

STUDY GUIDE FOR JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION.

- a. Prophecies of Jeremiah directed to Judah just prior to & after destruction of Jerusalem (586 B.C.).
- b. Jeremiah remembered as the "Weeping Prophet".

II. BACKGROUND TO BOOKS OF JEREMIAH & LAMENTATIONS.

- a. Who was Jeremiah?
 - i. Born to a priest's family. (1:1)
 - ii. Called to be a prophet while a youth. (1:6-8)
 - iii. Told not to marry. (16:1-4)
 - iv. Not very popular, beaten, put in prison.
- b. Jeremiah was a contemporary of Ezekiel, Daniel, Nahum, Zephaniah and Habakkuk.
- c. Jeremiah, writer of both books (with services of Baruch).

III. MESSAGE OF JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS.

- a. Jeremiah, a book of stern rebukes, as well as tender pleadings to a backsliding nation.
 - i. 3:12, 3:22, 6:16 and 9:1.
- b. Lamentations, an expression of deep grief over destruction of Jerusalem.
 - i. 1:3, 1:7 and 2:11.
- c. Theme of both books: "Divine Judgment".

IV. KEYS TO STUDY OF JEREMIAH.

- a. Key word—"return".
- b. Key verses—7:23, 24; 8:11, 12 and 31:31-34.
- c. Key phrase—"Thus says the Lord."

V. LESSONS/ISSUES OF JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS.

a. THE TRUE GOD VS. IDOLS.

- i. Jeremiah sets forth God as Creator and Loving Saviour of His people—(27:4b, 5).
- ii. Jeremiah's description of "useless" idols—(10:1-5).
- iii. Judah's worship of idols and their moral decay doomed the nation to captivity.

b. GENUINE RELIGION VERSUS "OUTWARD" TRAPPINGS OF RELIGION.

- i. During decline, Judah remained incredibly "religious" in own eyes.
- ii. Their religion—one of "form" and not "substance".
- iii. Some points made by Jeremiah:
 1. Knowledge of law without obedience is worthless.
 2. Temple and its sacrifices meaningless apart from surrendered life.
 3. Circumcision had to be of the heart, as well as the flesh.
- iv. Shallow religion is a real threat to the church today.

VI. CONCLUSION.

- a. At time of Jeremiah's work:
 - i. N. Kingdom (Israel) already fallen to Assyria.
 - ii. S. Kingdom (Judah) repeated sins of Israel and also fell.
 - iii. People too far into apostasy to "return" to God.