

Jeremiah 1:1–19 — “Called, Prepared, and Protected”

1) Setting the Scene (Jeremiah 1:1–3)

“The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah... also in the days of Jehoiakim... until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.” — Jeremiah 1:1–3

God raises up Jeremiah—a young priest from a small town—to speak during the final decades before Jerusalem’s fall. Outward reforms under King Josiah could not cure an inwardly stubborn nation. God sends a faithful voice even when the audience will not listen. This is grace.

Application: Faithfulness is not measured by numbers of people and their applause but by obedience. Serve God even when results seem small or slow.

2) God’s Call and Our Identity (Jeremiah 1:4–5)

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
Before you were born I sanctified¹ you;
I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” — Jeremiah 1:5*

God’s calling precedes Jeremiah’s qualifications. The Lord knows, sets apart, and commissions—all before Jeremiah speaks a single word. This affirms God’s initiative without erasing Jeremiah’s responsibility to respond.

Balanced emphasis: God authors purpose; we must answer His call. Neither fatalism nor self-reliance—cooperation with grace.

3) “I Cannot”—and God’s Answer (Jeremiah 1:6–8)

*“Then said I: ‘Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.’
But the Lord said to me: ‘Do not say, “I am a youth,” for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you,’ says the Lord.” — Jeremiah 1:6–8*

Jeremiah feels too young, too small, too unready. God neither flatters nor scolds—He commissions and promises His presence. Courage grows where God’s presence is trusted.

Application: Offer God your availability, not your resume. Obedience turns “I cannot” into “He will.”

4) Words Placed, Authority Given (Jeremiah 1:9–10)

¹ To be *sanctified* means to be set apart by God, for God, and to live for His purposes. (Refer to addendum on page 4)

“Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: ‘Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.’” — Jeremiah 1:9–10

God equips what He commands. Jeremiah’s task begins with tearing down what is corrupt so that God can **build and plant** what is true. God never demolishes without intending renewal.

Application: Let the Lord pull up what is diseased in your life—habits, idols, excuses—so He can plant what is healthy. Surrender precedes growth.

5) Two Visions: God Will Perform His Word (Jeremiah 1:11–16)

The almond branch (the “awakening” tree):

“You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word.” — Jeremiah 1:12

The boiling pot from the north:

“Out of the north calamity shall break forth... For I will utter My judgments... because they have forsaken Me... and worshiped the works of their own hands.” — Jeremiah 1:14–16

God is awake over His word—alert to fulfill it. Judgment will come from the north because the people forsook the Lord and embraced idols. Consequences are not random; they are moral and spiritual.

Application: Treat God’s word as certain. Build your decisions around what He has said, not around what feels convenient today.

6) Stand Up and Speak Up (Jeremiah 1:17–19)

“Therefore prepare yourself and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not be dismayed before their faces... For behold, I have made you this day a fortified city and an iron pillar... They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you,” says the Lord, “to deliver you.” — Jeremiah 1:17–19

God does not promise ease; He promises presence and protection. Jeremiah must speak everything God commands, without shrinking before opposition. God makes him like a fortified city—resilient in a storm.

Application: Courage is not the absence of conflict but confidence in God’s nearness. Speak truth in love; let God handle outcomes.

Practical Application

1. Seek God’s purpose daily: Begin each morning, “Lord, what have You prepared for me to do today?”
2. Replace excuses with obedience: When you feel “too young,” “too old,” or “not enough,” remember Jeremiah 1:7–8.

3. Invite holy demolition: Ask the Spirit to “root out” what resists God and “plant” what bears fruit.
4. Treat Scripture as certain: Plan and pray as if Jeremiah 1:12 is true—because it is.
5. Practice presence-based courage: Memorize Jeremiah 1:19 for hard conversations and faithful witness.

A Challenge to Believers

- From comfort to calling: Move from passive consumption to willing participation in God’s mission.
- From fear to faithfulness: Refuse to be “dismayed by faces.” Speak truth with humility and hope.
- From patches to planting: Do not paper over spiritual problems—let God rebuild from the ground up.
- From private devotion to public witness: Carry God’s words beyond the sanctuary into streets, workplaces, and homes.

Consider a seven-day response: read Jeremiah 1 aloud daily; each day obey one prompting of the Spirit you would normally postpone.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

The God who knew Jeremiah before he was formed also knows you and loves you. Our sins—like Judah’s—lead us away from God and toward judgment. But God has acted in mercy: Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again so we could be forgiven, made new, and brought into His purpose.

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” — Romans 10:13

If you are ready to turn from sin and trust Jesus, pray from your heart:

*“Lord Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God.
You died for my sins and rose again.
Please forgive me, cleanse me, and make me new.
I surrender my life to You as my Savior and my Lord.
Put Your words in my mouth and Your purpose in my steps.
In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

If you prayed sincerely, tell a mature believer, be baptized in water, and join a Bible-teaching ekklesia and study group. God has called you—not to ease, but to life with Him, and He will be with you to deliver you.

Addendum: Sanctify

The word sanctified means “set apart for a holy purpose.”

In Scripture, to *sanctify* something or someone is to dedicate it to God and to make it holy—that is, to separate it from common or sinful use and reserve it for God’s service and glory.

Here’s how the Bible uses the term:

- Old Testament (Hebrew: *qāḏaš*) — means *to make holy, to consecrate, to dedicate*.

Example:

“Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the Lord spoke, saying: “By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy.”’” — Leviticus 10:3

- New Testament (Greek: *hagiazō*) — means *to make holy, to purify, to set apart for sacred use*.

Example:

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality.” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3

So, when the Bible says someone is sanctified, it can carry two complementary meanings:

1. Positionally Sanctified — When a person trusts in Jesus Christ, God declares them holy and sets them apart as His own.

“By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” — Hebrews 10:10

2. Progressively Sanctified — The ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life, making them more Christlike in character and conduct.

“This is the will of God, your sanctification...” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3

In short:

To be *sanctified* means to be set apart by God, for God, and to live for His purposes.