



## Part 5 of 5

Jeremiah is the only prophet on record to witness the final destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah describes it briefly in chapter 39 and again in chapter 52. However, the detailed description of Jerusalem's fall is found in the book of Lamentations, and according to Jewish tradition, is also authored by Jeremiah.

Most of the prophets in the Old Testament preach messages of judgment not only against Israel and Judah, but also against the surrounding nations. Jeremiah is no different, and in chpts. 46-51 he delivers prophecies of judgment on several foreign nations that played a hand in Judah's destruction, namely, Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, and of course, Babylon.

The ending of this book (chpt. 52) repeats much of the material from chpt. 39 which serves to underscore the somber reality of God's judgment. But also, the book ends with a brief mention of Jehoiachin, the young king who had not defied God and had surrendered to the Babylonians, survives in Babylon, and thus provides a glimmer of hope for the exiles.

Much can be learned from Jeremiah... Jeremiah hammers away at the sins of idolatry, social injustice, and religious ritualism. We need to ask whether we too have let our rituals replace our relationship with God? We need to listen carefully to the indictments brought by Jeremiah and ask ourselves what do we "idolize" instead of worshiping God?

It is also important to note that while Jeremiah was obedient to God, he was pretty much unsuccessful in reaching his people, a failure by world standards. But God does not measure success in ministry by head count, it is our faithfulness and obedience to God's will that truly matters.