

DEAF, BUT CONTENT

Jeremiah 21-24

PROPHECIES CONCERNING JUDAH 2-45

She's headed for destruction

ACCUSATION AND EXHORTATION 2-20

Eight Messages of Warning 2:1-19:13

Accusation of sin and idolatry

Exhortation to repent—to turn back to God.

These messages should have produced repentance—return to God.

Israel's Response to the warnings 19:14-20:18

Condition declared 19:14-15

Why will God destroy them? They are “stiff-necked”

Israel refuses to submit to GOD's authority.

She rejects His Word.

Condition demonstrated 20:1-6

Persecution of the prophet 20:1-2

Condition illustrated by Pashhur's treatment of Jeremiah.

When he rejects Jeremiah's message, he represents the people.

This is an official rejection of God's message and messenger.

Pashhur orders that Jeremiah be beaten and placed in stocks.

God's response to their rejection 20:3-6

Because of the seriousness of the offense,

Pashhur's name is changed to “*terror on every side.*”

His name will serve as a reminder;

he will be a symbol of the coming Babylonian captivity.

Condition lamented 20:7-18

Jeremiah isn't happy about the role God has given to him.

Jeremiah's frustration 7-9

People reject Jeremiah and his message (Cp. 2 Pet. 3:3-10)

When he decides to keep quiet, he can't.

He has a burning desire within to proclaim God's Word.

He's undoubtedly motivated by his love for God's people.

Jeremiah's opposition 10

Even his friends abandon him.

They're just waiting for him to slip so they can accuse him.

Jeremiah's protection 11-13

Jeremiah continues to trust the Lord.

He remembers God's promise: “*I will be with you.*” (1:17-19)

He's certain of God's protection.

His suffering causes him to seek vengeance.

He praises God because he knows what he will do.

Jeremiah's complaint 20:14-18

Jeremiah experiences inner conflict.
 He wants to see vengeance and God's plan fulfilled.
 Yet he loves the people,
 though they persecute him and seek to kill him.

PREDICTION OF CAPTIVITY 21-39

2nd set of prophecies directed to Judah deals specifically with the captivity.

Moves from call to repent, to direct warning: judgment's coming.

While there's still the possibility of repentance, which would bring restoration, God's operating on **assumption they won't repent.**

Eight messages of judgment 21-29

Jeremiah delivers 2nd series of 8 messages which inform them concerning
 God's plan to send captivity upon His people.

Messages designed

- to prepare them for what's about to come
- to demonstrate that God's in control.

It's especially important that they be aware of God's plan,
 so that they'll trust Him when the time of restoration arrives.

Order of Jeremiah isn't chronological; it's thematic.

ANSWER FOR ZEDEKIAH 21-22

1st message of judgment: an answer to **Zedekiah's question: what should they do about Babylon? 21:1-2**

The word came to Jeremiah from the Lord when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malkijah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah. They said: 2 "Inquire now of the Lord for us because Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is attacking us. Perhaps the Lord will perform wonders for us as in times past so that he will withdraw from us."

Zedekiah sends for advice. *Who is Zedekiah?*

Josiah => Jehoahaz (3 mo)

=> Jehoiakim (11 yr.) => Jehoiachin (3 mo.) => captive in 597

=> Zedekiah (11 yr. => captivity) 597-586

King of Judah

Son of Josiah

"Bad" king

Last king-taken captive

Sends 2 messengers to find out what to do about Babylon

Jeremiah answers: God Himself is fighting against Judah.

Prediction of captivity 21:3-7 *But Jeremiah answered them, "Tell Zedekiah,⁴ 'This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **I** am about to turn against you the weapons of war that are in your hands, which you are using to fight the king of Babylon and the Babylonians who are outside the wall besieging you. And **I** will gather them inside this city.⁵ **I** myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm in anger and fury and great wrath.'⁶*

I will strike down those who live in this city—both men and animals—and they will die of a terrible plague.⁷ After that, declares the Lord, I will hand over Zedekiah king of Judah, his officials and the people in this city who survive the plague, sword and famine, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to their enemies who seek their lives. He will put them to the sword; he will show them no mercy or pity or compassion.'

Notice the emphasis on "I"

GOD is fighting against them!

Warning: Submit to Babylon 21:8-10 *"Furthermore, tell the people, 'This is what the Lord says: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death.⁹ Whoever stays in this city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; he will escape with his life.¹⁰ I have determined to do this city harm and not good, declares the Lord. It will be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will destroy it with fire.'*

He warns them to submit to Babylon.

Those who submit will survive; those who fight will die.

Rather than resist Babylon, they should repent.

Consequences of refusal to obey are given
because He knows they won't listen.

God will defeat them and send them into captivity.

Warning: Repent 21:11-22:30 21:13-14 *I am against you, Jerusalem, you who live above this valley on the rocky plateau, declares the Lord—you who say, "Who can come against us? Who can enter our refuge?"¹⁴ I will punish you as your deeds deserve, declares the Lord. I will kindle a fire in your forests that will consume everything around you.'*

22:1-5 *This is what the Lord says: "Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and proclaim this message there:² 'Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, you who sit on David's throne—you, your officials and your people who come through these gates.'³ This is what the Lord says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of his oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place.⁴ For if you are careful to carry out these commands, then kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this palace, riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by their officials and their people.⁵ But if you do not obey these commands, declares the Lord, I swear by myself that this palace will become a ruin.'*

The warning presents the results of failure to obey
because they won't obey.

God is against you and will take you captive.

MESSAGE AGAINST SPIRITUAL LEADERS 23

2nd message of judgment: against spiritual leaders of God's people.

What should characterize their spiritual leadership?

What does characterize it?

23:1-8 “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 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.

⁵ “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.⁶ In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness.⁷ “So then, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when people will no longer say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,’⁸ but they will say, ‘As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.’ Then they will live in their own land.”

23:16 This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.

23:21 I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied.

23:32-36 Indeed, I am against those who prophesy false dreams,” declares the Lord. “They tell them and lead my people astray with their reckless lies, yet I did not send or appoint them. They do not benefit these people in the least,” declares the Lord.³³ “When these people, or a prophet or a priest, ask you, ‘What is the oracle of the Lord?’ say to them, ‘What oracle? I will forsake you,’ declares the Lord.”³⁴ If a prophet or a priest or anyone else claims, ‘This is the oracle of the Lord,’ I will punish that man and his household.³⁵ This is what each of you keeps on saying to his friend or relative: ‘What is the Lord’s answer?’ or ‘What has the Lord spoken?’

³⁶ But you must not mention ‘the oracle of the Lord’ again, because every man’s own word becomes his oracle and so you distort the words of the living God, the Lord Almighty, our God.

23:39-40 Therefore, I will surely forget you and cast you out of my presence along with the city I gave to you and your fathers. 40 I will bring upon you everlasting disgrace—everlasting shame that will not be forgotten.”

Rather than care for people and lead them in God’s ways, they’re false priests and prophets.

They promote sin among God’s people.

Therefore they will be judged.

TWO BASKETS OF FIGS 24

3rd message of judgment: derived from illustration of two bunches of figs, one batch good; the other, rotten. **24:1-10**

After Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and the officials, the craftsmen and the artisans of Judah were carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Lord showed me two baskets of figs placed in front of the temple of the Lord.

²One basket had very good figs, like those that ripen early; the other basket had very poor figs, so bad they couldn't be eaten. ³Then the Lord asked me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" "Figs," I answered. "The good ones are very good, but the poor ones are so bad they cannot be eaten."

⁴Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁵"This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Like these good figs, I regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I sent away from this place to the land of the Babylonians. ⁶My eyes will watch over them for their good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down; I will plant them and not uproot them. ⁷I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart. ⁸" "But like the poor figs, which are so bad they cannot be eaten,' says the Lord, 'so will I deal with Zedekiah king of Judah, his officials and the survivors from Jerusalem, whether they remain in this land or live in Egypt. ⁹I will make them abhorrent and an offense to all the kingdoms of the earth, a reproach and a byword, an object of ridicule and cursing, wherever I banish them. ¹⁰I will send the sword, famine and plague against them until they are destroyed from the land I gave to them and their fathers.' "

The good figs were those who had been taken captive.

The bad figs were those who remained in the land.

The people left behind thought the opposite.

They think they're better because they're not taken captive.

God explains that workers gather good fruit.

The bad are left behind to rot.

APPLICATION—What do we learn from these messages?

What do they tell us about history?

What do they tell us about Israel?

What do they tell us about our own lives?