

## **Burning the Scroll**

Jeremiah 36

Jeremiah 45

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The Lord commanded Jeremiah, "Write down all the messages I have ever given you regarding Israel, Judah, and the other nations. Read them to the people of Judah. Perhaps they will turn from their evil ways and I will be able to forgive them."

Jeremiah sent for a scribe named Baruch and dictated to him all the messages the Lord had given him throughout the years. Baruch wrote everything down in a scroll. Then Jeremiah said to Baruch, "Because of these very prophecies I am not allowed to go into the Temple. So you take this scroll to the house of the Lord and read it to the people."

A fast had been proclaimed. People from all over Judah had come to Jerusalem for special services in the Temple, to fast, and to pray. That was the day Baruch read Jeremiah's scroll to the people. Some of the king's officials asked Baruch for a private reading. Then they said, "We must share this scroll with the king. It would be best if you and Jeremiah were to hide. Don't tell anyone where you are!"

The scroll was read to King Jehoiakim. It repeatedly predicted the destruction of Judah and the exile of the people. The king was irritated. After three or four columns had been read from the scroll, the king cut off that portion with a knife and threw it into the fire. Despite the objections of some of his advisors, the king continued to burn section after section, until the whole scroll was burned up. Then the king ordered the arrest of the prophet and his scribe, but the Lord kept them safe.

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to "write everything again." This time the prophet included not only the messages God had given him, but also recollections of the events surrounding those messages.