

## RESTORATION AFTER JACOB'S DISTRESS - 1

(Jer 30:1-11) 10/31/18

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### I. CONTEXT

- A. Expositors generally agree that chapters 30-33 constitute a group of prophecies. The section has been called "The Book of Consolation" (Feinberg).
- B. [Jer 32:1] gives us the historical background of these prophecies (cf. Jer 33:1). Jerusalem was in the final period of an eighteen-month siege by the Babylonians. Other Judean cities had already capitulated to them. The temporary intervention of Egypt (cf. Jer 37:45) failed to stem the tide of events, and Jerusalem remained disillusioned and helpless. The remarkable feature of chapters 30-33 is that, though written during a time of deep distress for Jerusalem, they foretell a glorious future for the nation (cf. the latter part of 1:10). Up to this point in the book, Jeremiah's prophecies have mostly been threatening and gloomy, despite some bright glimpses (cf. Jer 2:13; 3:14-17; 16:14-15; 23:18; 24:47). Now in chapters 30-33 the prophetic outlook changes (ibid.).

### II. RESTORATION PROMISED (1-3)

- A. The first three verses serve as a prologue for the coming chapters (30-33). Again, it was not Jeremiah's own opinion, but the revealed **word** of the **Lord** to him (1).
- B. The **God of Israel** has something to say to Israel (and Judah) and He wanted Jeremiah to record it in a **book**. This would end up being a portion of the entire book of Jeremiah (2).
- C. The Lord began with the phrase, "**behold, days are coming**" (3). This is a prophetic announcement of eschatological times (Jer 7:32; 9:25; 16:14; 23:5; 31:27, 31, 38; 33:14; 48:12; 49:2; 51:47, 52). Some prophetic announcements in Jeremiah have been about judgment (Jer 7:32; 9:25; 49:2). Some prophetic announcements have been about deliverance (Jer 16:14-15; 23:5). However, since this section (chapters 30-33) contains five prophetic announcements of restoration (Jer 30:3; 31:27, 31, 38; 33:14), it has been called, "The Book of Consolation."
- D. The Lord summarizes His announcement with the **restoration** of the **fortunes** of His people. Though the kingdom was divided, the Lord would unite His people **Israel** (northern kingdom) and **Judah** (southern kingdom). This was a theme in Jeremiah (Jer 3:18; 23:6), especially in chapters 30 through 33 (Jer 30:3; 31:27, 31; 33:7, 14). They will **possess** the land of their forefathers.

### III. JACOB'S DISTRESS FOR A TIME (4-11)

- A. Lord's Words for Israel and Judah (4) - Israel and Judah would be restored to a united kingdom. However, before that took place, they would both experience a time of distress. The cause of their distress was that their sins were numerous (Jer 30:15).
- B. Lord Heard Terror and Dread (5) - The Lord began with a poetic (**heard**) and prophetic message that His people will be besieged with **terror** and they will have **no peace**.
- C. Like Pain of Childbirth (6) - The Lord poses a dramatic question, "**can [a male] give birth?**" The men will clutch their thighs in anguish from the destruction of the enemy. They will assume a position similar to a **woman in childbirth** and will become **pale** with dread.
- D. Time of Jacob's Distress (7) - The tribulation in that day will be **great**. There will not be another day **like it**. It is a **distress** (*tsarah* - narrow or confined) that is designed for **Jacob** (Israel).
  1. Interpretations - There are several interpretations of this and especially of the phrase "Jacob's distress."
    - a. Some believe it is referring to the immediate situation of the Babylonian's final invasion. This is a prominent interpretation and cannot be excluded from any of the views. However, we might say that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians pales in comparison to the Great Tribulation. In a sense, the Babylonian conquest is a foreshadow of the future distress of the Great Tribulation.
    - b. Some believe that it refers to the entire time Israel is in Babylonian captivity. However, the terror, dread, and destruction described in Jeremiah usually refers to the approach, arrival, and action of the enemy. Those descriptions were centered on the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple, not necessarily the time of captivity.
    - c. The best interpretation is the view that holds "Jacob's distress" as the Great Tribulation in the end times before Israel's full restoration. It is the view that is most consistent with the description of the text as well as its parallel passages.
      - 1) It is called "Jacob's" distress because it will primarily deal with Israel in order to bring them to the Messiah at the time of His return.

- 2) This “time of distress” is unprecedented. It is called “great” and there will not be another day like it. Therefore, it must be the one and only “Great Tribulation.”
- 3) Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord’s anger would be accomplished and understood in the “latter days” (Jer 30:24). Sometimes the phrase “latter days” carries eschatological meaning (cf. Deu 4:30; Dan 10:14).
- 4) All of these explanations point to the fulfilment of Jacob’s distress in the end times.
- 5) *This period of unprecedented difficulty for Israel, as the verse defines, is set in a context of Israel’s final restoration. It is best equated with the time of tribulation (cf. vv. 8, 9) just before Christ’s Second Advent, mentioned elsewhere (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21, 22) and described in detail of Rev. 6–19 (MSB).*
- 6) *The first great purpose of the tribulation is to prepare the nation Israel for her Messiah. The prophecy of Jeremiah (30:7) makes it clear that this time that is coming has particular reference to Israel, for it is the time of Jacob’s trouble (Ironsides, Things to Come).*
- 7) *In the future, there will be a seven-year period (Dan. 9:27) during which God’s plan to restore Israel will resume. The last half of this period will include unprecedented persecution and the wrath of Antichrist, who will commit an abominable act in the Jerusalem temple (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:34). Jeremiah says that this will be a unique period, a time of distress for Jacob, but that he shall be saved out of it (Jer. 30:7) (MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine).*

## 2. Jacob’s Distress in Scripture

- a. As far back as Deuteronomy, a time of “distress” (Great Tribulation) for Israel was predicted in the “latter days” (Deu 4:30).
  - b. Zephaniah described the Great Day of the Lord as a “day of trouble and distress” (Zep 1:15).
  - c. Zechariah also described a day when all the nations would gather against Jerusalem. Though the word “distress” is not explicitly mentioned, it clearly depicts Israel’s distress in the Great Tribulation (Zec 14:1-4).
  - d. Daniel prophesied of the same event and called it a “time of distress” and it was directed at Israel [“your people”] (Dan 12:1).
  - e. Matthew recorded Jesus’ teaching to His disciples on the “great tribulation.” It was a distress that had not occurred since the beginning of the world (Mat 24:21).
  - f. Mark identified the future distress as a “time of tribulation” which had never occurred (Mar 13:19).
  - g. Luke wrote of a time of “great distress” (Great Tribulation) upon Israel [“this people”] (Luk 21:23).
  - h. John wrote in Revelation of a period in which some had come out of the “great tribulation” (Rev 7:14).
- E. Yoke will be Broken (8) - Though Nebuchadnezzar’s yoke will eventually be broken from the neck of Israel, “**that day**” refers to the ultimate breaking of all foreign yokes at the end of the Great Tribulation.
- F. Will Serve God and David (9) - It is only in “that day” that Israel will truly **serve the Lord** their God. That will be the future time when the Ultimate **King David** (Christ) will be **raised up** to sit on the throne (cf. Davidic Covenant - 2Sa 7:12-13 and Jer 23:5, 6; Eze 37:24, 25; Dan 7:13, 14, 27; Mat 25:34; 26:64; Luk 1:32; Rev 17:14; 19:16).
- G. Israel will be Saved (10) - After “Jacob’s distress,” Christ will return from heaven (**from afar**) to **save** Israel. He will usher Israel into the Millennial Kingdom where He will rule, and Israel will **return** and be **at ease** (Isa 9:7).
- H. Jacob Will Not be Destroyed Completely (11) - According to the Lord’s **justice**, He will not leave Judah **unpunished** for their sin. The Lord will also destroy the nations for their sin. However, He will **not destroy** Israel **completely** (cf. Jer 4:27; 5:10, 18; 46:28 cf. Amo 9:8).