

Prophecy Through the Bible – Books of Prophecy

Today we continue in the book of Jeremiah. As I mentioned last week, this book is full of laments, judgments, and predictions about the consequences of the sin of Israel, Judah, her Priests, and her people.

In Ch 4 Jeremiah talks of the Disaster to come upon Israel because of their wickedness, and in Ch 5 he discusses the divine reasons for judging Israel.

Jeremiah 4

⁵ “Announce in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem and say:
‘Sound the trumpet throughout the land!’

Cry aloud and say:

‘Gather together! Let us flee to the fortified cities!’

⁶ Raise the signal to go to Zion! Flee for safety without delay!
For I am bringing disaster from the north, even terrible destruction.”

⁷ A lion has come out of his lair; a destroyer of nations has set out.
He has left his place to lay waste your land.
Your towns will lie in ruins without inhabitant.

⁸ So put on sackcloth, lament and wail,
for the fierce anger of the LORD has not turned away from us.

Jeremiah 5:29-31

²⁹ *Should I not punish them for this?”
declares the LORD.*

*“Should I not avenge myself
on such a nation as this?*

³⁰ *“A horrible and shocking thing
has happened in the land:*

³¹ *The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority,
and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?*

Jeremiah 7 False Religion Worthless

7 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² “Stand at the gate of the LORD’s house and there proclaim this message:

“Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD.

³ *This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: **Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place.** ⁴ **Do not trust in deceptive words** and say, “This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!” ⁵ **If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each***

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other justly, ⁶ if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, ⁷ then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever. ⁸ **But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.**

⁹ **“Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, ¹⁰ and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, “We are safe”—safe to do all these detestable things? ¹¹ Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.**

The Lord knows what is truly worship of Him and what is not. He is watching! This is a sobering thought not only for the Jews who were deceiving the people and acting like pious religious leaders when all the while they were doing the things that the Lord has told them not to do... **But also for us today.** I wonder about the dead churches we have discussed before where all the process and tradition is in place, but the Spirit is not there. He is not there because there is deception, and no true worship and repentance.

Do we think God will not judge us as He did Israel? Do we think God isn't watching us every minute and knows what we are doing and not doing? Do we think God will give us a pass with Spiritless and worthless worship.

No ! God is the same today, yesterday, and tomorrow and His Word never changes, no matter how smart, or enlightened, or politically correct we are.

Our religion is worthless if it does not change our lives and lead us to obedience to Him (v2)

Jeremiah 11 the Covenant is Broken

11 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² “Listen to the terms of this covenant and tell them to the people of Judah and to those who live in Jerusalem. ³ Tell them that this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Cursed is the one who does not obey the terms of this covenant— ⁴ the terms I commanded your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt, out of the iron-smelting furnace.’ I said, ‘Obey me and do everything I command you, and you will be my people, and I will be your God. ⁵ Then I will fulfill the oath I swore to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey’—the land you possess today.”

I answered, “Amen, LORD.”

⁶ The LORD said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: ‘Listen to the terms of this covenant and follow them. ⁷ From the time I brought your ancestors up from Egypt until today, I warned them again and again, saying, “Obey me.” ⁸ But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubbornness of their evil hearts. So I brought on them all the curses of the covenant I had commanded them to follow but that they did not keep.’”

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WOW...you mean God expects us to do what He tells us? You mean that if we do not follow His commands, He will punish us?

Don't be fooled by those who tell you God is not going to punish us! God does not lie in wait for us to disobey but where He has laid out clear commands, and they are conditional covenants with consequences if we do not obey them, we will suffer the consequences.

Once we are Christians, none of the consequences can deprive us of our salvation, but they can provide us a load of problems in this life.

Jeremiah 11:9-14

⁹ *Then the LORD said to me, "There is a conspiracy among the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem. ¹⁰ They have returned to the sins of their ancestors, who refused to listen to my words. They have followed other gods to serve them. Both Israel and Judah have broken the covenant I made with their ancestors. ¹¹ Therefore this is what the LORD says: 'I will bring on them a disaster they cannot escape. Although they cry out to me, I will not listen to them. ¹² The towns of Judah and the people of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they will not help them at all when disaster strikes. ¹³ You, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns; and the altars you have set up to burn incense to that shameful god Baal are as many as the streets of Jerusalem.'*

¹⁴ *"Do not pray for this people or offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their distress."*

Of course, these prophecies took place at the conquest of Israel/ Judah by Babylon, so God fulfilled his prophecies literally and accurately. Unfortunately, the Jews also did not want to hear any of Jeremiah's prophecies from the Lord because the Jews were content in their sin and their false religion and did not want anything or anyone to upset their gravy train, but Jeremiah knew of their plots and sought protection from the Lord.

Q: Who do we depend on for our protection in the times we are doing the Lord's work according to His will and command? There is no one but the Lord Himself that we can depend on.

Jeremiah 16:19-21 The Gentiles will be saved

¹⁹ *O LORD, my strength and my stronghold,
And my refuge in the day of distress,
To You the nations will come
From the ends of the earth and say,
"Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood,
Futility and things of no profit."*

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²⁰ *Can man make gods for himself?
Yet they are not gods!*

²¹ *“Therefore behold, **I am going to make them know—**
This time I will make them know
My power and My might;
And they shall know that My name is the LORD.”*

Isn't it wonderful to know that even when the Jews, God's chosen people, failed to teach and bring the "nations" into knowledge and understanding of God, that His plan will be accomplished "I will make them know". What will they learn? They will learn about the Power and Might of the Lord, the one who keeps His covenants, and they shall know that the Lord God Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the LORD.

It is also important in this time when we celebrate Thanksgiving to God, to also Thank Him for bring us into his family as believers. We are the "called out ones", or the ekklesia...aka the "church". Not the church in the sense of a denomination, or campus, or religion. It means "the called out assembly", called out by God to be His children. All of the Christians of all time and all denominations are the "church" or the body of Christ.

Do you know Him? Do you know His Power and Might and His name is the LORD? Did you know that when your Bible uses the term LORD in all capitals, it is the replacement word for the Hebrew word YHWH? Jews would not pronounce God's name so when the translators translated YHWH they used the word LORD. When it is not capitalized as in Lord, it is a translation of adonai which is a title like Master. For a fuller explanation, see your own Bible in the beginning pages where it will tell you how these words are treated and what they mean in your version. This is important because they mean different things in the Verses. "and they shall know my name is the LORD" means We will know God as the covenant making, covenant keeping God we call Jehovah.

Jeremiah 18:1-10 Sign of the Potters House

The potter makes the objects he wants to make. If one is not to his liking he can remold it to be something new. God claims through Jeremiah that He is the Potter and we are the clay and He can do the same thing with us.

Jeremiah 19:1-15 Sign of the Broken Clay Pot

Jeremiah uses the clay pot as an example of how God will destroy Israel in the Valley of Slaughter, by breaking the pot and saying it cannot be restored again.

Jeremiah 23:1-4 Judgment on Israel's Shepherds

²³ *“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD.
² Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people: “Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the LORD. ³ “I myself will gather the remnant of my*

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flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD.

God is saying to the leaders of Israel that they are bad shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep (God’s people). They have driven them away and not cared for them.

God will call them back and place new shepherds over them who would be good shepherds. We know Jesus is the Good Shepherd for the end of days who will lead and take care of His people.

Jeremiah 23:9-14 Judgment on Lying Prophets

⁹ *Concerning the prophets:*

*My heart is broken within me;
all my bones tremble.
I am like a drunken man,
like a strong man overcome by wine,
because of the LORD
and his holy words.*

¹⁰ *The land is full of adulterers;
because of the curse the land lies parched
and the pastures in the wilderness are withered.*

*The prophets follow an evil course
and use their power unjustly.*

¹¹ *“Both prophet and priest are godless;
even in my temple I find their wickedness,”
declares the LORD.*

¹² *“Therefore their path will become slippery;
they will be banished to darkness
and there they will fall.*

*I will bring disaster on them
in the year they are punished,”
declares the LORD.*

Jeremiah is placing serious woe on both the leaders of the Jews and their hired prophets. They are working together to deceive the sheep, and not taking care of them the way God has ordained. As a result, people are being destroyed and scattered out of the control of the Priests and Prophets.

Both of these concerns are present for the “church” today as well. With the power that comes with the leadership of God’s people, there comes a duty and obligation to shepherd the flock according to the plan of God himself. When this does not happen, there is discord, and people are driven away or choose to leave for

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better shepherds elsewhere. The idea of prophets does not mean **foretellers** today but those who are “**forthtellers**” who lay out the word of the LORD as God has told them to. If they lay out their own ideas and call them “from the LORD”, they are liars and deceivers. There are many of them in the universal church today who have motives that are personal, prideful, and greedy. We must be discerning of these folks.

God reminds us in these verses that they will be judged and God Himself will bring disaster on them (judgment) when their time has come.

Two more items before we close today.

Jeremiah 24:1-10 The Two baskets of figs

Jeremiah was shown two baskets of figs. One was very good and the other was very bad. In this illustration the good basket were the Jews who were carried off to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel. The bad figs were those who remained in the land. This seems strange to us but God protected the remnant of Jews by allowing them to become captives. The remaining were either killed or melted into the masses in the land. These who remained are what we call the Samaritans who were Jews who intermarried with the people of other regions and lived in Samaria or what is known as the West Bank today. They are “Palestinians” or Bedouins, or Arabs for the most part.

Sometimes what appears as judgment to us is really God preserving us for something later. We must trust God, as did Daniel and those captured.

In Jeremiah 25:1-14 Jeremiah predicted the time that the captives would be in Babylon

25 The word came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. ² So Jeremiah the prophet said to all the people of Judah and to all those living in Jerusalem: ³ For twenty-three years—from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah until this very day—the word of the LORD has come to me and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

⁴ And though the LORD has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention. ⁵ They said, “Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the LORD gave to you and your ancestors for ever and ever. ⁶ Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; do not arouse my anger with what your hands have made. Then I will not harm you.”

⁷ “But you did not listen to me,” declares the LORD, “and you have aroused my anger with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves.”

⁸ Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: “Because you have not listened to my words, ⁹ I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,” declares the LORD, “and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy

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them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. ¹⁰ I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

¹² “But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians,^[b] for their guilt,” declares the LORD, “and will make it desolate forever. ¹³ I will bring on that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. ¹⁴ They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.”

Just a reminder, that God raiser up Kings and leaders and takes them down. Nebuchadnezzar was called a servant of God, but He did not know Him. He was acting out the plan of the ages that is God’s plan, even though he did not know it at the time.

After the 70 years of captivity, God sent the Jews back and destroyed Babylon because Cyrus of Persia captured Babylon and released the Jews back to their homeland. As I mentioned before the two kings that did not know God but were used in an mighty way by Him were Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar.

God’s plan is still moving and unfolding today. We are getting closer to the time long awaited by believers when the LORD comes back again and takes us for protection away before His Wrath comes to the earth.

What a glorious day.