



**Sunday School Lesson**  
**Jeremiah 7:1-15**  
 by Lorin L. Cranford  
 All rights reserved ©

**The Temple Sermon**



A copy of this lesson is posted in Adobe pdf format at  
<http://cranfordville.com> under Bible Studies in the Bible Study Aids section

A note about the [blue, underlined](#) material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the internet. Just use your web browser's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Quick Links to the Study**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>I. <u>Context</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. <u>Historical</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. <u>Literary</u></p> | <p>II. <u>Message</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. <u>Call to Repent, vv. 1-7</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. <u>Warning of Impending Doom, vv. 8-15</u></p> |
|--|---|

\*\*\*\*\*

The scripture passage under consideration is one of the more fascinating texts from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah. It stands as the famous Temple Sermon and in its present form is a part of the original Jeremiah scroll (1:1-8:3), that was initially destroyed by King Jehoiakim (36:1-32) and then rewritten by Jeremiah a second time. Even more intriguing is that a second version of this same sermon is reported by Baruch is found in chapter twenty-six. This was a hot sermon! And it created a furor when it was preached! Many Israelites wanted Jeremiah killed because of what he said. Providentially, God spared him from death, although a fellow prophet with a similar message was killed.

Studying the texts of most of the major prophets in the Old Testament poses special challenges. Almost all of these OT books are collections of the earlier preaching of the individual prophet with some occasional narrative material inserted. The challenge comes with trying to organize the content of the material into either a chronological or a thematic based structure. Seldom, if ever, is the content of any of these books arranged in a discernible manner either chronologically or thematically. Old Testament scholars have contributed enormously by sifting through the material from the ancient language texts and then by developing structures both chronological and thematic to help us pull the material together in a cohesive manner. For an example of how this works with the book of Jeremiah, see the chart on page two of this study. This difference reflects the substantial distance between a modern, western way of thinking and the ancient Semitic mind set.

**I Context**

In a study such as this the historical and literary contexts for the passage take on additional importance. Apart from a clear sense of these settings the passage is easily misunderstood and its message distorted.

**a. Historical**

The Temple Sermon in Jeremiah took place during the reign of Jehoiakim over the southern kingdom (B.C. 610-599). 2 Kings 24 and 2 Chronicles 36 provide brief descriptions of his eleven year reign over Israel, which they label as evil. He had been put in place by Pharaoh Neco and subsequently taken prisoner by the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezza in the first invasion of the southern kingdom before being restored as a vassal king to them. After a revolt, he met a violent death. The tenor of the times for the Israelites was not positive. Jeremiah realized this and sought to speak out in warning, although the people were not willing to hear a disturbing voice. By the time of the delivery of the temple sermon, Jeremiah had been prophesying to the people for about two decades.

Jeremiah's ministry began during the reign of Josiah who sought to bring spiritual renewal to the south-

ern kingdom beginning in 622 BCE. Jeremiah's preaching during that time evidently helped to bring this about, although it generated substantial opposition to him by many of the people since the reforms essentially uprooted generations old religious traditions and practices.

The larger world events picture in the background but influencing many of the events in Israel at this time focuses on the struggles between the "super powers" of that day. The old Assyrian Empire had already destroyed the northern kingdom in 622 BCE. With the subsequent death of the Assyrian ruler Ashurbanipal the Assyrian Empire spiraled rapidly into ruin and weakness, prompting nearby rulers to begin trying to carve up the empire. The Babylonians and the Medes on the eastern side of the fertile crescent joined forces and captured Asshur, Assyria's early capital, in 614 BCE and then Ninevah in 612. The Egyptian pharaoh Neco II had sought to help the Assyrians against the Babylonians at Asshur but was unsuccessful. The Assyrians were left only with Haran and Carchemish. When Neco marched through Israel to help the Assyrians Josiah engaged them in battle near Megiddo but was wounded and later died back in Jerusalem. After a three month reign by Jehoahaz, the Egyptian ruler placed another son Eliakim in power in Jerusalem and renamed him Jehoiakim. Thus during Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah delivered his Temple Sermon calling on the people to repent and turn back to the Lord, or else face doom. With some initial Egyptian success against the Babylonians, many Israelites favored strong ties with the Egyptians, but Jeremiah strongly opposed them. In 605 BCE the Babylonians defeated Egypt at Carchemish and Nebuchadnezzar chased the Egyptians all the way back to Egypt. About a year later Jeremiah's scribe, Baruch, finished the recording of Jeremiah's poems and oracles. When Jehoiakim learned of this he had his servant Jehudi fetch the scrolls and read them to him. Upon hearing the prophet's words of coming doom, the king burned the scrolls but they were quickly rewritten with additional prophecies of personal doom for the king.

### A Suggested Chronology of Jeremiah's Messages

Date B.C.	Passage	Chronological Notation
627	Ch 1	13th year of Josiah
626-609	2-12	Dating uncertain
610	47	Before Egypt smote Gaza (609 BC?)
609	26, 27:1	1st year of Jehoiakim (27:1 may be a scribal error)
608	13	Jewish captivity still future
607	14-20	Defeat of Jews appears more imminent
606	(Dan 1:1)	(3rd year of Jehoiakim)
605	25, 45, 46, 36:1-8	4th year of Jehoiakim
604	36:9-32	5th year of Jehoiakim
603	21:11-14; 22: 23; 35	During reign of Jehoiakim, time uncertain.
598-97	22:24-28; 24:1; 27:20; 28:4; 29:2; 37:1; 52:31	During the reign of Jehoiachin; time uncertain. Jehoiachin reigned 3 months, end of 598 and early 597 See also Ez 1:2
597	49:34	1st year of Zedekiah
597	24	Jehoiachin has been deported
596	29	Probably a year after Jehoiachin's deportation
593	27-28, 50-51 (v. 59)	4th year of Zedekiah (contrary notations in 27:1 and 28:1 probably scribal errors)
588	21:1-10; 34:1-7	Siege of Jerusalem by Babylonian army begins
588	34:8-22; 37	Siege temporarily lifted
587	30-31	Undated message of hope
587	32	10th year of Zedekiah
587	33, 34, 38	During the siege
586	39-42	After the fall of Jerusalem
585	43-44	Jeremiah goes to Egypt
582	48	Moab is desolated by Babylon (582?)
561	52	Historical addenda dated after the accession of Evil-merodach

Taken from Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, s.v. "Jeremiah, Book of."



These words came true within a few years. In Nebuchadnezzar's determination to subdue Egypt, he suffered defeat in the desert of Shur, southwest of Palestine. This prompted Jehoiakim to revolt against the Babylonians who now controlled Israel. But in 599 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar armed Israel's neighbors with the encouragement to harass the Israelites. In one of those raids on Jerusalem, Jehoiakim lost his life and his body was thrown over the outer wall without an honorable burial, just as Jeremiah had predicted (Jer. 22:19). The two maps on page two illustrate the dramatic changes that took place in the Middle East during this general time period. In 588 BCE the successor Israelite king, Jehoiachin, surrendered to the Babylonians and was carried as a prisoner off to Babylon along with some 10,000 others including the prophet Ezekiel. Jeremiah remained in Jerusalem for a while before eventually being carried against his will into Egypt.

Thus the historical setting for our passage paints a period of uncertainty and impending doom for the nation and many of its citizens. The Israelites in efforts to ward off enemies made alliances with first one and then another super power in trying to preserve their existence. Unfortunately, there was little genuine reaching out to God by either national leaders or the masses of the people. A formal religious orientation toward God was certainly present, but not genuine, sincere commitment to Him or his Law. Jeremiah realized this, along with other prophets during this period, and spoke out strongly and courageously to warn the people that the wrath of God was poised to fall on the nation and that nothing or no one would escape it.

### **b. Literary**

The major literary contextual issue is correlating the three passages that are describing the same event: [7:1-15](#); [26:1-24](#); and [36:1-32](#). The delivery of this message took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign according to 36:1, which 26:1 describes as (NRSV) "At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came from the Lord." The time frame is left vague in 7:1 with just the words, "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord" (NRSV). The second account in 26:1-24 is more in the literary form of a narrative describing God's instructions to speak (vv. 1-6), and the people's angry reaction (vv. 7-24). The content of Jeremiah's message is summarized in vv. 4-6: "4 You shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, 5 and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently — though you have not heeded — 6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth" (NRSV). The third description, 36:1-32, contains more elaborate narrative detail regarding the event of preaching the sermon than is found in chapter twenty-six, but contains no depiction of the content of the sermon itself. Thus 7:1-15 is central for understanding the words of Jeremiah, but the other two passages are crucial in determining the historical circumstances surrounding the preaching of the sermon.

The organization of the book of Jeremiah is aptly summarized by Stanley Frost in the *Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible*:

Jer. himself took the initiative in gathering the first collection of his oracles; and when this manuscript was destroyed, he encouraged his friend and adherent Baruch to produce an enlarged collection. It is important, however, to remember that the individual pieces which went into these manuscripts were not produced for posterity but arose out of particular situations. Thus the book does not have a coherent, sequential text. Rather it consists of a collection of sayings, poems, prayers, oracles, hymns, proverbs, visions, and stories, at first sight brought together quite irrationally, but in fact often grouped in smaller collections having a rationale of their own. The book may be divided into 4 major sections: (a) the words of Jer. (1:4-25:14; 25:15-38 forms an independent collection of Jer.'s sayings concerning the nations); (b) Jer.'s ministry (26:1-45:5); (c) oracles against the nations (46:1-51:64); and (d) a historical appendix (52:1-34).

After Jeremiah's call (1:1-19), there follows a series of oracles with occasional narrative insertion in the next five chapters. This material largely makes the case against the southern kingdom and the people's disobedience to God as the basis for the coming doom. The material that follows, especially 7:16-8:3, contains words directed from God to the prophet himself with the initial injunction "As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry or prayer on their behalf, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you" (7:16, NRSV). Thus the surrounding context of our passage underscores the very difficult task facing Jeremiah. He was commissioned by God to deliver essentially the message of the wrath of God to a hardened, sinful people who had just enough religiosity to provide a false sense of satisfaction and belief that everything

was okay with God.

## II. Message

The passage naturally breaks down into two sections: (1) vv. 1-6 with a call to repent, and (2) vv. 7-15 with a warning and accusation against the people. We will approach the passage from these two perspectives.

### a. Call to Repent, vv. 1-7

#### NASB

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 "Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house and proclaim there this word and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah, who enter by these gates to worship the LORD!' " 3 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. 4 "Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.'

5 "For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly practice justice between a man and his neighbor, 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, nor walk after other gods to your own ruin, 7 then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.

#### NRSV

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2 Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah, you that enter these gates to worship the Lord. 3 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. 4 Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord."

5 For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, 7 then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

#### NLT

1 The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, 2 "Go to the entrance of the LORD's Temple, and give this message to the people: 'O Judah, listen to this message from the LORD! Listen to it, all of you who worship here! 3 The LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Even now, if you quit your evil ways, I will let you stay in your own land. 4 But do not be fooled by those who repeatedly promise your safety because the Temple of the LORD is here.

5 I will be merciful only if you stop your wicked thoughts and deeds and are fair to others; 6 and if you stop exploiting foreigners, orphans, and widows; and if you stop your murdering; and if you stop worshiping idols as you now do to your own harm. 7 Then I will let you stay in this land that I gave to your ancestors to keep forever.

#### Comments:

The very brief narrative introduction in verse one simply identifies this material as a word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord. As explained in the [Historical Context](#) section above, the two parallel passages in chapters twenty six and thirty six provide more details on the time and place of this event. The first of these sets the stage as "At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came from the Lord" (26:1, NRSV). Jehoiakim is portrayed in both Kings and Chronicles as an evil king who had no regard for the religious reforms instituted by his father Josiah. [2 Kings 23](#) provides the following summation (NRSV): "34 Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away; he came to Egypt, and died there. 35 Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land in order to meet Pharaoh's demand for money. He exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, from all according to their assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco. 36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37 He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, just as all his ancestors had done."

[2 Chronicles 36:1-7](#) supplements this (NRSV): "1 The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king to succeed his father in Jerusalem. 2 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. 3 Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid on the land a tribute of

one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. 4 The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; but Neco took his brother Jehoahaz and carried him to Egypt. 5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord his God. 6 Against him King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up, and bound him with fetters to take him to Babylon. 7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried some of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon. 8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and the abominations that he did, and what was found against him, are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah; and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him.”

These eleven years were turbulent years for the southern kingdom with a wicked king under the thumb of the Egyptian pharaoh who taxed the dickens out of the people in order to appease the Egyptians. In the fourth year of this mess God told the prophet Jeremiah to go stand in the temple and deliver a stern message to the people. The courage of the prophet is one of his admirable traits. He knew that his words were not going to be well received.

More detailed instructions are provided in 26:1-6 (NRSV): “1 At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came from the Lord: 2 Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the Lord; speak to them all the words that I command you; do not hold back a word. 3 It may be that they will listen, all of them, and will turn from their evil way, that I may change my mind about the disaster that I intend to bring on them because of their evil doings. 4 You shall say to them: Thus says the Lord: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, 5 and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently—though you have not heeded— 6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.”

A slightly different angle with greater details is provided in 36:1-8 (NRSV): “1 In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2 Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today. 3 It may be that when the house of Judah hears of all the disasters that I intend to do to them, all of them may turn from their evil ways, so that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the Lord that he had spoken to him. 5 And Jeremiah ordered Baruch, saying, "I am prevented from entering the house of the Lord; 6 so you go yourself, and on a fast day in the hearing of the people in the Lord's house you shall read the words of the Lord from the scroll that you have written at my dictation. You shall read them also in the hearing of all the people of Judah who come up from their towns. 7 It may be that their plea will come before the Lord, and that all of them will turn from their evil ways, for great is the anger and wrath that the Lord has pronounced against this people." 8 And Baruch son of Neriah did all that the prophet Jeremiah ordered him about reading from the scroll the words of the Lord in the Lord's house. “

In the last two narratives an emphasis upon God's concern for the people's repentance is found; notice 26:3 and 36:3. This provides an important insight about the nature of God's wrath. His righteousness demands the punishment of sin but He is anxious for His people to turn away from their sin and seek forgiveness.

Jeremiah called upon the people to repent (7: 3-4, NRSV): “3 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. 4 Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord." The people's sinfulness had forced God's departure from his temple. The last admonition has a woeful tone in it. The people had listened to false prophets reassuring them that God would always protect Jerusalem because His temple was there and the Lord would never let anyone or anything bring harm to the temple. The people had made a magical rabbit's foot of God's temple and came to place their confidence in it, rather than in God. In barely two decades afterwards the people would watch in horror as the Babylonians razed the temple to the ground after plundering it of all its valuables. For many Israelites the shallowness of their devotion to God was evident. Religious faith had become misplaced and focused on things rather than God. The lack of moral living overwhelmed them. Finally, God had run out of patience with them just as He had with the folks of the northern kingdom a few decades before.

Next Jeremiah elaborated on his call to repentance with God's offer to the people (vv. 5-7, NRSV): “5 For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, 7 then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.” Repentance is much more than just saying, “I'm sorry.” They were to change the way they treated others and the way they treated God. If they would do that, God promised to dwell in their midst with His blessings.

The study theme for this lesson in the Formations series is “Worship Challenges Us.” The message of these verses for today centers on the continual need for God’s people to live righteously before the Lord. If there’s an unwillingness to do that, then God’s calls us to repentance that changes dramatically the way we live in relationship to others and to Him. Christians are under this same divine mandate. God will not tolerate us when we drift into patterns of injustice in our treatment of other people. Note the passage stresses both those on the inside of the covenant community and those on the outside of it. When we chase after other ‘gods’ -- pleasure, money, fame etc. -- we are turning our backs on God no matter whether we’re in Sunday School and church every Sunday. God demands our loyalty and commitment fully. Public worship should challenge us, at times making us very uncomfortable with our present ways.

### **b. Warning of Impending Doom, vv. 8-15**

#### **NASB**

8 "Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail. 9 "Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other gods that you have not known, 10 then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered!'--that you may do all these abominations? 11 "Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*," declares the LORD. 12 "But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I made My name dwell at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. 13 "And now, because you have done all these things," declares the LORD, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you but you did not answer, 14 therefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. 15 "I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim."

#### **NRSV**

8 Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. 9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are safe!"—only to go on doing all these abominations? 11 Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the Lord. 12 Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. 13 And now, because you have done all these things, says the Lord, and when I spoke to you persistently, you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, 14 therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your ancestors, just what I did to Shiloh. 15 And I will cast you out of my sight, just as I cast out all your kinsfolk, all the offspring of Ephraim.

#### **NLT**

8 "Do you think that because the Temple is here you will never suffer? Don't fool yourselves! 9 Do you really think you can steal, murder, commit adultery, lie, and worship Baal and all those other new gods of yours, 10 and then come here and stand before me in my Temple and chant, "We are safe!" – only to go right back to all those evils again? 11 Do you think this Temple, which honors my name, is a den of thieves? I see all the evil going on there, says the LORD. 12 "Go to the place at Shiloh where I once put the Tabernacle to honor my name. See what I did there because of all the wickedness of my people, the Israelites. 13 While you were doing these wicked things, says the LORD, I spoke to you about it repeatedly, but you would not listen. I called out to you, but you refused to answer. 14 So just as I destroyed Shiloh, I will now destroy this Temple that was built to honor my name, this Temple that you trust for help, this place that I gave to you and your ancestors. 15 And I will send you into exile, just as I did your relatives, the people of Israel.

#### **Comments:**

This second segment turns into accusation against the people. They have placed their confidence on the deceptive words of false prophets who have reassured them that all is well. Their immorality is rampant, even while they faithfully attend worship services in the temple. All this is disgusting in the eyes of God and has caused the pollution of his temple. In vv. 12-15 God calls on the people to remember what He did

to the people of the northern kingdom. [Shiloh](#) had been an early center of worship of God from the time of the Exodus when the tabernacle was set up there after the occupation of the promised land under Joshua ([Joshua 18:1-10](#)). But the center had been destroyed some 500 years prior to Jeremiah, and now the Israelites who had occupied the northern region had also been destroyed some two plus decades before Jeremiah's words. The point to the people was that if they thought God didn't mean business they should make a trip north and see first hand just how awesome His wrath could be when unleashed on a sinful people. They should not think that somehow they were better than these people and would not suffer the same fate, if they didn't quickly mend their ways.

The lesson for us from these words of God should be clear. Our country doesn't even enjoy covenant status with God like the Israelites did. For us to think then that somehow we can escape the wrath of God for our immoral and irreligious ways is sheer folly! For those of us in a Christian community of faith, we must not mistake the grace of God for license to sin. The demands for righteous living are greater upon us than upon the Israelites, as Jesus reiterated time and again. His haunting words that come often to me are "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded" ([Luke 12:48](#), NRSV).

For our worship to be genuine our lives must be in order as we worship. This is a basic truth from these verses. We can't "live like the devil six days and then go to church on Sunday" and get away with it. All our worship is doing is heaping up the wrath of God upon our lives.

Although Jer. 7:1-15 doesn't record the reaction of the people to the prophets words, the other two passages do. A quick glance at one of them is helpful for understanding the full impact they had.

Jer. 26:7-24 provides a helpful description of the response (NRSV): "7 The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. 8 And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die! 9 Why have you prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, "This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the Lord. 10 When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the Lord and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the Lord. 11 Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears." 12 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "It is the Lord who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. 13 Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you. 14 But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. 15 Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the Lord sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

16 Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God." 17 And some of the elders of the land arose and said to all the assembled people, 18 "Micah of Moresheth, who prophesied during the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, said to all the people of Judah: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.' 19 Did King Hezekiah of Judah and all Judah actually put him to death? Did he not fear the Lord and entreat the favor of the Lord, and did not the Lord change his mind about the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great disaster on ourselves!" 20 There was another man prophesying in the name of the Lord, Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land in words exactly like those of Jeremiah. 21 And when King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the officials, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. 22 Then King Jehoiakim sent Elnathan son of Achbor and men with him to Egypt, 23 and they took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who struck him down with the sword and threw his dead body into the burial place of the common people. 24 But the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that he was not given over into the hands of the people to be put to death."

A slightly different account is given in [36:4-32](#) but with a similar emphasis upon the danger to Jeremiah and to his secretary, Baruch. The focus here is mostly upon the king's reaction.

Jeremiah barely escaped with his life because of the anger of the people. May we never come to the place where we try to muzzle God's messenger and keep him from preaching uncomfortable sermons! To do so is to risk our own ruin.