



# Jeremiah



## Reading the Bible Together September 2014

### What is 'In Sync' Bible Reading?

'In Sync' encourages us to read the same Bible book through a month, and then reflect together on what we have read from God's Word. We consider the main message and the key themes of a whole book of the Bible, and then we can share with others what we have learnt through our Bible reading.

*'I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.'* (Psalm 119:16)

### Questions to consider

Reading the Bible does not have to be an intellectual study. Anyone can read the Bible and by God's grace understand it. The main thing is that we pray for God's help as we read.

Here are some questions to help you think through what you are reading:

1. What have I learnt about God and about Jesus?
2. What does this teach me about humanity and myself?
3. What has most encouraged me from this book?
4. How does this teach me to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul and mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
5. How does this teach me to love my neighbour as myself? (Matt 22:37-40)
6. Is there anything else I should learn here to be 'equipped for every good work' (2 Tim 3:17)

### Jeremiah : What can we expect?

Jeremiah is known as 'the weeping prophet'. He is one of seven Old Testament prophets portrayed by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and is painted as a man sitting in anguished meditation. Jeremiah served as a prophet for over 40 years, from 627-586 BC. At that time, the southern kingdom of Judah was caught in the middle in the struggle for supremacy between the Assyrians, the Egyptians and the Babylonians. In 586 BC the city of Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, the temple is destroyed, and the people of Judah were taken into captivity.

Jeremiah pronounces God's judgment on the idolatry and immorality of the people of Judah. He experiences much opposition and hostility and persecution as faithfully he proclaims messages from God. At times, Jeremiah feels abandoned by God and he questions the goodness of God in the face of his suffering.

Jeremiah lived at a time when people had stopped trusting God. Despite all that they had experienced of God's grace and help in the past, the people of Judah were increasingly accommodating towards pagan ideas and pagan practices. They continued to meet their religious obligations but their worship of God was undertaken out of duty and not true devotion.

Jeremiah also looks forward to the eventual return from exile and he prophesies about a new covenant (Jeremiah 31), and a 'righteous branch of David' (Jeremiah 23 & 33) who will come and do what is right and just, and bring salvation.

### How to read?

One of the challenges of reading Jeremiah is that there is not an obvious structure to the book. With 52 chapters, you can read through Jeremiah by reading 2 chapters a day or 13 chapters a week.

**In-Sync for October : Psalms 51-100**