

Jeremiah – Introduction

Introduction:

- What do we know most about the prophet Jeremiah?** He is the weeping prophet
- What was he weeping about?** The fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC

Jeremiah was probably born around 650-645 BC (during the last years of the reign of Manasseh, the wicked king)

- He was born in Anathoth, about 3 miles NE of Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin
- This was believed to be a Levite village

The times were very turbulent:

- 721BC – The Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes)
- There were very few survivors - basically, the Northern Kingdom came to an end
- 612BC – The Assyrians were defeated by the Babylonians, and the capital city Nineveh was destroyed
- The Assyrian general withdrew from Nineveh and reassembled for another battle
- 606BC – Battle of Carchemish – the final defeat of the Assyrian Empire (and their allies the Egyptians)

In Southern Kingdom of Israel: Josiah became king in 639 BC (after 52 years of Manasseh)

- The situation of the Southern Kingdom of Israel was terrible morally
- There were the fertility cults (prostitution in the name of religion) (*2 Kings 23.4-7*)
- Human sacrifice was growing
- Astrology was growing
- The worship of the one true God was mixed in with pagan worship (see the excellent introduction in *Beacon Bible Commentary*, IV, 303)

The situation was so bad that the Word of God was “discovered” during the reign of Josiah (*2 Kings 22.3-8*)

- The Law of Moses had been lost during the reign of Manasseh – you may remember that when Josiah read the Word of God, he tore his clothes in anguish over how far the country had drifted from the Bible

Josiah was the last good king of the Southern Kingdom of Israel – next: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah

- 606BC – 1st attack of Babylonian on Southern Kingdom of Israel
- 597BC – 2nd attack
- 586BC – 3rd attack and final attack
- The city fell and was not rebuilt until 536BC (under Zerubbabel)
- Jeremiah began his work as a prophet during the reign of Josiah

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