



Study Guide: Jeremiah – Chapter 36

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This study guide provides an educational overview of Jeremiah Chapter 36 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Jeremiah Chapter 36 is a pivotal moment in the prophetic ministry of Jeremiah, illustrating the tension between divine revelation and political authority. This chapter records the dramatic episode where Jeremiah's words, dictated by God, are written down and read publicly, only to be met with rejection and censorship by King Jehoiakim. As part of the larger narrative, this chapter highlights the challenges of proclaiming God's message in a hostile environment and sets the stage for the unfolding judgment on Judah. Readers should watch for the interplay between prophecy, political power, and the written word as a means of divine communication.

Context

Jeremiah 36 is situated within the broader context of Jeremiah's prophetic ministry during the late 7th and early 6th centuries BC, a time of political instability and looming Babylonian invasion. The immediate literary context follows Jeremiah's warnings to Judah about impending judgment due to their covenant unfaithfulness. The chapter takes place in the reign of King Jehoiakim, who is resistant to Jeremiah's message. The key figures include Jeremiah, the prophet; Baruch, his scribe; and Jehoiakim, the king of Judah. This setting reflects the covenantal framework where God calls His people to repentance, but their leaders reject His warnings, leading to national calamity.

Outline

The chapter begins with Jeremiah instructing Baruch to write down all the words God has spoken to him. This written scroll is then read publicly in the temple, exposing the sins of Judah and the coming judgment. Following this, the king's officials hear the reading and report it to Jehoiakim. The king summons Baruch and Jeremiah, and as the scroll is read to him, Jehoiakim reacts with hostility, cutting the scroll and burning it piece by piece. Despite this, Jeremiah is commanded to rewrite the scroll with additional words, signaling



the persistence of God’s message regardless of human opposition.

Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1–3: Jeremiah instructs Baruch to write down all the words God has spoken since the beginning of his ministry. This act of recording is significant as it preserves the prophetic message beyond oral proclamation.

Verses 4–8: Baruch reads the scroll publicly in the temple during a fast day, ensuring that the message reaches a broad audience, including the leaders and people gathered there.

Verses 9–12: The officials hear the reading and report to King Jehoiakim, who summons Baruch and Jeremiah. This shows the political awareness and concern regarding the prophetic message.

Verses 13–19: Jehoiakim listens to the scroll being read but responds by cutting it with a knife and burning it, symbolizing his rejection of God’s word and authority.

Verses 20–26: Despite the destruction of the scroll, God commands Jeremiah to rewrite the words with additional prophecies, emphasizing the unstoppable nature of divine revelation.

Key Themes

One key theme is the power and permanence of God’s word, which cannot be destroyed by human hands. The chapter also highlights the conflict between divine authority and earthly power, as seen in Jehoiakim’s defiance. Another theme is the role of the written word in preserving and disseminating prophecy, underscoring the importance of scripture. Additionally, the chapter reveals the consequences of rejecting God’s message, foreshadowing judgment on Judah.

Cross-References

Jeremiah 36 connects with several other biblical passages that deepen its meaning. The destruction of the scroll recalls the rejection of God’s word in 2 Kings 22–23, where reforms are initiated by rediscovering the law. The theme of God’s word enduring opposition is echoed in Isaiah 40:8, which affirms that “the word of our God will stand forever.” The defiance of Jehoiakim parallels Pharaoh’s resistance in Exodus 5, illustrating a pattern of rulers opposing God’s messengers. Finally, the command to rewrite the scroll



anticipates the preservation of Scripture despite persecution, a theme found in Revelation 10:8-11.

Application

For modern discipleship, Jeremiah 36 challenges believers to value and uphold the authority of God's word even when it is unpopular or opposed. It encourages perseverance in sharing truth despite rejection or hostility. The chapter also invites reflection on the role of scripture in personal and communal faith, emphasizing the need to engage with God's message actively. Furthermore, it warns against the temptation to ignore or alter uncomfortable truths, calling for integrity and courage in responding to God's call.

Summary

Jeremiah Chapter 36 portrays a dramatic episode where God's prophetic word is written, publicly proclaimed, and violently rejected by King Jehoiakim. Despite human efforts to suppress it, the divine message persists and expands, underscoring the enduring power of scripture and the inevitability of God's judgment. This chapter serves as a powerful reminder of the tension between divine truth and worldly authority, encouraging faithfulness to God's word in the face of opposition.