

## **TWO NOTABLE CONTRASTS**

### **Jeremiah 34-39**

**Talk about a crisis! Judah's headed for destruction**

**Even in the midst of the crisis,**

**God gives His wayward people a promise of restoration.**

**God isn't finished with His people.**

There's still hope for the future.

He still has a plan for their good.

*"I know the plans I have for you; plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.... You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."*

[Trace the development of Jeremiah's message up to Jer. 29. ]

### **ACCUSATION AND EXHORTATION 2-20**

#### **Eight Messages of Warning 2:1-19:13**

Accusation of sin and idolatry => Call to repentance

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

They're "stiff-necked"

### **PREDICTION OF CAPTIVITY 21-39**

2<sup>nd</sup> set of prophecies directed to Judah deals specifically with the captivity.

#### **Eight messages of judgment 21-29**

Judgment is coming!

"You can't play games with God!"

"If you play with fire you WILL get burned!"

In spite of false assurances by false prophets,  
captives will remain in Babylon 70 yrs.

Settle in Babylon. Wait for restoration God promised—AFTER 70 years!

#### **Future restoration 30-33 The GOOD News!**

**God hasn't abandoned nor forgotten His people.**

**He will fulfill His promise to them.**

Before Israel can experience blessings God promised,  
they must return to Him.

#### **The purpose of the tribulation 30:1-16**

Purpose of tribulation is to prepare God's people for restoration.

God wants them to realize that both present suffering  
and their future restoration are from Him.

**Pagan nations are not in control; God is in control.**

God wants to bless His people.

The reason for her suffering is SIN.

Discipline is the means of bringing her to turn back to God.

When they repent, God will judge nations that mistreated them.

**Sin => Discipline => Repentance => Blessing**

#### **Restoration of the people 30:17-33:26**

After time of corrective suffering, God begins restoration of His people.

### **Promises of the Palestinian Covenant 30:17-31:26**

God promises to restore them to the land.

### **Promises of the New Covenant 31:27-40**

#### **Confession of sin 29-30**

Recognition of sin. They'll stop blaming everybody else!

#### **Reception of blessing 31-34**

God is going to give them a new attitude—they'll seek Him.

#### **Certainty of fulfillment 35-37**

God's going to give them a new attitude so they'll seek *Him*.

As long as stars stay in place,

Israel can be sure God will fulfill His promise!

### **Illustration of Hanamel's field 32:1-44**

Troubled times are not likely to convince Israel that God will fulfill His promises to Judah.

The lesson shows certainty that God will restore them to the land.

That deed WILL be a good investment (some day)

But not yet! It's 70 years away.

### **Promises of the Davidic Covenant 33:1-26**

Restoration of the King upon the throne of David.

God promises to place a descendant of David on throne again. 14-26

Object lessons from day and night, from the stars, and from the quantity of the sand are presented as **guarantees that God will finally restore His people and fulfill the Davidic covenant.**

Promise of restoration emphasizes that God *will* fulfill His unconditional covenants with Israel.

**He'll restore their land.**

**He'll restore their blessing.**

**He'll put His Spirit within them.**

**He'll restore His king upon the throne.**

### **TWO CONTRASTS 34-38**

Before their restoration, He must deal with the present reality.

First, they must be disciplined to bring them to repentance.

Immediate judgment is coming to turn them back to God so He can bless them (34-38).

In the midst of this scene of judgment, two exceptions to the general pattern of unbelief and disobedience stand out.

They make the guilt of the people even more notable.

The first contrast described is that of unfaithful Israel and the faithful Recabites (34:1-35:19).

The contrast begins with a message concerning the captivity (34:1-7).

Nebuchadnezzar and his army have arrived.

They are attacking Jerusalem.

The final result of the attack will be captivity.

Why would God allow His people to be taken into captivity?

The reason is that they have broken the covenant (34:8-22).

In spite of the promise made to God, their obedience didn't last.

They have gone back on their word.

Therefore, destruction and captivity will come against them.

In contrast to Judah's unfaithfulness to their covenant, the example of the faithful Recabites is presented (35:1-19).

The Recabites were related to the Kenites, a tribe present in Canaan when Abraham arrived.

They were allies of Israel who had no land of their own but wandered about in the fields.

Jonadab, their forefather, rode with Jehu in his chariot when Jehu fought the descendants of Ahab and the followers of Baal.

He was presented as an ally of Jehu and as a faithful supporter of Yahweh, against Baal.

Jeremiah tempts the Recabites to drink wine with him (1-5).

There is nothing inherently wrong with his request.

Nothing could be more innocent, of itself, than obeying God's messenger in His house by doing something which God allows them to do.

In spite of the apparently innocent invitation, the Recabites refuse (6-11).

They remember Jonadab's command not to drink wine.

Even though God had not prohibited the practice, the Recabites obey their father's command.

God does not praise them for the content of their rules.

He praises them, and uses them as an example, because they have remained faithful to their father's teaching.

Jeremiah uses their example to teach Israel (12-16).

These were not Israelites.

There is no evidence that they followed Yahweh.

Israel should have taught them the importance of submission and obedience to Yahweh.

Instead, they are used as an example for Israel.

Just as there is a contrast in their conduct, so there is a contrast in their destiny (17-19).

Judah will experience God's judgment.

The Recabites are promised preservation and participation in the blessing God will send His people in the future.

The second contrast Jeremiah points to is that of unfaithful Israel and the faithful servant (36-38:28).

Again he begins with the judgment of Israel for their unfaithfulness (36-38:6).

The first cause of judgment is Jehoiakim's burning of the scroll (36).

Later, when Babylon came against Jerusalem, the people called on Egypt for help (37:1-10).

Jeremiah's message of judgment was rejected and he was arrested unjustly (37:11-38:6).

Finally God's people threw His messenger into a cistern, where he sank into the mud.

The contrast presented is based on the care shown for God's servant by the Ethiopian servant (38:7-13).

He was not even part of God's people.

He was only a foreign slave from a pagan country (7a).

Nevertheless, he recognized the injustice which had been done and was willing to risk his own life to save God's servant (7b-13).

Because of the servant's care for God's servant, he is promised protection at the time of judgment (15-18a).

He stands out as an example to Israel, God's people, because he, a pagan, trusted Yahweh when God's own people rejected Him (18b).

After presenting these two contrasts, and in part because of what they represent, Jeremiah delivers a final warning to submit to Babylon.

Zedekiah once again asks what he should do.

The answer has not changed.

If he submits to Babylon, God will bless him.

Zedekiah's fear wins out and he, therefore, experiences the judgment God predicted.

### **FULFILLED JUDGMENT 39**

The judgment is fulfilled just as Jeremiah had foretold (1-10).

By way of contrast, Jeremiah's submission to Babylon is rewarded as promised (11-14).

The blessing also reaches Ebed-Melech who is saved because of His trust in God and kindness to Jeremiah (15-18).

**APPLICATION—What do we learn from ...**

What lessons should we learn concerning God's plan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

What should WE do in the light of these messages?

What should our country do in the light of these messages?

What does this passage tell us about God's plan for *OUR* life?