

Starting from Scratch

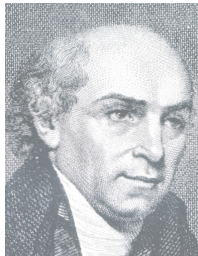
Jeremiah 36:16-24, 27-32

The expression “**starting from scratch**” means to start from the very beginning, without the aid or advantage of something that is already prepared or completed. Jeremiah was God’s bold mouthpiece, presenting a message of judgment upon the apostate kingdom of Judah. This unpopular message was carefully recorded on a scroll by Baruch the scribe. Wicked King Jehoiakim listened to the scroll being read and



systematically cut out sections and burned them. After this, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, and he was told to take another scroll and **start from scratch**. The repeated prophecies came from the heart of God to the mouth of Jeremiah to the pen of Baruch, as the destroyed Scriptures gradually reappeared. God even added additional material (Jer. 36:32). Due to these efforts, we now have the book of Jeremiah for our learning.

William Carey, the father of modern missions, labored in India. He spent many years learning the language so that he might produce the Scriptures in the local dialect. He had also thoughtfully prepared grammar books and dictionaries for the use of his successors. One day while away from his station, a disastrous fire broke out destroying



everything. Countless hundreds of hours of work went up in smoke. When the man of God returned home, his servant tearfully told him of the dreadful loss. Carey had to **start from scratch**. Without a word of despair, impatience, or anger, he knelt and thanked God that he still had the strength to do the work **all over again**. He started immediately, not wasting a moment in idle self-pity. Before his death, with the Lord’s kind help,

he duplicated his earlier achievements and produced translations, grammars and dictionaries that were even better than what he had done at first!

What an encouragement to all of us to trust God and never give up!

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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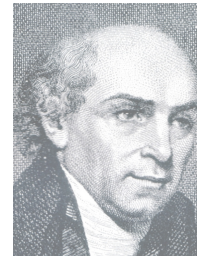
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