

Outline of JEREMIAH, a Trimark video

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“I felt the fire of his word within me and cannot hold it in.”
-a paraphrase of Jeremiah 20:9 voiced by Jeremiah in this video.

Jeremiah, Trimark Video, 2000. Available on Amazon.com. Part of the same Bible video series by Lux Vide, also sometimes called the TBS or TNT Bible series. Starring Patrick Dempsey at Jeremiah. Jeremiah is portrayed as a sensitive young man, not the raging old prophet of popular imagination.

Approximate Running Time: 91 minutes.

Age Range: 3rd through Adult. Some scenes appropriate for younger children, some not.

Jeremiah tells the story of Israel in the 7th Century BC just before Israel was conquered and taken into captivity. This is a good video revealing the flesh and blood Jeremiah unburied by his long speeches in scripture. Jeremiah does a number of dramatic and symbolic things to get his message across. He was reluctant to speak against his people's sin but couldn't hold it in and so was oppressed by his own people for telling them of the coming consequences for their unfaithfulness. Yet he brings a message of hope...that God himself would save them. In the video,

Before using the video, I recommend that you briefly introduce the names of the main characters and the various kingdoms and kings. Some of the Hebrew names are difficult to understand at first and their names are not well-introduced. I also strongly suggest you talk throughout the video reminding students, especially younger ones, who is who, and what is happening. A brief timeline of this period of Israel's history will be helpful, as would reference to a map to show where Babylon is located.

The section numbers are my own and the minutes of duration are approximate. The entire movie is 91 minutes long. If showing it in two parts, it breaks better if you show the first 45-50 minutes or so and save the last 30 minutes for the second session. I've made some "skip" suggestions in the outline which you can fast forward through if pressed for time.

Approximately 6 Minutes:

- 1) Opening scene: King Josiah's workmen find scrolls of the Law while renovating the Temple.
- 2) Boy Jeremiah is introduced with his father Hilkiah, a priest at the Temple. Hilkiah says he is taking Jeremiah to Temple for special Passover.
- 3) Inside the Temple we hear Hilkiah tell Jeremiah about the Covenant. Josiah comes.
- 4) Jeremiah dreams of encounter with God in the form of young girl in the Temple. Receives prophet's call. Wakes up and smells his hand (incense from Temple dream).

Approximately 10 minutes:

(If you are pressed for time you could fast forward through sections 5-9)

- 5) 16 years later in Babylon.... we see King Nebuchanezzar desiring Jerusalem.
- 6) Jeremiah is seen learning from his father.
- 7) Jeremiah and girlfriend Judith.
- 8) Jeremiah celebrates Sabbath at home
- 9) Jeremiah announces he wants to marry Judith. Jeremiah and Judith overhear King's son who wants his money back which he had loaned to Judith's father. Jeremiah promises to save Judith and family from debtor's prison. (this is a metaphor for what God will do for Israel.)
- 10) Jeremiah meets old man on road. Old man is God. Points out olive tree whose season (time) it is to bear fruit (become a prophet). "It is time for you to speak."

Approximately 8 minutes:

- 11) Jeremiah and Father in Jerusalem. Jeremiah goes to hear new king pronounce judgment on Judith's family. He makes them slaves for 7 years to pay debt.

- 12) Jeremiah helps Judith escape with relatives.
- 13) Jeremiah goes to the Temple, see injustices all around, sin all around. (Can you name them all?) Jeremiah smashes false gods.
- 14) Jeremiah dreams of going to Temple. God says “How to do good they know not. You will speak for me.”

Approximately 10 minutes:

- 15) Jeremiah meets father in Temple to offer his first sacrifice as a priest. Puts on priestly robes. Josiah approaches to offer the sacrifice to Jeremiah. Jeremiah sees various “God” appears in the crowd to encourage him to speak judgment on the King Jehoachin.
- 16) Judgment: “You worship other gods then go to the Temple.” “Abomination.”
- 17) Father Hilkiyah is told by King not to bring Jeremiah anymore to the Temple.
- 18) Men attack Jeremiah as he sleeps.
- 19) Jeremiah leaves Jerusalem. On the road he meets Ephraim (father’s slave?) and tells him “God himself is calling me. ..I felt the fire within.”

Approximately 5 minutes:

- 20) Jeremiah meets up with God in the wilderness. The pot tips over and lays north and south. (The Kingdom was split into two kingdoms: Israel in north, Judah in south.) God pronounces judgment on both. God tells Jeremiah he cannot marry Judith.
- 21) Jeremiah prays not to have to do this alone.
- 22) Jeremiah discovers Baruch, a Temple scribe, who is following him. Baruch becomes Jeremiah’s scribe.
- 23) We see Baruch reading Jeremiah’s/God’s words in Jerusalem. “God is sending the King of Babylon to punish Jerusalem.”
- 24) King Jehoachin burns the scroll.

(AT THIS POINT YOU ARE ABOUT 45 MINUTES INTO THE MOVIE)

Approximately 15 minutes:

(This is the one section you could leave out and just summarize -if pressed for time.)

- 25) General Shephan is introduced as the main bad guy. He conspires with Bettaniah who will become the next King when Jehoachin dies. Bettaniah takes the name Zedekiah.
- 26) Jehoachin submits to King Nebuchadnezzar and must strip the gold from the Temple to pay him off. Leaders are taken by soldiers into exile back to Babylon.
- 27) Zedekiah gives his crown to Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah comes to speak with Zedekiah and tells him to “turn to God.” Jeremiah has a wooden yoke around his neck to signal the humbling submission the people must endure. A false prophet by the name of Hananiah breaks the yoke. Jeremiah tells Zedekiah he will become a slave. For this, Zedekiah has Jeremiah imprisoned in a cage.

(AT THIS POINT YOU ARE 1 HOUR INTO THE MOVIE and have 31 minutes left)

Approximately 20 minutes:

(if pressed for time fast-forward 28 through 32 and save about 10 minutes)

- 28) Babylon comes ... and people realize Jeremiah’s prophecy was true. Jeremiah says to surrender to Babylon and trust God to rescue them.
- 29) We see Baruch spreading the message to surrender to the Babylonians.
- 30) General Shephan and Zedekiah debate what to do. Zedekiah decided to get God’s favor by freeing all the slaves (which includes Judith’s family).
- 31) We see Jeremiah telling Judith that her family is free, but then General Shephan arrests Jeremiah and takes him to Jerusalem. Judith follows and is killed by a guard in Jeremiah’s cell.
- 32) Jeremiah prays to God
- 33) 12 months later, just as Jeremiah said, the Babylonians return to punish Zedekiah.
- 34) Jeremiah is released from cell and sees people starving as Babylonians besiege the city.

35) Jeremiah is brought before Zedekiah who wants answers. Jeremiah says, “if you want answers, turn to God.”

Approximately 8 minutes:

- 36) Jeremiah sees Baruch preaching to the people.
- 37) The General and Zedekiah plot and argue.
- 38) Jeremiah offers words of hope to the people.
- 39) General Shephan beats Jeremiah in front of the people.
- 40) Jeremiah is thrown into cistern (like a well).
- 41) One of the king’s eunuchs sees Jeremiah and pleads to King to release him.
- 42) Jeremiah comes to the King who asks how to be saved, and Jeremiah tells him to “obey God, ...make your life a living monument to God.”

Approximately 12 minutes:

- 43) Jeremiah topples the false god which Zedekiah has kept in the palace and tells Zedekiah he will become a slave.
- 44) Advisors to the King who are sympathetic to Jeremiah speak with Zedekiah.
- 45) Jeremiah buys a field as a sign of hope in the face of the oncoming Babylonian attack. “I will make a new covenant ...and written in their hearts.” Jeremiah is put in a cell during the attack.

(if pressed for time you could end the video here)

- 46) Babylonians break into Jerusalem. Zedekiah is captured and taken to Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon.
- 47) Nebuchadnezzar asks about the prophet Jeremiah who foretold all these things.
- 48) Nebuchadnezzar kills the sons of Zedekiah and puts Zedekiah’s eyes out. (this happens quickly but is a tad gruesome.
- 49) Jeremiah escapes from his cell in Jerusalem. Surveys the wreckage of Jerusalem and says, “next time the Temple will be built in the hearts of men.”

Presentation suggestions:

1. Highlight key scenes in this outline and add questions in the margins of this outline to pause the video and ask.
2. Take your time showing the video. It hangs together pretty well, so you probably shouldn’t skip much.
3. Begin class with a map showing Jerusalem and Babylon. Discuss the precarious geographic location of Israel/Jerusalem amid the great kingdoms of that time.
4. Browse through the book of Jeremiah before or after the video to read actual scripture.
5. Use your pause button frequently and make comments. Don’t be afraid to stop the video, or go back and watch a segment again.

See my “Teaching with Video” lesson plan tips at <http://www.sundaysoftware.com/video-tips.htm>

Some questions for discussion: *(ask these before the video so they know what to look for)*

- Why was Jeremiah reluctant to become a prophet and confront the authorities?
- How would you sum up God’s message through Jeremiah?
- What did Jeremiah have to give up in order to follow God’s call?
- What in his life had prepared Jeremiah to receive God’s call?
- How did Jeremiah describe his call, and how did he say that God presence and word felt within him?
- How did Jeremiah’s visuals/actions help get his message across? (ex. the yoke)
- Pick a problem in your community and describe something you could DO to get people’s attention about that problem.
- How are we like Judith’s family? Imprisoned, in debt.
- What could God be calling YOU to speak out against?
- How do we warn people today of the consequences of their sin?