

Jeremiah and Ezekiel

The Book of Jeremiah – Part 1

Interpreting the Text:

1. What is your prior experience with the Book of Jeremiah? Have you read it before? What were your impressions?
2. Jeremiah was a deeply unpopular prophet in his day – is that surprising to learn? What do you think it must have felt like, especially given the huge time span of his prophetic activity?
3. There are parts of Jeremiah, and many other prophets, which people often take to be “anti-cult;” that is to say, at first glance, these passages read as decrying sacrifice or temple centralization, etc. How does it feel to read them as “anti-hypocrisy” instead? To see that Jeremiah, and many of the other prophets, are actually against the rote observation of religion at the expense of allowing the poor and needy to suffer?
4. The world in which Jeremiah was prophesying was a very dangerous one, with many external threats to Judah. What do you think it must have felt like to live in Judah at that time,? Wwith the very real threat of Babylonian conquest hanging over your head? What clues do we have from the text to tell us how Jeremiah felt?

Applying the Text:

1. How do you react to the approach of the Major Prophets, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel? Who is the most compelling to you? Would you have heeded their message?
2. Jeremiah the prophet had a prophetic career that spanned four decades of activity, under some of the most taut and precarious geopolitical conditions possible. What do you think it was like to pursue that kind of ministry for so long? Would you be able to keep up that kind of message for that period of time?
3. Jeremiah was a deeply unpopular prophet in his day – is that surprising to learn? What do you think it must have felt like, especially given the huge time span of his prophetic activity?

Yale Divinity School, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven, CT 06511
www.yalebiblestudy.org