

12. The rest of Jeremiah's prophecies

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Though chapter 45 belongs to chapter 36, it is placed here to connect the remainder of the prophecies in chapters 46-52. As I already mentioned in our last study, chapters 46-52 contain a collection of Jeremiah's prophecies that he gave earlier in his ministry.

A. DO YOU SEEK GREAT THINGS FOR YOURSELF?

Jeremiah 45:1-5 The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the instruction of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, 2 "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: 3 'You said, "Woe is me now! For the Lord has added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest."' 4 Thus you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, what I have built I will break down, and what I have planted I will pluck up, that is, this whole land. 5 And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them; for behold, I will bring adversity on all flesh," says the Lord. "But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go."'"

Y'all remember Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah. He was a godly man. He could have a cushy job with his brother in the king's palace, but he chose to be Jeremiah's scribe and endured mistreatment with Jeremiah. But on this spiritually and emotionally draining occasion, he was down. The Lord asked him through His prophet, "Do you seek great things for yourself?"

This is a very important question for all of us to ask ourselves. In this room, we have the core group of our church. All of you are serving the church in one capacity or another. Whatever you and I do in the church, do we do it for the glory of God or for ourselves? Of course, our standard answers in front of others will be, "For His glory." But if we long to hear compliments from others about what we do, then, it is the evidence that we are doing it for ourselves and we are missing the point of our service in the church.

B. JUDGMENT AGAINST EGYPT

Jeremiah 46:17 They cried there, 'Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is but a noise. He has passed by the appointed time!'

King Josiah was killed in the battle against Egyptian Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo in 609 B.C. Later Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho at the battle of Carchemish in 605. From then on, Egypt became powerless and Babylon became the supreme power kingdom in that region. The Jews thought that Pharaoh would protect them from king Nebuchadnezzar's invasion. What Pharaoh said was a big noise and it stopped there.

All the promises of the world are just one big noise in reality. In front of God's judgment, it's not all cracked up to be.

C. GOD'S PROTECTION FOR ISRAEL

Jeremiah 46:27-28 "But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, And do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity; Jacob shall return, have rest and be at ease; No one shall make him afraid. 28 Do not fear, O Jacob My servant," says the Lord, "For I am with you; For I will make a complete end of all the nations To

which I have driven you, But I will not make a complete end of you. I will rightly correct you, For I will not leave you wholly unpunished."

From the time of Abraham, the Lord promised that He would protect Israel in Genesis 12. The ancient Israelites took it as a "no-matter-what-they-do" guarantee protection as they served other gods. That was not what the Lord promised. After almost 1900 years, the Jews from all over the world were coming back to their own land Israel.

While I was preparing this study, just for the fun of it, I went on to do some researches of the modern Israel military power. They are the fourth strongest military in the world. Additionally, many countries, including the Arab nations around Israel, believe that Israel possesses nuclear weapons. But Israel would neither confirm nor deny their thermonuclear bombs in their possessions. In other words, Israel is taking a policy of nuclear ambiguity.

Israel is believed to have begun full-scale production of nuclear weapons following the 1967 Six-Day War. In September 1992, German intelligence was quoted in the press as estimating that 40 top Jewish Soviet nuclear scientists had immigrated to Israel since 1989. And there are many, many very rich Jews around the world, mostly in the USA, who paid for their homeland's nuclear weapon development.

Israel also has very effective nuclear weapon delivery systems. They have German made submarines that can launch nuclear missiles from the sea, the very powerful and skillful Israel Air Force, and their medium range ballistic missiles, Jericho III, of which range is over 7000 miles. These missiles can carry nuclear warheads. By the way, the distance between Jerusalem and Tehran is only 1237 miles. Additionally, Israel has a very effective espionage agency, a.k.a. Mossad. I wouldn't be one bit surprised if they already set up nuclear weapons within the territory of Iran with a remote detonation capability.

OK, that's enough for a little rabbit trail. No extra charge for you guys.

D. JUDGMENT AGAINST MOAB

Jeremiah 48:10 Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully, And cursed is he who keeps back his sword from blood.

Jeremiah 48:38 A general lamentation On all the housetops of Moab, And in its streets; For I have broken Moab like a vessel in which is no pleasure," says the Lord.

The Moabites were descendants of Lot along with the Ammonites. They became the enemies of the Jews. During the Babylonian invasion, they joined with Judah to fight against Nebuchadnezzar. But in 582 B.C., the Babylonian army defeated Moab, and made its area in total desolation. Why did the Lord use Nebuchadnezzar to utterly destroy Moab? Their pride. The Moabites thought that their god Chemosh would protect them.

We can learn two valuable lessons from these two verses.

1) Do all in the name of the Lord.

Not everyone can be a pastor, Bible teacher, or evangelist. But we all can be used by the Lord for His glory. Once we committed our lives to the Lord, we all should live the lives that glorify the Lord.

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Jesus made a stern warning against the lukewarm church of Laodicea in the Book of Revelation 3. Unfortunately, many Christians fit in this category because they choose not to put their hearts into the work of Christ. In other words, they are NOT jealous for God.

Revelation 3:16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

2) Let's never forget that we are created for His pleasure, not our own.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

The Lord can use anything and anybody. He is not using us for His plan because He was so impressed with our capabilities and intelligence. I often wonder why He even bothers to put up with me and my stupidity. The only answer I can see is that if there is anything good I do, people would say, "It had to be the Lord." Let's remember to work hard for our King, and when it is done, step aside so that He can be praised.

E. JUDGMENT AGAINST EDMOM

Jeremiah 49:15-16 "For indeed, I will make you small among nations, Despised among men. 16 Your fierceness has deceived you, The pride of your heart, O you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Who hold the height of the hill! Though you make your nest as high as the eagle, I will bring you down from there," says the Lord.

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, the older brother of Jacob whom the Lord bypassed for the blessings and had given to Jacob because Esau looked down on his birthright and he was very carnal.

Many of the Edomites, estimated up to 30000 people lived in the rock city Petra which is located in the west side of Jordan. The Edomites, within their rock cities, they thought that they were impregnable against their enemy attacks. But when the Lord allowed the Babylonian army to come after them, they were destroyed like any other cities of the plain.

F. JUDGMENT AGAINST BABYLON

Jeremiah 50:1 The word that the Lord spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

Babylon had been used by the Lord to chastise the ungodly kingdoms, such as Judah, Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom and Damascus. But it didn't mean that it was exempt from God's judgment. Some may say, "That's very uncool of God to use Babylon to judge those kingdoms and discard it when He was done with it." The Lord uses satan to fulfill His purpose. But at the end, satan must be judged for his evil actions. Don't ever think that Babylon trusted the Lord and followed Him.

This gives us another important lesson for us to keep in mind. Just because the Lord is using us to do His work and He gets the glory, it doesn't mean that we can do whatever we want in carnal ways. Jimmy Swaggart thought that when he was foolish enough to be involved with prostitutes. During his confession, he said, "Since God has been using me, I thought that I could get away with it." No one is exempt.

Jeremiah 50:6 "My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; They have forgotten their resting place.

Again the Lord was speaking to His people, the Jews. They were lost sheep, because they didn't have a good shepherd. Their bad kings and idolatrous priests led them

away from the Lord, because the people wanted to be led astray. It was a simple supply and demand routine.

It is a total tragic and a sad state of situation that those who are called to be pastors and leaders of the ministries are so liberal and carnal that they don't care to teach the Word of God. For example, Rob Bell, an Emergent Church movement pastor says that he is an evangelical to the bone. Then he says that according to the Hebrew custom it was a common to say a virgin having her first baby was called a virgin birth. In other words, Mary had sex with Joseph, and they had baby Jesus. It may sound innocent and logical in the people who do not understand the Bible. It is a total absurdity. What Bell is saying is that Jesus was no more than a common man. As a common man he could not be an atoning sacrifice for mankind. This is nothing more than undermining the basics of Christianity.

They don't have to be the Emergent Church pastors. There are a plenty of pastors who would not preach Jesus to their congregation for whatever their reasons are. They will face the judgment of God.

Jeremiah's prophecy regarding Babylon contains both a near and far fulfillment. The Medes and Persia kingdom conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. In 330 B.C., Alexander the Great completely destroyed Babylon to a heap of ruins. Babylon is known as the anti-God world system. And it shows its final ending in Revelation 17 and 18.

Jeremiah 50:20 In those days and in that time," says the Lord, "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought, but there shall be none; And the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found; For I will pardon those whom I preserve.

God is not like us when it comes to keeping promises. Sometimes we break our promises because of impossible situations or just plain lazy or dumb part of ours. But the Lord always keeps His promises without exception. He promised that He would protect Israel and He does. All the Arab nations, all the power of Russia that was prophesied as Magog in the Book of Ezekiel 38 and 39, all the anti-Semitism that people or organizations have will mount up to nothing against the protective hands of God for Israel. I am sure that they think that they will eliminate Israel and the Jews from the earth. That is not going to happen. They are only digging their graves deeper.

I love what it says at the end of v20. *"I will pardon those whom I preserve."* I am so glad that we are included in His pardon list.

G. APPLICATIONS

1) Let's not seek our own glory, but His.

2) Let's remember that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.