

Jeremiah

An outline of the movie by Neil MacQueen

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Jeremiah is a very good movie. It does a good job of capturing Jeremiah, the colorful and troubled prophet. The movie/video, was produced by LuxVide and TNT, and is part of the “Bible Series” of videos that include Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, Esther, and Solomon.

Jeremiah the Dreamer is portrayed by **Patrick Dempsey** who later starred in Grey’s Anatomy as “Dr. Dreamy”. Other famous actors in the movie include Oliver Reed and Klaus Brandauer. Like the others in this series, Jeremiah is a fairly faithful rendition of the scriptures. It tells the story of the finding of the law by Josiah, and the impending attack on Jerusalem by Babylon –about which Jeremiah warns. But unlike other prophets, Jeremiah wants the nation to submit to Babylon as punishment.

We are also introduced to two other characters, Judith and Baruch, both of whom hold a high place in Jewish tradition and extra-biblical writings. Many of the stories within the story are good fodder for discussion. Trying to pay Judith’s father’s debt, for example, is a theological “sign.” A portent of the problem. The story raises the profound question of “punishment” ...and to what degree does God bring about events, or let them happen. Jeremiah is a prophet who addresses the government and its leaders.

The movie is about 80 minutes long. Hopefully this outline will help you find your way through it. The ‘numbers’ are my own for the purposes of ordering the parts. I’ve created sections -each “about” 10 minutes long, though I won’t guarantee that. They are ‘logical’ breaks in the story. I’ve also included some of the odd/interesting highlights.

1. Opening: Men find scrolls in Temple reconstruction. King Josiah.
2. Boy Jeremiah, descendant of Aaron goes to Temple for Passover.
3. Inside the Temple. Teaching the law to children.
4. Josiah parade. Sacrifice at the Temple
5. Jeremiah dreams of an angel/girl. Prophet’s call. Smells hand.

6. Babylon 16 years later. The King wants Jerusalem.
7. Young Jeremiah learns
8. Jeremiah and girlfriend
9. Sabbath meal at home. “Babylon will crush us.”
10. Jeremiah wants to marry Judith
11. Jeremiah and Judith overhear soldiers; try to pay Judith’s father’s debt.
12. Jere meets old man. Olive tree in season. “God is in a hurry.”
13. “It is time for you to speak.” Jeremiah: “who are you?”

14. Father and Jere in Jerusalem
15. Jere hears Josiah speak about family debt and 7 yrs of servitude
16. Judith escapes with family
17. Jeremiah goes to Temple
18. Jere sees injustice and sin outside the Temple. Girls arguing become animals.
19. Smashing gods.
20. Jere dreams of going to Temple “How to do good they know not” “You will speak for me”

21. Jere goes to Temple to meet Father, puts on priest’s robes
22. Josiah comes
23. Jere hears old man speak judgment, in front of King Jehoiakim
24. Girl/angel says “Shall I not punish them?”
25. Jeremiah....”Choose to speak the word of God, truly execute justice.”
26. Father Hikiah is told by King not to bring Jeremiah back to the Temple.
27. Men beat Jere.

28. Jere leaves Jerusalem, meets Ephraim
29. “God himself is calling me...I felt fire within”
30. Jere in the wilderness... the wind blows.
31. Man appears. The overturned pot. “The north will be destroyed.”
32. You shall not take a wife, Jere.” “Go proclaim to Jerusalem”
33. “Lord, do not make me do this alone.” God sends Baruch to Jeremiah
34. Baruch finds Jeremiah. Baruch was a scribe in the Temple.
35. We see Baruch reading Jeremiah’s words in Jerusalem about the King of Babylon coming to punish.
36. King’s friend brings Jere’s scroll to King Jehoiachin

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37. Jeremiah see Babylonian soldiers coming. See Nebuchadnezer.
38. General Shefan (Oliver Reed) conspires with the next king.
39. King Jehoiachin submits to Nebuchadnezer.
40. Zedekiah is crowned the new king by Neb.
41. Jeremiah goes to speak to Zedekiah.
42. Zedekiah debates what to do, allies with Egypt
43. Jere says "turn to God to be free"
44. Jere puts yoke around his neck. "Accept your yoke of slavery... and turn to God instead of your enemies." Repent!
45. Competing prophet Hananiah says to use force.
46. Jere says King will be a slave
47. Jeremiah is arrested and hung in a cage.

48. Babylon comes "prophecy was true!"
49. Jere says "surrender"
50. Baruch spreads the word to surrender to Babylon
51. General Shefan and Zedekiah. Zed frees the slaves
52. Jere goes to Judith, "King has freed your family"
53. Jere kisses Judith, but he dumps her.
54. General arrests Jere, takes to Jerusalem

55. Judith finds Jeremiah in jail.
56. Jeremiah says "God must tear it down before building it up again."
57. Judith is killed by guard.
58. Jere prays to God

59. 12 months later Babylon returns to Jerusalem.
60. Jere is released from cell, people are starving
61. "If you want answers, turn to God"
62. Jere sees Baruch preaching
63. Gen Shefan and King Zedekiah discuss what to do
64. Words of Hope from Jere
65. Gen Shefan confronts Jere
66. A beating (this is where my outline ends!)

Presentation suggestions...

1. Highlight key scenes in the outline. Add questions in the margins of this outline.
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. Go to www.sundaysoftware.com/articles and look for our free guide to teaching with video. It has many suggestions.

Some questions for discussion...

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 God feel within him?
How did Jeremiah's visuals/actions help get his message across? (ex. the yoke)
How are we like Judith's family? Imprisoned, in debt.
What are some examples in history of nations being 'punished' for doing wrong?
What events or problems do we have in the world today and how might God be speaking to us through them? What's God's message to us in the middle of the energy crisis, for example?
What does the story of Jeremiah say about leaders, kings, priests?
What does it say *to* our leaders?
How could you be like Jeremiah? Where could you speak God's word? What messages do you need to start delivering?

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