, I have to wait. God doesn't have to wait, He exists outside of the realm of time and so the whole passage of time lies before Him. And He knows the beginning from the end and the end from the beginning. And so He can speak to someone and say, I knew you before you were even formed in the womb, I called you before you were even born. But that doesn't mean that God fixed things in time, very important to remember that.

So, if you know, frankly shouldn't surprise us that Jeremiah existed in the thoughts and purposes of God prior to his conception, so. But you have to ask yourself the question, why did God say that to Jeremiah? I mean, why tell him? Why tell him? Why say to him, I knew you before you were even conceived, I called you before you were born. I gave you this ministry to accomplish before you were even born, why say that?

Well, I believe that the reason that the Lord said things like that to Jeremiah was because that knowledge that his life and his ministry was part of God's ordained

plan, purposed ahead of time, would provide incredible confidence and great strength in the coming days and years when life got hard, because people, life got hard for Jeremiah.

Essentially, Jeremiah was given a ministry to speak prophetically to the southern kingdom of Judah and God said, I've got a message for you to tell them and it's pretty much bad news. And you're going to warn them and you're going to warn them, and then you're going to warn them some more, and they're not going to listen to you. They're never going to listen to you and then there's going to come a point where you're no longer going to warn them, you're just going to say, it's too late. It doesn't matter what you do now, the end is coming and that's the message I've given you and they're not going to like you for giving that message. In fact, they're going to persecute you for giving that message.

But I want you to know something, when those persecutions happen, when those difficulties come upon you, I want you to know something and I want you to gain strength from this. I want you to know that I called you, I knew you before you were conceived and I called you before you were born, I want you to know that this is my purpose for your life.

I don't know if that, if that resonates with you in any way, but as a pastor, I am fairly passionate about the things that I'm sharing with you right now. Because I've understood over the course of 30 years pastoring this church and about however many years I was in the ministry prior to that, that how important calling is. Because in any sort of a ministry, life gets hard and there's a point in time where anybody who's called into the ministry has to look at their life and say, this isn't what I signed up for, this isn't fun, this got very unfun.

Here's the point, if you think you got yourself in the ministry, you're going to think to yourself, well I'm just going to get myself out, because I don't need this grief. I got to tell you something, I feel really bad for professional ministers who go to school, seminary, or whatever the thing might be and who make a determination based on a career choice. And then they put their name out there, or their resume, and they get hired somewhere to a church, to minister and life gets hard. Do you know how many ministers have quit the ministry and gone into the insurance business? In some certain denominations, the number is just astronomical, you know why? Because nobody would put up with this, you know, by choice, nobody would put up... Jeremiah would never choose this life for himself. It's like, you know, I can't wait to get into this ministry of telling people the bad news. And then having them reject me and then having them persecute me, I can't wait to get started, there's no way.

Listen, you can't pay me enough, you can't say enough things, there's not enough incentive. The only thing that's going to keep me going in the ministry, the only thing that's going to keep you going in the ministry, God called me, that's why I'm here. Because believe me, there was a lot of times I wanted to quit. I'm sure there were many times Jeremiah thought about quitting. So why don't people quit? Because they're called, it's an ordination that comes not from man, it's fine, it's great when men recognize that. But listen, we don't ordain people, God ordains people to the ministry. We recognize His ordination as the church and we may confer some sort of legal standing on people or even ecclesiastical standing on people, but it has to come from God first. If it doesn't come from God, don't even put your toe in the pool because you know it's going to get bitten off, not to be too graphic.

You know, the Apostle Paul talked about his own calling in similar kind of terms as Jeremiah. Let me show you this from the Book of Galatians, chapter 1. Look at this, Paul writing here,

**Galatians 1:15-16 (ESV)**

*But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;*

*But when he who had set me apart before I was born, (that sounds similar) and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;*

So notice that Paul talks about his calling in that sense, he came to understand that his calling, like Jeremiah's, was one that happened before he was even born. And you'll remember that in both of Paul's letters to Timothy, he made reference to that reminder of calling, why? Because you got to hang on to it. Look what he said, it's in actually both 1st and 2nd Timothy. He said,

**1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6 (ESV)**

*Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...*

*Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. (and from 2 Timothy) For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you...*

He's talking about the gift of God that came with the calling, right? Because God never calls somebody and doesn't also gift them to accomplish what He has called them to do. He called Jeremiah to be a prophet and He gifted him with that prophecy and we'll see that here in just a moment. But the reminder was essential, because Paul knew the kind of heat that Timothy was going to come under for simply being a Christian and church history tells us Timothy was martyred just like Paul, he eventually gave his life.

Who in the world would start a career that's going to end with martyrdom? Who in the world? I can't wait to sign up, where do I sign up, get me on that list. No way! There's only one reason, one reason you stick with it. God called me, this is God's calling in my life. Do you see the importance here? Do you see what causes a person to stick with it?

But you know, it's interesting, Jeremiah didn't consider himself ready for the calling that God gave him. Look at verse 6, *"Then I said, 'Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.'"* <sup>7</sup> *But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak."* I want you to stop there for just a moment because this is a very interesting exchange between Jeremiah and the Lord.

It's interesting that God calls Jeremiah to this place of ministry and what does Jeremiah do? He immediately processes this thing through self. Rather than saying, Lord, you called me to this area of ministry and I just trust that you're going to give me everything I need, what does he do? Similar to what Moses did, right, when he got a call from the Lord. But, I don't think I'm ready for this because I just don't...

And you know, it's one thing to understand our weaknesses and there's nothing wrong with understanding and even admitting a person's weakness, but you have to understand that Jeremiah is throwing this as an objection to the calling, just like Moses did. He objected to being called, I'm slow of speech, Moses said, and what did God say to Moses? Who gave man his mouth? You think that's a problem for me?

See what we do? We take the calling of God and we place our limitations over the top of it. Oh, I could never be a pastor, I could never teach the Bible, I could never, oh, I could never do that. You see what we do? We do the same thing Jeremiah did, we project our limitations on God's abundance and we say, well, my limitations trump your abundance, sorry. I know that you want me to go do this ministry, but look, look at the man that I am. And I want you to notice what

God says to Jeremiah, He says, don't say that, don't say that, Jeremiah. You know why? This isn't about you, you're making it about you, this is about me, this is about obedience to my command. I can handle anything that you lack, I can take care of any limitation that you have, doesn't matter what it is, I can take care of it. Don't worry, I am not limited, you may be, but I'm not, so don't make this about you, it's about me.

And that's why God goes on to say, wherever I send you, you go and you talk, you speak, you tell them what I tell you to say and that's all you have to do. You see what He was telling Jeremiah? All you have to do is be faithful, I'm not saying to you, I think you're the coolest thing since sliced bread. God's not saying that at all, He's saying, you're my chosen vessel, now go be faithful. And immediately we go, oh, but I can't. No, you just go be faithful, I know what you are, I know who you are and I know your limitations but your limitations don't limit me because I am God, right.

We got to remember that, guys, I know you hear me saying it, but we got to remember it. We got to remember it, your limitations don't limit God. The ministry that He gives us is not only created by Him, but it is empowered by Him and you know what? If you don't get this through your head, you're never going to walk by faith. Because walking by faith is faith in His power, not yours. It's faith in His ability, not yours, it's faith in His abundance, not a focus on your limitations.

Walking by faith is keeping your eyes on Him and getting them off yourself. Because you see, our natural human tendency is to look inward. That's why Jeremiah did it, that's why Moses did it, hey, even Isaiah did it. Now his came out slightly different, he recognized how unworthy he was to speak the words of the Lord. Remember what the Lord had to do? Remember he cried out, he goes, ah no, no, I'm unclean, I live among a people who are unclean, and I, you're just too holy. (Isaiah 6:5)

And you know, the Lord had to have an angel come over, remember, took a tongs off the altar in this vision he was having and touch his lips with it, so as to kind of give him this visual picture of the fact that, you know, it's okay Isaiah, you're going to be okay, just chill, all right? (Isaiah 6:6) I'm doing..., this is my work in you, I know the man that you are, I know the people you live with, this is my work, let me do my work in you, through you.

Are you willing to let God use you as His vessel? Are you willing? Oh, but Pastor, I... If you start your sentence, your next sentence with that, you've missed the point, it's not about you. We don't hesitate by saying, but I. We say,



hey, you know, that's what God wants to do, that's His business, I'll just be faithful.

I've had people ask me many times, "how do you get up week after week speaking the Word of God?" They say, "don't you feel unworthy to speak the Word of God?" I was like, "yeah, of course I do, but if I'm going to let that stop me, I would never teach. It's His word, it's not mine, right?"

And I'm not saying I have the freedom to stand up here as a hypocrite, I'm not saying that. My point is, if you and I have to attain to some level of perfection before we're willing to speak words of truth, we'll never open our mouth. Of course we feel unworthy, we ought to but I still have a calling to be faithful, right? Okay.

And so, knowing that people are going to oppose him God promises here. Oh, and this is, I love this, look at verse 8. *"Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord."* Isn't that a wonderful promise? Do not be afraid of them. Doesn't that sound a lot like what Jesus said to His disciples? Do not let your hearts be troubled, right? (John 14:1) Kind of the same sort of thing.

He exhorted Jeremiah not to allow fear to enter into his heart, because fear, what does fear do? We've talked about this, fear paralyzes, doesn't it? It keeps us from going forward. So don't let fear rise up in your heart Jeremiah, because let me tell you something, people are going to get angry and they're going to be spitting mad, and they're going to wag their bony finger in your face, and they're going to threaten you within an inch of your life, but don't be afraid because I am going to deliver you.

Verse 9, *"Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth.* (so Jeremiah is obviously seeing a vision here) *And the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth."* Again, this is kind of similar to how Isaiah was called, you know, during his calling into prophetic ministry.

Verse 10, He says, and this is really interesting, very interesting terminology. *"See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up* (your Bible may say, to root up) *and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."* And what's interesting about verse 10 is that Jeremiah is pictured here by the Lord as doing more than just speaking prophetically, He's given us kind of a picture here of Jeremiah actually doing things with his prophetic word, does that make sense?

I want to call your remembrance to Moses when he was sent to Egypt to convince Pharaoh to release the Jewish people from their captivity. And you'll remember that he brought those plagues, but you'll remember that none of the plagues began until Moses spoke it, he spoke these plagues. And it was like this prophetic thing that brought these things forth, right? And so, it's sort of a similar picture of God setting Jeremiah in this position where he speaks these things into being; whether it's uprooting of nations, or building up of a nation, or whatever the case might be.

In fact, when you look at verse 10, once again, look with me in your Bible, look where it says, *"See, I have set you this day over nations"* That phrase, set you over, is actually in the Hebrew, it suggests a title; something like deputy or vice regent, where someone is given the authority of someone to go and do things in the name of the one who granted them the authority.

And that is what God is saying here to Jeremiah, that the word that He's given to him to speak over nations and kingdoms and so forth would actually be used by the Lord to do the uprooting, to do the tearing apart, to do the overthrowing, but also to do the building up and the planting. And so it's really a fascinating sort of a picture of how God uses prophecy to speak to things and make them happen. Did you ever catch that?

God's still speaking and making things happen. You know, with Ezekiel, there was the same sort of a thing. He said, the Lord said to Ezekiel, speak to those bones that we're lying in that valley and speak to them that they might come to life. (Ezekiel 37:4) The Lord just didn't say, He didn't say, now, Ezekiel, just sit back and watch while I do this. He said, no, son of man, speak, speak life into those dead bones, do it and it will happen. Do you get the picture? That's what we're seeing also in the ministry of Jeremiah.

Now, as we get to verse 11, we're going to see that Jeremiah has his first vision concerning the people of Judah and it almost is going to sound like a riddle. And I'll explain it to you as we go through it, verse 11 and 12. *"And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Jeremiah, what do you see?' And I said, 'I see an almond branch.'"* <sup>12</sup> *Then the Lord said to me, 'You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it.'"* And we're all kind of going, huh? Why didn't He just say, hey Jeremiah, I'm watching over my Word to perform it.

What that means is, I'm watching to make sure that this is carried out and fulfilled. But what's this almond branch have to do with anything? What do you see, Jeremiah? I see an almond branch. That's right, you've seen well and just to let you know, I'm watching over my Word. Well, the key words here, because

what God does, and He does this often in the scriptures, He does a play on words. And the 2 key words in those verses are almond and watching, alright?

First of all, the word that's rendered almond comes from a root word that signifies to be awake. And the reason they talk about the almond tree as the awake tree in Israel is because it actually begins to blossom in late January and so it's the first of the trees of the year to actually begin to blossom and then to bear fruit, alright. So it's, think about it now, it's the awake tree, so keep that in your mind here.

But the word watching is also used here and it is also interestingly enough related to the Hebrew language, in the Hebrew language to the almond tree. So God is using a play on words to associate using this almond branch with watchful activity that is soon going to take place. Because it's the, remember the almond tree was the first of the trees to blossom, it's going to happen soon in the year.

This is God saying to Jeremiah in essence, I'm watching over my plans to soon bring them to fruition and I will continue to watch over them so that they are accomplished. It seems like a lot of trouble to go to make a simple statement to you and I. We're kind of like, why didn't you just say that? But, you know, it's the way the Lord does, He often gives a picture to kind of speak of the thing that He's saying.

Now, the next word that comes to Jeremiah essentially outlines the nature of his prophetic ministry and it begins in verse 13 in your Bible. It says, *"The word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.'"* And by the way, if you were ever around a big boiling pot and it was starting to tip over, you'd want to make sure you weren't in the place where it was going to be pouring out because you might get scalded. That's the picture Jeremiah is seeing; a boiling pot that is tipping over from the north and then in verse 14, the Lord explains what this vision means.

*"Then the Lord said to me, 'Out of the north disaster shall be let loose upon all the inhabitants of the land.'"* Verse 15, *"For behold, I am calling all the tribes of the kingdoms of the north, ..."* And that speaks of all of the nations that Israel, or excuse me, that Babylon had conquered, and now made up the Babylonian Empire. And He says, I'm bringing them from the north <sup>15</sup>... *declares the Lord, and they shall come, and every one shall set his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all its walls all around and against all the cities of Judah."* So, in this vision, the Lord is basically

speaking to Jeremiah about the impending judgment upon Jerusalem and all the cities of the southern kingdom.

Well, you know what's a little bit kind of crazy about this? This early prophecy came during the time of Josiah and remember, Josiah was a godly king; he was a godly man. Started off very, very young as king and he began to seek the Lord. And as his devotion to the Lord grew, he began to bring some incredible reforms into the country. And that had to be very exciting for Jeremiah to see as a godly man himself, to see a king on the throne who's making good decisions, you know? We're going to do this better, we're going to get rid of some of this idolatry and we're going to root this stuff out of the kingdom and all the...

And there has to be an excitement among those who love the Lord and Jeremiah receives this vision of this boiling pot. What do you see, Jeremiah? I see a boiling pot facing from the north, tipping from the north. That's right and that's judgment that is coming. Even in the midst of this uptick in the moral environment, the moral atmosphere of Israel, they have been wallowing in idolatry for so long that God is telling them now that judgment is coming because of their chronic idolatry, which of course the Lord refers to as spiritual adultery.

Verse 17 He goes on. Oops, did I, I missed the last part, I missed 16, excuse me. *"And I will declare my judgments against them, for all their evil in forsaking me. (And then God emphasizes their evil) They have made offerings to other gods (there it is) and worshiped the works of their own hands. <sup>17</sup> But you, (now speaking to Jeremiah) dress yourself for work;..."* Your Bible might say, gird up your loins, because that's actually what the Hebrew means there.

You and I, we hear that and we're like, what does that mean? Well, remember, the men wore long robes and when they would go out into the field to work or when they would go into battle, they would be told to gird up their loins. Meaning they would take their robe and they would wrap it around through their legs and around and they would tuck it into their belt, because it would give them freedom of motion; the ability to move quickly and run and make, it's that sort of thing and to work. And so, whenever, The Lord would say to someone, prepare yourself for action, the term in Hebrew was, gird up your loins, whether you were wearing a robe or not. And so, here in the ESV, they use the phrase, dress yourself for work.

*"<sup>17</sup>...arise, (the Lord says) and say to them everything that I command you. (and then He, the Lord, adds this,) Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them."* And now there's an interesting statement. He says, do

not be dismayed by their faces, by the look they give you, if you are, then I will dismay you before them. Isn't that..., kind of a strange sort of an idea, isn't it? It's kind of a thing like, don't be intimidated by the look on their face or I will intimidate you in front of them.

Verse 18, *“And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. <sup>19</sup> They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the Lord, to deliver you.”*

Wow, these last comments of the chapter ought to really have bolstered Jeremiah's confidence a bit because, you know, Jeremiah, as we've already mentioned, got more than just a little pushback to his ministry from those who are in the highest levels of Israel's leadership.

But God says right here in these verses, I've made you a fortified city, I've made you essentially, bronze walls. And so that even though the people are going to come against you, I promise you, they will not prevail against you because I am going to deliver you. So the Lord promises Jeremiah deliverance here, but He doesn't tell him that life isn't going to be hard because life is going to get hard for Jeremiah.