Jeremiah 1

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Preacher: Paul Levy

[0:00] And turn in your Bibles to the book of Jeremiah. The book of Jeremiah. Which if you've got a church Bible and you want to grab one,!

And I don't know if Jeremiah's reputation is pretty miserable. Michelangelo, I wonder whether we can have it on the screen, Michelangelo painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.
I don't know if you've been there. It's Peter's Chapel. It's an amazing scene. And he painted different characters from the Bible. And so can you see Isaiah?
Look at Isaiah. He looks smart, doesn't he? Isaiah looks noble. Quite an attractive fellow. Then you've got Ezekiel. Ezekiel, he's animated.
He's ready for action. Can you see that? And then you've got Zechariah. And Zechariah gets to read the Bible. He looks engaged, doesn't he?
[1:23] He's thoughtful. And then you get Jeremiah. Jeremiah. Melancholy. And it's no wonder, is it, that Jeremiah is called the weeping prophet.

But as I've kind of studied Jeremiah over these past few months, I've grown to love him. Yes, there are elements which express deep, deep emotion and deep, deep sadness.
And yet, throughout this book, I think we're going to see wonderful glimpses of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel that we believe in.
Why study Jeremiah? Let me give you four reasons. The first reason is that I'm not sure there is a book in the Bible that is more personally engaging or consistently moving than the prophet Jeremiah.
If you think that engaging with God and worshiping God is cold or detached or formal, you're going to be in for the shock of your life when you look at Jeremiah.
[2:28] The second reason that I think we need to study Jeremiah as a church is because it's clearly written to such a time as this. Jeremiah lives on the cusp, on the edge of God's people being taken into exile in Babylon.

They're about to be kicked out of the land. And his ministry straddles complacency, gathering gloom, impending disaster, disaster itself, and the aftermath of exile.
He walks us through that path like no one else in the Bible. It's a time of massive, threatening change, a frightening time.
A time such as this. None of us know exactly, do we, how the next few years are going to pan out, economically, socially, politically, religiously.
None of us know how things are going to work themselves out for the church of God in this land in the next few years. But it is a real mistake to think that, to miss that we are living at a time of traumatic societal change.
[3:40] Societal norms on sexuality have been revolutionized in the past 40 years. Bills are being introduced into Parliament that would have been unthinkable, even illegal, in generations past.

Technology has recalibrated, doesn't it, how we connect with people and how we live our lives. But also, our jobs are under great threat, aren't they?
From technology. There is an old world that is unraveling. And Jeremiah is in the Bible, in part, to help us to cope with times like this. The third reason for studying it, I think it's unusual, because no other book in the Old Testament gives us as great an insight into the incarnation of the Lord Jesus. Into the coming, into this world of the Lord Jesus. Here is a prophet, Jeremiah, whose words are his own, and yet they are identified frequently as the words of God himself.
At times, as I've been reading it, I couldn't tell you the difference between the words of God and the words of a Jeremiah. Here is a prophet who feels what God feels. Here is a prophet who goes through the pain of his people like no other.

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[5:04] Here is a prophet that lives out, acts out his message, and loves through his message. And lastly, a reason for studying Jeremiah is no other book in the Bible gives us as much insight as to how God works through his word.

The spoken word of the prophet. The written word of the prophet. And his scribe Baruch. And ultimately, the living word of the prophet.
Jeremiah actually gives us a unique insight into how the Bible was put together. And so Jeremiah preaches, and his scribe Baruch writes down the first edition.
Only to watch King Jehoiakim carefully slice it up and throw it in the fire. Baruch immediately starts work on the second expanded edition.
And it seems that when Jeremiah goes into Egypt with those who refuse to go to Babylon, Jeremiah produces and Baruch produce a third version of their work. Just for the Egyptian exile.
[6:06] Which then kind of finds its way into the Greek version of the New Testament. Before Jeremiah and Baruch produce a final, a definitive, a fourth version of their work. And it finds itself into the Masoretic text and into our scriptures.

All the way through, what I'm saying to you is this. God is superintending. Overruling his purposes. Overruling the process by which Jeremiah's words are the very words of God.
And so what we'll find in Jeremiah is that it's emotionally demanding. It's intellectually engaging. And it's personally challenging. Because this is the word of God.
Chapter 1 this week. Chapters 2 to 6 next week. So there's some homework, alright? Read chapters 2 to 6, alright? Chapter 1. Chapter 1.
Jeremiah lives, verses 1 to 3, in messy times. In messy times. Let me read those words. Words of Jeremiah, the son of Elkiah. One of the priests who were in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin.
[7:12] To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah, the son of Ammon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah. And until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

Until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month. Every detail is important. What follows are the words of a real historical person called Jeremiah and the words of Yahweh.
And the two are indistinguishable. And right from the very off, the word, word, dominates Jeremiah. Jeremiah. It's there in verse 1, verse 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 17.
Sometimes it's a noun, it's translated word. Sometimes it's translated spoke or proclaim. But right from the off, in chapter 1, we are being told that Jeremiah is a book about God's word.
Spoken into a deeply messy world. And for Jeremiah, it really was a messy world. Jeremiah was born in the long, dark reign of King Manasseh, who was the clear winner of the worst king that Judah ever had.
[8:29] He then lived through the not much better, but mercifully short reign of Manasseh's son Ammon. Jeremiah began his ministry in the time of the reforming King Josiah.

Josiah and Jeremiah, they are rough contemporaries, brothers in arms, in the battle to discover the message of Deuteronomy for God's people.
So Josiah kicks off his reform program in 6 through 9 BC. And Jeremiah is commissioned in the events we're going to look at in 6 through 7 BC. The same year that the last great Assyrian king, Asher Bernapal, dies and the world begins to change.
Then the book of Deuteronomy is rediscovered. Jeremiah lives then through the stupid death of the godly but politically naive King Josiah. At the hands of the Egyptians.
He sees the rise of the rebellion of the Babylonians. The rebellion and the subjection of Jehoiakim and Jehoiakim. Many of the good and the great, like Ezekiel and Daniel, they get carted off to Babylon.
[9:40] He lives through the pointless rebellion of Zedekiah. And he lives then through the final fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar in 587. Jeremiah goes with the stubborn and rebellious rebels to Egypt.

And he serves there for the rest of his days. There's an unraveling. Don't worry about the details. It's an unraveling of the royal world. It's the disintegration of what has been a stable universe.
And he was a priest from Anathor. Which complicates things even further. This is a slightly dangerous illustration. But my associate minister is away.
In Northern Ireland, politics is ethnically defined. You can argue with me about that. If you are an ethnic Protestant, you are assumed to be a Unionist and a Rangers football fan.

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And you want a constitutional link between the UK and Ireland. You want them to stay together. If you are an ethnic Catholic, it is assumed that you are a nationalist and a Celtic fan.
[10:51] And you favor an all-island state. And so Protestants, who come out as nationalists and Celtic fans, and Catholics, who identify themselves as Unionists, are basically regarded as traitors.

Politics is ethnically defined. It's the same here. This is the hint we've got in Jeremiah. It's from Anathor. Why does he tell us that? Jeremiah is a priest from Anathoth, a Levitical city.
It's got a long history. And if you look up in your Bibles, it relates to something that happened in Joshua 21. Anathoth is Abiathar country. Do you remember him? Abiathar was a priest in David's time.
And he vies with Zadok for preeminence of the kingdom. They fight about it. He backs Adonijah rather than Solomon in 1 Kings 1.
And it ends up in tears for them both. Abiathar picked the wrong horse. And his disgruntled family, they are marginalized. They spend the rest of their days grumbling back in Anathoth.
[12:03] And so Jeremiah comes from that part of the world. He comes from a priestly family who've got an axe to grind against the descendants of Solomon.

And what does he do? He embarks on a life of preaching. Where the priests get a bit part role in tandem with a Davidic king, Josiah, whose reforms are word-centered rather than priest-driven.
He's hardly popular. He's seen as a traitor back home. And with that said, the stage is set for Jeremiah's commissioning in verses 4 to 10, which is a unique commission.
But before we get there, I want you to make sure that you get the point of the first three verses.
Already it's been flagged up that Jeremiah lives in a time of turmoil.
Jeremiah's ministry lasted 40 years through multiple regime and government changes.
[13:08] And with the possible exception of Josiah, nobody ever wanted him around. In fact, as we'll see on multiple occasions, they tried to get rid of him.

And that is the basic pattern of his ministry. And that, the Bible teaches us, is the basic pattern of what it means to be a Christian.
Which is evident throughout the whole of the Bible. Think of the Gospels and the Lord Jesus. One of the most striking things, I think, for you and I, when we read the Gospels with fresh eyes, is just how awkward Jesus is.
The sheer awkwardness of the Lord Jesus. And the way that he never seems to answer a question directly. The way that he puts people on the wrong foot.
The way that Jesus refuses to conform. The strength of reaction that he provokes. And leading up to Jesus throughout the Old Testament. And flowing from Jesus into the New Testament.
[14:15] That is always the case. Living as a follower of Jesus. Never leads to straightforward popularity. Sooner or later, the rub will come.

And faithfulness and popularity can never breathe the same air for very long. And so today, in your office. In your school.
On your street. In your friendships. Sooner or later, it always becomes clear that faithfulness and popularity are uneasy bedfellows.
And for some of us this morning, popularity is a very alluring mistress, isn't she?
We long for it. There's something in many of us, if not all of us. Which along with a desire to serve Jesus, yes, and bring glory to him.
[15:18] We would love to be recognized and affirmed and applauded. Or perhaps even just to be liked. And the entire book of Jeremiah, starting with the first three verses, is a call to die to that.

That to set ourselves to be faithful followers of Jesus. And leaders who are willing to take whatever comes with that.
Because faithfulness and popularity can never hang around together for very long. And that becomes increasingly clear in his unique commission, verses 4 to 10.
Verses 4 to 10. Often this passage is given to ministers or Christian workers. That God has set you apart for the role that you've been given.
God calls ministers and preachers. That kind of thing. That's how it kind of used to be preached. If you look at kind of sermons from the early 20th century. That changed slightly in the last few years.
There's another tendency where people go to Jeremiah.
[16:31] And they say, well, Jeremiah was a prophet. And if you remember, in the New Testament, we are all prophets. And so this applies to everyone. I think both those are wrong turns

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at the traffic lights.

The problem with that is that Jeremiah is asked to do something in these verses that I don't think anyone else in the Old Testament is asked to do. Or anyone else in the Bible with one glorious exception.
So look with me at verses 4 and 5. Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. And before you were born, I consecrated you.
I appointed you a prophet to the nations. That is a remarkable appointment. A prophet to the nations. I appointed you to be. So think of the other prophets.
Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Nahum. They did have a few words to speak to the nations. But they weren't given this global commission. Nor were they told, before you were born, I formed you.
[17:40] In the womb, I knew you. And before you were born, I set you apart as holy. Of course, these verses do tell us, don't they, that life begins at conception as well, in a secondary way.

They tell us that God is intimately involved with the creation of every human being. It's why we stand against abortion. But it's much more than that.
This is God saying something specific to Jeremiah as he commissions him. It's not an accident. That the only parallel to these words are taken from Psalm 139. Which is written by David the Messiah, God's king.
As he describes his realization that God has known him in the beginning. But even Psalm 139 is eclipsed by Jeremiah 1. Because Jeremiah is chosen like Abraham.
Do you remember in Genesis 18? And he is known like Israel are in Amos 3 verse 2. It's heightened language in the Bible.
[18:42] It refers to kind of key players in Scripture. Key moments in his unfolding plan. And Jeremiah feels the weight of this, of what God is saying. And he says, oh Lord God, I don't know how to speak.

Verse 6. I'm only a youth. At first glance, you think, that sounds like Moses. Do you remember Moses? Moses trying to wriggle out of his role as God's spokesman in Exodus.
That he didn't want to go to Pharaoh. In Exodus 3 to 6, Moses is eminently qualified. But he is reluctant to go.
But here I think Jeremiah's reticence is understandable. There's no hint that Jeremiah doesn't want to do it. He's just blown away by the responsibility.
Which explains why the Lord doesn't get angry with him like he did with Moses in Exodus. Jeremiah experiences God's tenderness and encouragement. So look at verses 7 and 8.
[19:51] God says to him, don't say. Don't say that I'm only a youth. For to all to whom I would send you, you shall go. And whatever I command you, you shall speak.

Do not be afraid of them. For I am with you to deliver you, declares the Lord. God reassures him and says to him, your mission will be unlimited. You'll go wherever I send you.
But it also comes with universal protection. And at this point in verse 9, the links with Moses, they become even more clear. Even more direct.
Look at verse 9. Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, behold, I put my words in your mouth. Do you remember what God had said to Moses?
To John 18, I will raise up for them a prophet from you. Like you among the brothers. That's what Moses was promised. And I'm going to put my words in his mouth.
[20:50] And he shall speak to them all that I command them. Now God says to Jeremiah, you are someone that fits the bill. You will be someone, Jeremiah, whose words will match perfectly my words.

Someone whose obedience will be consistent. You will be a prophet like Moses. And this elevated view of Jeremiah is supported by verse 10. See, I've set this day, you this day, over nations, over kingdoms, to pluck up, to break down, to destroy, to overthrow, to build and to plant.
The images there are picture language, aren't they? It's a picture of farming and building. Plucking and planting. You're going to be in the job of construction. Smashing things down and building them up.
You're going to be in the business of warfare, destroying and overthrowing. Primarily, Jeremiah's role will be negative. Can you see that in verse 10? There's four negative verbs.
But it will not be without hope. There's two positives as well in there. But the most striking thing about those verses is the remarkable authority that is delegated to Jeremiah.

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[22:04] Do you see that? Over kings and nations. This prophet is in a league of his own. In fact, those of us who know our Bibles, you think of Psalm 2.

In Psalm 2, verse 8, it says, Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage, the ends of the earth your possession. You'll break them with a rod of iron, dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel.
And so what is going on here in Jeremiah 1? It's setting us up to read the rest of the book in what turns out to be a really surprising way. This young man, he's probably about 18, is appointed by God himself to be the promised prophet like Moses.
But he's one who's a prophet to all the nations, who speaks with the very word of God, who has authority to uproot and demolish and destroy, as well as sowing seeds of hope.
And already there are signs, aren't there, that this ministry will be lonely and painful. That this prophet, like no other, will suffer pain like no other.
[23:15] And Jeremiah is being introduced to you as the suffering prophet. Much like the figure in Isaiah, do you remember, is introduced as a suffering servant. And David in the Psalms is the suffering king.

And so Jeremiah, the prophet, the main speaker, and the main character in the book, he is the true Moses, a true prophet like Moses.
But actually, as we read Jeremiah, we see that he is an anticipation of a greater prophet who is to come. Because these words find their fulfillment, their true fulfillment, in the one who is the word.
Jeremiah's experience of pain and sharing in the punishment of Judah, they'll find their fulfillment in the incarnation of the one who will take our guilt and our punishment upon himself at the cross.
Jeremiah's message of salvation will not only be proclaimed, but ultimately will be embodied and achieved by the one whom we know to be the Lord Jesus Christ.
[24:34] And the words that God speaks to Jeremiah should in the first place be read as a description ahead of time, an anticipation of the coming of Jesus, the Son of God, the true prophet.

They apply first to Jeremiah, and then they are taken up, and they are applied and fulfilled in Jesus himself. So look again at verse 5. Can you see the beauty of it?
Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. And before you were born, I consecrated you. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations.
Our eyes should fill with tears. Our hearts should be expanded. Because yes, it teaches us of Jeremiah, but it teaches us more gloriously of the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.
And that helps us in how it applies to us. Because we as the people of God who are trusting in the Lord Jesus, we are united to Christ.
[25:37] And we are called in a secondary way to walk in his steps. And we share as the church in the fulfillment of his mission. And so when we read, Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

And before you were born, I consecrated you. And I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations.
He's talking of Jeremiah, yes. He's talking of Jesus, yes. And he's talking to us, yes.
But only in Christ. Ephesians 1, verse 3. It says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, That we should be holy and blameless before him. What was true for Jeremiah uniquely, Is now true generally for all of the Lord's people through the Lord Jesus.
And when we read, For to all to whom I send you, you shall go. And whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them. For I am with you to deliver you.
[26:48] These words, they are an anticipation. And they are a foretaste of the ultimate rescue act of Jesus' death and resurrection. In which the Father and the Son cooperate perfectly.

And now Jesus says to us, in turn, Do not fear. For I am with you. And he promised to rescue us, Not just from our opposition, but from death itself.
And when we hear God say, Behold, I put these words in your mouth. It throws us forward, isn't it? To that time where God says, This is my Son. Listen to him.
The one who would speak the words of God and embody them and live them so perfectly. That we now, as his church, are to echo his words. As they've been handed on to us. And so when we hear God say to Jeremiah, I've set you over nations and over kingdoms to pluck up and to tear down. And so on. We know that one is coming who has all authority in heaven and earth. And whilst it's true of us that we've not been given this authority in any raw sense, Jesus does send his church out

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in his authority to make disciples of all nations.
[27:58] Now this has taken a while. And I know it's a lot. But I need you to see how important this is that God speaks to Jeremiah.

And then through Jeremiah, he enables us to grasp the nature of the true prophet who is to come. And it's only through that true prophet, the Lord Jesus, that this message can make any sense to us at all.
And I hope that's going to be clear to you as we go through this story. Jeremiah's messy world. His unique calling. And then verses 11 to 19. His typical ministry.
So after appointing Jeremiah to his new role, God moves on to explain to the suffering prophet, And what's your ministry going to look like? He gives him three things.
He says, he shows him a tree, a pot, and a city. And verses 11 to 12, he sees a tree. God says to Jeremiah, what do you see? He says, I see an almond branch.
[29:00] Then the Lord said to him, you've seen well, for I'm watching over my word to perform it. I'm told that there's a Hebrew pun in there. It's saying to Jeremiah, every time you see the almond tree blossoming, remember God is going to keep his word.

Jeremiah is equivalent of Isaiah 55. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return, but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the soul and bread to the eater, so shall my word that goes out of my mouth, it shall not return to me empty, but it will accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed for that which I sent it.
Jeremiah, you are not on a wasted journey. Your ministry will not be wasted. Your labor for the Lord, Jeremiah, will not be in vain. You see the almond tree?
There's a harvest coming. Then there's the pot in verses 13 to 16. It's a pot facing away from the north. Verse 14, I see a boiling pot facing away from the north.
And then the Lord said to me, Out of the north, disaster shall be let loose upon all the inhabitants of the land. For behold, I'm calling all the tribes and the kingdoms of the north, declares the Lord. And they shall come, and everyone shall set his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all its walls all around, and against all the cities of Jerusalem, of Judah.
[30:21] Here's Jeremiah, your message summed up in one overflowing pot. I'm going to declare my judgments against them, for all their evil in forsaking me.

God has called time on the sins of Judah. He says, enough is enough, Judah. Over a hundred years earlier, they had watched the horror of Assyria dismantling Israel to the north.
And since then, there'd been a long succession of prophets and preachers that had called them back to God, but it had no effect. And the verdict is in. Can you see the verdict?
They have forsaken me. That's the reason for the exile. They've forsaken God. And it shows itself in idolatry.
But do you see the prior step? It's forsaking God. And that's always the heart of the matter. Forsaking God. Failing to trust God is the root sin.
[31:24] In other words, you can't break commandments 2 to 10 without breaking number 1. Unbelief is the primal sin.

The decision to worship idols is always because you've forsaken God. And if you think about that, that makes perfect sense, doesn't it? It tells you and I that the solution to sin is never just more effort.
Or simply facing our guilt. The solution to our sin is to return to God through the gospel itself. Because that is the main deal. It's the gospel that awakens us.
Faith and repentance drive us back to God. Jeremiah's ministry in the first place is to be devoted to exposing the root unbelief of God's people.
It's a Romans 1 ministry. The wrath of God is revealed against heaven, from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.
[32:34] Paul goes on. For what can be known of God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. His invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, they've been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made.

So they're without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him. That is the root from which flows out every other sin.
Forsaking God. And that to some measure, it's not the whole of the task of the church, but it is to some measure the task of the church.

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To convince a world that doesn't even have the categories to understand that this is reality. You have forsaken God. Which leads us to the third picture really briefly.
God knows that Jeremiah's ministry is difficult. He tells him it'll be like an almond tree. There will be a harvest. He says it's going to be like a boiling pot of judgment.
[33:38] And that's why he shows that Jeremiah, the third thing, is a fortified city. And so he says, doesn't he, dress yourself for work. Arise and say to them everything that I command you.

Do not be dismayed by them lest I dismay you before them. It's very interesting that, isn't it? When the church becomes ashamed of the message, God becomes ashamed of the church.
And he says this, I will make you a fortified city, an iron pillar, bronze walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. Isaiah, 100 years before, was told, no one's going to listen to you, but this is worse.
Jeremiah is told up front, they're going to seek to intimidate you. And if Jeremiah was wondering who they are, can you see who they are? Be the kings of Judah, the officials, the priests, and the people of the land, verse 18.
Everybody. Everybody will turn on you, Jeremiah. And they will fight against you. But I will make you a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze wall.
[34:44] And whatever people throw at you, I will enable you to resist. God says, I'm going to make you a metropolis of a man, a man of steel, unmovable, and unshakable wall.

Put those three things together, the plant, the pot, and the city. And what have you got? In his ministry, Jeremiah will see God watch over the outworking of his word.
He will be tasked with announcing judgment before salvation, and he'll be equipped to stand firm.
And once again, there is a sense, isn't there, where all of this is unique to Jeremiah.
Only Jeremiah is going to watch the exile play out in front of him. Only Jeremiah is going to have to persuade people who initially at least were living in la-la land that Babylonian exile is coming. Only Jeremiah would bring that word of judgment, urging God's people to repent in the face of the Babylonians, and to submit to the discipline of being kicked out of the land.
But even as Jeremiah sticks unflinchingly to the truth, suffering for suggesting that God's people are under judgment, there will be promise and rescue and salvation for those who repent.
[35:58] And Jeremiah is the precursor of another word ministry, of another preacher who will be taken to death and back.

A preaching ministry that will be perfectly lived out and proclaimed, which announced not that exile was coming, but that exile had ended in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
And it's through belonging to the Lord Jesus that we have this assurance that God will continue to work through his word, both in salvation and in judgment.
And as the church proclaims the message of Jesus, the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And so we can read this book and be greatly encouraged that God will continue to work through the preaching of his word.
and we can be reminded that it falls to the church to announce both judgment and salvation. And that God is going to give us all the resources we need to preach the gospel in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in.
[37:09] And so in reading Jeremiah 1, I don't think we want to rush to apply it to ourselves without first recognizing that Jesus is the true prophet. And he's the one that fills it with meaning.

And he refocuses this word to help us to see that always and only do we serve after Jesus. Our ministry is his ministry.
Our message is his message. Our only authority is his authority. And our only method is to walk in his steps. And so the chapter details, doesn't it, a really surprising call and a demanding message and an astonishing provision.
All of which were addressed to a young priest from Anathoth nearly 2,800 years ago. But as he speaks and obeys and suffers and loves in this book, Jeremiah anticipates a true prophet, the ultimate prophet, one like Moses.
But one who in turn summons us as a church in ways which is even more surprising to proclaim a message to the nations which is even more demanding.
[38:22] But he gives us an even more astonishing reassurance. Because Jesus came and said, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, you go and make disciples of all nations.

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Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all I have commanded. And behold, I am with you always to the very end of the age.
Let's pray. Amen.

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