

THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE

TEXT: JEREMIAH 30:1-24

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible teaches the final restoration of Israel, which will be preceded by the great tribulation, referred to here in Jeremiah 30:7 as "the time of Jacob's trouble."
2. Verse 3 says, "For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it."
3. Notice, the LORD refers to both "Israel and Judah," emphasizing the complete restoration of Israel (cf. verse 4).
4. Ezekiel 39:25 says, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel..."
5. Isaiah 11:12 says the LORD "shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."
6. The destruction of Jerusalem, the Babylonian captivity, and their return from Babylon to Jerusalem was a foreshadowing of what will take place during the time of Jacob's trouble.
7. These prophecies in Jeremiah 30 look beyond the return and restoration at the end of the seventy-year captivity in Babylon.
8. They are still future and have not yet been fulfilled (30:9-11, 22).
9. Warren Wiersbe says, "Jeremiah had two horizons in view: the nearer horizon of the return of the exiles to Judah and the farther horizon of the regathering of Israel in the end times from the nations of the earth" (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*).

I. THE TRIBULATION WILL PRECEDE THE MILLENNIUM (30:5).

1. H.A. Ironside said, "Before there can be the fulfillment of the promises of blessing, there must be the tasting to the full of the cup of the Lord's indignation. The subject therefore to which these words introduce us is that of 'the great tribulation' (See Matthew 24:21 and Revelation 7:14). Before the appearing of Israel's once rejected Messiah and the establishment of the kingdom, the favored nation will be exposed as never before to the power of the oppressor and to the malice of Satan. It is their special punishment for having crucified and slain the Anointed of the Lord" (*Jeremiah and Lamentations*).

2. The pain and suffering will be so severe that it is likened to the travail-pains that precede the birth of a child (30:5, 6; cf. 4:31; 6:24).
3. Merrill Unger says the figure of a woman in travail "is often employed to vividly set forth Israel's sudden deliverance into millennial birth after the short but terribly painful Tribulation (Isa. 66:7-9)" (*Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*).
4. In Matthew 24:8, our Lord described the first part of the tribulation period as "the beginning of sorrows." This means literally, the pain of childbirth or birth pangs, and that is how some Bible versions translate it.
5. The tribulation will be painful, but out of it will come the birth of the millennial kingdom.
6. Jeremiah 30:7 says, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it."
7. That is what our Lord said in Matthew 24:21 -- "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (cf. Jer. 30:23, 24).
8. Daniel 12:1 says, "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time."
9. The tribulation will be worldwide, but will be especially difficult for Israel and that is why it is called, "the time of Jacob's trouble" (30:7).
10. Unger says, "That purging out of a saved remnant from the apostate mass of the nation to form the nucleus of the millennial Kingdom is the central purpose of the Great Tribulation in God's plan of the ages" (*Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*).
11. Jeremiah 30:7 says Israel "shall be saved out of it." Revelation 3:10 says the church will be saved from it.
12. Israel will be corrected "in measure," and will not be left "altogether unpunished," but a remnant will be saved (30:11).
13. The sin of Israel and Judah was serious. The LORD told them, "Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines" (30:12, 13).
14. Their backslidden condition is described in II Chronicles 36:16. "But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy."
15. Not only was their bruise incurable (30:12), but their sorrow was incurable (30:15) because of their sin.
16. All of their "lovers" (30:14), i.e., their pagan neighbors they had looked to for help, had forgotten them and abandoned them.

17. The LORD will punish Israel for their sin (30:14, 15).
18. Israel's heathen allies had forgotten, and had abandoned Israel and Judah, but the LORD never will. The LORD will protect Israel and will punish their enemies (30:16, 20).
19. Regarding verse 16, H.A. Ironside said, "All down through the centuries the nations have been made to know the truth of this verse. None have prospered long who oppressed Israel. Babylon and Assyria exist not; while Persia and Greece are still preserved. So among modern nations. There should be no question that one source, at least, of the strength of Britain and the United States is found in this, that they have, as a rule, befriended the Jews. On the other hand, the history of the powers who have stretched out their hands against the Lord's people, records disaster after disaster. Spain is witness to this; as, markedly, Russia is also - that great dominion of Gog" (*Jeremiah and Lamentations*).

II. ISRAEL IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

1. Verse 17 says, " For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD..."
2. The LORD will protect Israel and preserve Israel and restore Israel and heal Israel during the millennial kingdom.
3. Verse 8 says, "For it shall come to pass in that day (i.e., the day of the LORD), saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his (Israel) yoke from off thy neck."
4. Israel is referred to directly, and then indirectly in verse 8. Unger says this is an enallage, a rhetorical device that creates a literary effect.
5. The "yoke" referred to is that of the last great Gentile power, the ten-horned beast of Revelation 13, the antichrist and his revived Roman empire.
6. The power of the beast will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ; after which Israel, restored to their land, shall enter into rest under Messiah's beneficent rule.
7. "Strangers shall no more serve themselves of him" (30:8b). Israel will no longer be enslaved by foreign nations. Rather than serve foreigners, "they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (30:9).
8. During the millennial kingdom, David will be resurrected and will serve as a vice-regent under the Messiah. Our Lord said that during the millennial kingdom, "many shall come from the east and west, and

- shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11; cf. Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; Hosea 3:5).
9. Jeremiah 30:10 looks beyond the seventy-year captivity to the future restoration of Israel. From their return from the Babylonian captivity, to the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, and up to their present day troubles, Israel has not enjoyed any rest. It has been one long record of unrest and warfare.
 10. But during the millennium, "Jacob (Israel) shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid" (30:10).

III. ISRAEL WILL BE HEALED AND RESTORED (30:17).

1. This prophecy will be fulfilled during the tribulation when a remnant of Jews will be saved, and the Lord returns to establish His kingdom in Jerusalem (cf. Ezekiel 37:20-28).
2. The LORD will restore Israel. Israel will no longer be an "Outcast" (30:17), though Israel is considered an outcast by many people today.
3. Isaiah 62:11 and 12 describe the restored Israel during the millennial kingdom. "Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."
4. Verse 18 refers to Israel's wanderings and living in tents. The LORD promises that He "will bring again the captivity," i.e., He will restore them and have mercy on them.
5. Many towns and cities in Israel are built upon the "heaps" of ancient cities destroyed by war. For example, Tel Aviv literally means, "Spring Mound." *Aviv* is Hebrew for "spring", and *tel* is an archaeological site that reveals layers of civilization built one over the other.
6. The LORD will not only restore them, He will multiply them, and glorify them, and establish them (30:19, 20). This was fulfilled in small measure after the Babylonian captivity, but its complete fulfillment will take place after the great tribulation.
7. Jeremiah 30:21 is a Messianic prophecy.
8. Psalm 22:27 and 28 says, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations."

9. This same word translated "governor" in Jeremiah 30:21 and Psalm 22:28 is translated "ruler" in Micah 5:2.
10. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."
11. When "the time of Jacob's trouble" (30:7) is over, then Jeremiah 30:22 will be fulfilled.
12. Romans 11:26 says, "And so all Israel shall be saved." This prophecy will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ.
13. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."
14. "It is written" in Isaiah 59:20 -- "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD."

CONCLUSION:

1. Verse 23 says the wrath of God will come down upon the head of the wicked. This "fierce anger of the LORD" will culminate during "the time of Jacob's trouble" (30:7).
2. Verse 24 says, "in the latter days (i.e., the great tribulation) ye shall consider it."
3. Jeremiah 30 deals with Israel in the latter days -- the time of Jacob's trouble, followed by the millennial kingdom which will follow.