

## **Jeremiah, the Sovereign Call of a Reluctant Prophet (Jeremiah 1:4-10)**

### **Introduction**

The prophet Jeremiah was another distinguished hero of faith in the Old Testament. He prophesied in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, starting from around 640 BC till 586 BC and beyond.

- He prophesied during the period of King Josiah, and four other kings followed Josiah, stretching all the way to the destruction of Jerusalem by the hands of the Babylonians in 586 BC.
- He lived through the Babylonian invasion, one of the most difficult periods of Israel's history.
- He was a prophet of doom as he prophesied God's judgment upon Judah.
- He was also a weeping prophet who wept for the sin and the judgment of his people (Lamentation 1:16).

What we want to focus on today is his humble beginning and God's mighty plan for his life:

- He comes from the priestly family in Israel (1:1).
- He was deeply spiritual, and fully committed to the Lord's call, and as the Lord told him not to marry he did not even marry (16:2).
- But his beginning was very humble; he was very shy and a retiring nature.
- Jeremiah is an object lesson of a man whose commitment to God enabled him, by God's grace, to overcome his natural timidity and live courageously in the face of severe opposition and tragic circumstances.

He was a chosen vessel in the hands of God. God sovereignly chose him to be a powerful instrument in His hand.

- God's sovereignty is very much seen in this passage (vv 4-10)—repeated use of "I".

The lesson we learn from this passage today is that we are never the captain of our lives. There is a sovereign God over and above us. He is our maker and the sovereign ruler over us.

- We are a people, whom God the Creator fearfully and wonderfully made.

What were the sovereign plans God had for Jeremiah?

### **God's Sovereign Knowledge and Appointment (v 5a)**

Even before Jeremiah was conceived in his mother's womb, the Lord knew him.

- This knowledge is more than acquaintance; this is God's personal interest in him, known in theology as 'foreknowledge' or divine active delight.
- Jeremiah existed in the mind and plan of God before he ever existed in his mother's womb. God told Jeremiah this so that he could walk in God's pre-ordained plan.
- It was revealed to him so that he would know God's will, be encouraged by that, and therefore align his will with God's revealed will.

## **God's Sovereign Appointment (v 5b)**

Justification and salvation of a sinner is never a man's work or choice, but it is God's sovereign will. Interestingly, this verse says God foreordains our salvation and determines our life's path.

- In Jeremiah's case, God chose him, consecrated him, and installed him as a prophet.

## **God's Sovereign Empowerment (vv 6-9)**

Jeremiah was a man of inabilities (v 6). But the Lord taught Jeremiah that man's inabilities are in fact God's possibilities.

- The task would be difficult and demanding, but since the prophet was called by God, he would have divine enablement.
- Our limitations or weaknesses are nothing before the mighty God, if we make ourselves available to the Lord, knowing His will and plan for our lives.

## **God's Sovereign Commission (v 10)**

Jeremiah's commission has both the negative and the positive. The former was done by the prophesying of divine judgment, and the latter by the prophesying of divine mercy.

- God has a mission for everyone, and He commissions His people for the same.

## **Conclusion**

The LORD God says through Isaiah the prophet, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).