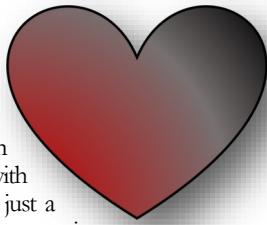


## Hypocritical & Haughty Hearts

As we've already seen through our reading of Jeremiah thus far, God was very concerned with the spiritual heart-health of His people. The law itself called for people to circumcise their hearts, and repeatedly the Israelites were rebuked for hard-heartedness. But what happens when one's heart isn't changed? How bad can it really be to not follow God with one's whole heart? Sometimes, people look at "heart-felt" religion as just a mystical experience, or another form of emotionalism. When that's the case, it doesn't seem like the repercussions of an unrepentant heart could be all that bad. At least a few times in Jeremiah, we see why that isn't the case at all. Refusing to turn our hearts to God has terrible consequences! First of all, hearts that don't truly love God's Word can lead to flagrant hypocrisy. When we know we should listen to God's Word but reject it when it doesn't fit our interests, our hearts have become hardened by hypocrisy. In Jeremiah 42, some of the remnant approached Jeremiah, asking him for a word from the Lord. When God spoke through the prophet, He warned the people not to flee to Egypt. This wasn't what the people wanted to hear, so they rejected it. Jeremiah 42:20 says, *"For you were hypocrites in your hearts when you sent me to the Lord you God..."* (NKJV). Even though they were the ones that asked for the Lord's Word, they rejected it because it wasn't what they wanted. Do you follow God's Word always, or only when it aligns with your preconceived ideas and desires?

Further, hearts that aren't turned towards God become arrogant, and lead people to destruction. In a prophecy against Moab, Jeremiah 48:29 says, *"We have heard of the pride of Moab—He is very proud—of his loftiness, his pride, and his arrogance, and the haughtiness of his heart."* These words were recorded in a prophecy concerning the destruction of Moab. Learn from these unfortunate examples. Humble yourself in your heart to hear the Lord's Word, obey it, and thus avoid His judgment and wrath!



## "That You May Grow Thereby..."

A weekly Bible reading plan



### Jeremiah 37-48

#### The Tragic Conclusion of Rebellion

##### Overview

You've probably noticed by this point, Jeremiah is a book that mixes prophecy and narrative. Much of the book contains the recorded prophecies and judgments God uttered through Jeremiah, but several chapters simply tell the story of Jeremiah and the difficulties he faced. This week, the first several chapters we will read are narrative, before returning to prophecy in the final section of the book.

Zedekiah was the last king that reigned in Judah. He had been made king after Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem in 597 B.C. and displaced the current king (Jehoiachin), thousands of troops, craftsmen, officials, and others. For a while, Zedekiah submitted to Babylon, but ultimately he was swayed more by public opinion than the warnings of Jeremiah. He sought alliance with Egypt, which proved a mistake. Babylon besieged Jerusalem again, and in 586 B.C. the city was breached and mostly destroyed. A man named Gedaliah was appointed governor, and he seemed ready to listen to Jeremiah. Sadly, there were those who still rebelled, and Gedaliah was assassinated by those who refused to submit to Babylon. Jeremiah sought to counsel these people, and warned against fleeing to Egypt, but once again his message was rejected. The people forced Jeremiah to go with them to Egypt, where they continued in idolatrous ways, receiving strong words of warning and judgment from the prophet for their rebellion and continued idolatry.

##### Suggested Reading Schedule

Monday: Jeremiah 37-38

Tuesday: Jeremiah 39-41

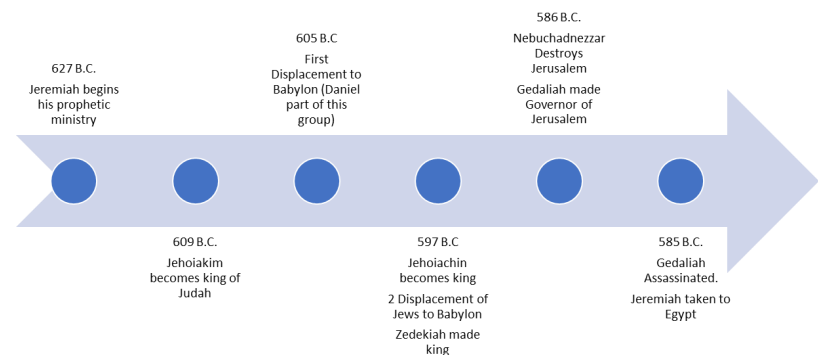
Wednesday: Jeremiah 42-43

Thursday: Jeremiah 44-46

Friday: Jeremiah 47-48

##### Questions:

1. Did Zedekiah listen to the words of the Lord that were spoken through Jeremiah? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How certain was the downfall of Jerusalem according to Jeremiah 37:10? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was Jeremiah thrown into (Jer. 38)? Who rescued him? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Approximately how long did Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem last? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did the Babylonians force Jeremiah to stay in Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_
6. When Gedaliah became governor, what city did he rule from? \_\_\_\_\_
7. The remnant that went to Egypt was rebuked for worshipping \_\_\_\_\_
8. What three nations does Jeremiah prophecy against in chapters 46-48? \_\_\_\_\_

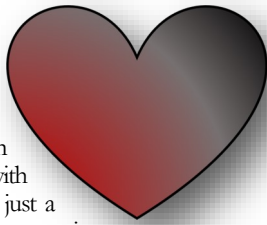


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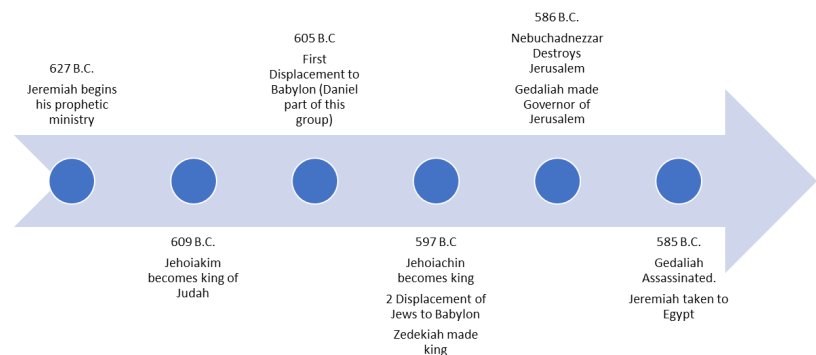
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