

## Journey through Jeremiah Part 6 – Refusal to Repent – Judgment

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Th.D. – Wednesday, January 25, 2017

### † Jeremiah 5:1-31

As we look at Chapter 5 tonight there are 2 different things that we will cover. 1. Judah's lack of repentance, and 2. God's judgement pronounced upon them.

(1) Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be *any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

The way this reads reminds me of the account of the Lord speaking with Abraham before he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham pleaded if there be 50 righteous men, then 40 righteous, then 30, and 20, and then if there be 10 righteous men Lord, would you not destroy them, and the Lord agreed. But there could not be 10 righteous men found, there was only one, Abraham's nephew, Lot, whom the Bible says was righteous in **2 Peter 2:7-8: And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)**

But here in the Land of Judah, in the City of Jerusalem, there wasn't even one righteous man that could be found. But if they could find one, the LORD would pardon their transgressions.

(2) And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.

The LORD knows the truth of men's hearts. He says if there is a man that claims that he lives for the LORD and only the LORD then he is lying.

(3) O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Then from the Prophet's lips come these words of unbelief at how the inhabitants of Judah have refused to repent. They have no intentions of repenting. He said they "*made their faces harder than a rock.*" That is the face of people today, in the time we are living in. No one is ashamed of their sin anymore. There used to be a time when someone would blush when caught in the act of their sin but not anymore. Jeremiah will even use that same analogy in Chapter 6 and in Chapter 8 where he will say, "*they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.*"

(4) Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God.

Jeremiah can't understand how the people could possibly be that ignorant of God's judgment. He says, "*surely these are poor and foolish.*" They just don't know any better or they would be repentant. But that's not the case. They DID know better they just didn't care. It's the same today. People DO know better but they don't care. They love their sin more than they love the LORD. Men love darkness more than they love the light. The Bible says in **John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

(5) I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the LORD, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.

Jeremiah says that he will find the great men, the educated men, the religious men that have studied and understand the ways of the LORD and surely they will turn and repent... but no, they too have "*broken the yoke and burst the bonds.*" The picture here is of an animal that has a yoke upon it and does what it supposed to do but has broken the yoke and is now running wild. Even the great men have broken away from the ways of the LORD and are running wild.

(6) Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.

The lion, wolf, and leopard represent Nebuchadnezzar and his powerful army that will come in and tear them to pieces.

(7) How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. (8) They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. (9) Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

The LORD asks the obvious question here, "*how shall I pardon thee for this?*" In other words, do you really expect me to overlook all the things you have done? Have you done one single bit of good that could make up for all the bad you have done? After all I have done for you, you continue to sin against me.

When I saw video and pictures of those women having their so-called "women's day march" on our nation's capital, I was completely appalled. The vitriol that they were spewing out of their mouths, the wickedness that was on display, was as ungodly as you can get. I asked myself, "God, how in the world can you forgive us for this?" How much longer is the LORD going to put up with the people of the United States?

(10) Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they are not the LORD'S.

Here the command is given from the LORD to Jeremiah to pronounce to the Chaldeans to go and destroy. What a dreadful thing to think of. He does tell them not to make a full end, that means you can destroy the walls but do not wipe the people off the face of the earth. The LORD still wants to preserve His remnant. Although there would be numerous people slain, most will be taken into captivity.

(11) For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD. (12) They have belied the LORD, and said, It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: (13) And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

Then he provides the reason he is allowing the enemy to invade and destroy. They worked deceptively, they lied, they claimed nothing would happen to them. Their prophets did not prophesy the truth. So God is going to allow this to happen.

(14) Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

And here begins the judgement being pronounced upon God's people. What a terrifying image of the Word of the LORD becoming a destroying fire and burning them up like wood.

We see a similar thing in the Book of Revelation talking about the 2 witnesses that will be sent by Him during the Tribulation period. **Revelation 11:3-5:** And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. **4** These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. **5** And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

We will also see this imagery when we get to **Jeremiah 23:29:** *Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*

(15) Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

He describes their enemy, the Chaldeans. They are foreigners. They speak a foreign tongue which the Jews did not know. This is the language that Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had to learn when they were taken into captivity.

(16) Their quiver is as an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men.

(17) And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

This is a description of the devastation that will take place when the enemy invades their land. The people of Judea will be left with nothing. It will all be taken from them.

(18) Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I will not make a full end with you.

(19) And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.

The LORD promises that he will not allow the enemy to totally wipe them out, they would keep their lives but they will be servants to strangers in a strange land and wonder what in the world happened and they will ask, why did God allow this.

(20) Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

(21) Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: (22) Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

Just as Solomon wrote in the Proverbs: **Proverbs 1:7:** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. And fools they were. They did not fear God and it led to their demise.

(23) But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. (24) Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

They are so caught up in their sin and iniquity that they don't even care that God is the one that blesses them with the rains that they so desperately need to grow their crops. Without it they would starve to death. God has already told them that he would withhold the rains if they did not turn from their sin but they could care less.

(25) Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

God tells them that He has withheld these things from them because of their sin. They could have been enjoying His blessings but he is withholding it.

(26) For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. (27) As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. (28) They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

Jeremiah describes the character of the men of Judah, how they are wicked and they prey upon men and steal from them and get rich off of them. It has become a cesspool of filth and wickedness in the land of Judah.

(29) Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? (30) A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; (31) The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

The question is asked again by the LORD through the Prophet Jeremiah, "shall I not visit for these things?" Do you expect me to just sit idly by and allow this to go on without repercussions? My friend, if God is a Holy God, and He is, then he cannot continue to allow men to continue to be fully given over to sin. He has to pronounce judgment upon sin and deal with it.

That is why I keep wondering, just how long will He continue to let us live as we are living here in the United States? I am praying that our new President and his administration will restore some of the virtue that we have lost in our country. He has been appointing leaders that seem to have more Christian and conservative values. Our vice president is certainly a Christian man with good morals about him. Maybe this is our reprieve. We as Christians can only pray that it is.

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† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Bible