

# Herald of Covenant Promise

## INTRODUCTION

The prophet Jeremiah began his ministry during the reforms of King Josiah. He witnessed the short-lived reforms in Judah and prophesied of a coming exile at the hands of the Babylonians. The prophecies and laments about this historic event are contained the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. In this lesson, Dr. Lawson examines these books to direct our attention to the promises of God during one of the most calamitous times in the history of Israel.

## LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Reference various passages that teach the doctrines of grace in Jeremiah
- Recognize the significance of the promise of the new covenant in Jeremiah
- Reference various passages that teach the doctrines of grace in Lamentations

## KEY IDEAS

- The book of Jeremiah begins with an emphatic statement of God's sovereign election in Jeremiah's call to be a prophet to God's people Israel.
- The book of Jeremiah clearly testifies to the moral inability of man, who cannot choose good because his heart is set on evil.
- The promise of the new covenant in the book of Jeremiah teaches that saving faith is a spiritual reality that God works in the heart; it isn't a mere external profession.

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## REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Before the Video

#### *What Do You Think?*

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- Is there any way an ordinary Christian can identify with someone called to an extraordinary office such as a prophet like Isaiah or Jeremiah?
- How have you faced the trials you have undergone in your life? Have you taken peace in knowing who God is in the midst of them?

#### *Scripture Reading*

*Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness." For thus says the LORD: "David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to make sacrifices forever." The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: "Thus says the LORD: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers.*

—Jeremiah 33:14–19

- Is this prophecy from Jeremiah fulfilled? How?

### During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

#### *Jeremiah's Call and the Problem of the Heart*

0:00–12:02

- When did God consecrate Jeremiah to the office of a prophet? What doctrine of grace does this affirm?

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- Why does it not make sense to say that God’s foreknowledge is the result of His looking down the corridors of time?
  - What two illustrations, in the form of questions, does Jeremiah use to show man’s moral inability to do good when he is accustomed to doing evil?
  - How does Jeremiah describe the human heart? What hope do we have?

*The New Covenant*

12:02–24:12

- What is significant about the tense of the verb in Jeremiah 31:3?
- What does God promise to do in the new covenant? What will be the result of this?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- Jeremiah 1:5 reads, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.” What does this mean? What does it not mean? What other way does the Bible use the verb *to know*?
- What is someone’s falling away from a profession of the Christian faith evidence of?

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- How does the book of Lamentations give you confidence that God will help you persevere in the faith?

## PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for His electing grace and His power to carry it out.
- Confess ways in which you doubt God's persevering love in times of trial.
- Thank God for the new covenant in which He has written His law upon your heart.
- Ask God for strength to endure during trials and remembrance of His covenant love.