

Jeremiah and a new covenant

Jeremiah 1:1–10; 31:31–40

Jeremiah, the son of the priest Hilkiah, lived in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin. When he was still a boy, he heard the voice of God speaking to him: “Before you were even born, I knew you and chose you to be a prophet.”

Jeremiah said, “But, God, I am too young. I don’t know how to speak to people.”

God answered, “Do not say that you are too young. You will go where I send you and you will speak the messages I give you. Do not be afraid. I will be with you.”

Then God touched Jeremiah’s mouth and said, “I have put my words in your mouth. I am calling you to speak to nations. Sometimes your words will help pull down what needs to be destroyed. Sometimes your words will cause seeds of new life to grow.”

God first spoke to Jeremiah when Josiah was king of Judah. Many years later, when Jeremiah was much older, Jerusalem was captured and many of its people were taken to Babylon. In the midst of these hard times, Jeremiah brought a message of hope.

Jeremiah spoke for God: “The time is coming when I will make a new covenant with Israel and Judah. It will not be like the old covenant. The people broke that covenant even though I led them out of slavery in Egypt.

“This is the covenant that I will make: I will put my law within the people, and I will write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will forgive the wrong they have done; and they shall all know me, from the least important to the most powerful.”

Jeremiah continued, “This is what God says: ‘As long as the sun, the stars, and the moon stay in their places and the waves of the seas continue to roll, the people of Israel will be my people.

“The time is coming when the walls of the city will be rebuilt. The valley and all that surrounds the city will be sacred places, and this will be true forever.”

Wonder: Imagine Jeremiah being young then growing old. Was it hard or easy to bring God’s message to the people?

Connect

God calls people of all ages. How old are you? What big thing could you do with God’s help?



Explore

Jeremiah said God’s will for the people would be in their hearts or in their understanding. Read Exodus 20:2, at the beginning of the Ten Commandments. What is a good reason for following God’s law?



Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38–42

Martha and her sister Mary invited Jesus to their home. Mary sat at Jesus’ feet and listened to him talk. But Martha was busy making the food, setting the table, and serving people. Martha worried about all that had to be done for their guests.

Martha said, “Jesus, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me!”

“Martha, Martha,” Jesus answered, “You are worried and upset about many things, but one thing is most important. Mary has chosen what is better and I will not take it away from her.”

Wonder: Imagine being Martha, trying to do all the work for your guests.

Connect

Following Jesus means both doing things to help others, and sitting and listening. What kinds of work do we do to help others? How can we quietly listen to God?



Explore

In the ancient world, women were expected to serve others. They were rarely allowed to sit and learn from teachers. But Jesus welcomed women as learners, teachers, and leaders.



Aquila and Priscilla

Acts 18:1–3, 18–28

Aquila and Priscilla were husband and wife. They were tentmakers, and they lived and worked in Rome, Italy. But then the emperor Claudius ordered all Jews to leave Rome. So Priscilla and Aquila came to Greece and settled in Corinth.

When Paul came to Corinth, he met Aquila and Priscilla. Paul was also a tentmaker, and so they invited him to stay at their home. Paul stayed for a long time, making tents with Aquila and Priscilla and teaching about Jesus to people all over the city.

After a year and a half, Paul left to teach about Jesus in other cities. And Priscilla and Aquila left with him! When the ship docked at Ephesus, the three of them got off. Paul talked to the Jews in the synagogue, and then went on his way.

Aquila and Priscilla stayed in Ephesus. They spoke to many believers in Ephesus. One day they met a man named Apollos, who was a very enthusiastic follower of Jesus.

Apollos knew all about scripture and spoke very well. He wanted to tell everyone about Jesus even though he didn't quite understand everything. When he began to talk in the synagogue, Priscilla and Aquila took him aside. They explained things about Jesus that Apollos had not understood before.

Because of Paul, Priscilla and Aquila were better able to tell people about Jesus. And because of Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos was better able to tell people about Jesus. The followers of Jesus helped each other, and together they built up the church of Jesus in the world.

Wonder: Imagine people meeting each other and discovering other followers of Jesus.

Connect

We each have gifts that can be used for God's work. One gift that Aquila and Priscilla shared was the gift of hospitality. What gift can you share?



The temple of Apollo in Corinth

Explore

Aquila and Priscilla are mentioned in other places. Look up these Bible passages and learn the names of other early Christians: 2 Timothy 4:19–22; Romans 16:1–5; 1 Corinthians 16:13–20.

