

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

August 8th, 2010

The Danger of an Inconsistent lifestyle

Focal Passage: Jeremiah 7

Cross References: Exodus 20, Deut. 5, Psalm 78:60-64, Luke 19:26, 2 Tim. 4:3-4,

Context When Jeremiah began to preach, the godly Josiah had begun his reforms to wipe out idolatry from his kingdom. The content of the prophet's preaching confirms his full support of Josiah's reforms and calls for a truly repentant return to the Lord. Tragically, the people of Judah had already become so ungodly that they were no longer responsive to calls to return to God. But in grace the Lord continued to plead with Judah through Jeremiah. From the beginning of his ministry Jeremiah never deviated from the position that Judah and Jerusalem were to be destroyed by a nation from the north and the people carried into captivity (4:5-9; 6:22-26). The threatening invasion of the northern enemy gave urgency to his warnings. With Jehoiakim's rule (608 B.C.), Jeremiah again began public ministry. In the famous temple address (chs. 7, 26), he indicated that only faithfulness to God could guarantee the nation's security; otherwise the temple would be destroyed. He aroused bitter opposition to himself and his message from all segments of the nation including his own family. Sad and despairing because of the rejection of his message, he yet loved, prayed for, and agonized over his people. No greater and truer Jewish patriot ever preached the truth to them. Even when the Lord forbade him to pray for them, he continued to intercede.

Feinberg, Charles L. "His public ministry" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 6. 359-360. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1986.

Bible in a Year Daily Readings

Aug. 2nd – Aug. 8th, 2010

Aug. 1st Isaiah 60-63

Aug. 2nd Isaiah 64-66

Aug. 3rd Jeremiah 1-3

Aug. 4th Jeremiah 4-5

Aug. 5th Jeremiah 6-8

Aug. 6th Jeremiah 9-11

Aug. 7th Jeremiah 12-14

Highlights of the Week

Isaiah 60: The Future Glory of Zion

Isaiah 61: The anointing of God's great Prophet

Isaiah 65: "I revealed myself to those who did not seek me."

Isaiah 65:17 A new Heaven and a new Earth

Jeremiah 1:4 The call of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 3:6 The unfaithfulness of God's people

A Short Biography of Jeremiah

Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah was of a priestly family, but nothing indicates that he ever exercised a priestly ministry. Some scholars (cf. IOT, p. 802, n.2) hold that his father was the Hilkiah who found the "Book of the Law" in the temple (2 Kings 22:8). Jeremiah's father was probably a descendant of Abiathar, the sole survivor of the priests of Nob (1 Sam 22:20). After ministering under David, Abiathar was exiled by Solomon to Anathoth, where he had property (1 Kings 2:26). Furthermore, had his father been high priest, Jeremiah would have lived in Jerusalem, would have been designated by the proper title, and would have belonged to the line of Zadok, not Ithamar. That he was from Anathoth further accounts for the fact that in Josiah's day Jeremiah was not so well known as Huldah the prophetess (2 Kings 22:14-20). That Jeremiah was a man of means may be inferred from his purchase of the field in 32:6-15.

Jeremiah was born at Anathoth about 646 B.C. and died, probably in Egypt, not long after 586. He was called to the prophetic office in 626 (1:2; 25:3) and served in it for more than forty years. The Lord did not permit him to marry (16:2). Though his public ministry was long and checkered, there is no indication that he ever had any disciples; and his closest companion was his faithful secretary and scribe, Baruch the son of Neriah.

As stated above, Jeremiah was called to his ministry in 626 B.C., in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (1:2), and preached in Jerusalem until the Fall of Judah in 586 (cf. 7:2; 22:1; 27:1-2; 32:1). After the decline of the kingdom, he labored for some time among the survivors in Judah and later among the Jews who had fled to Egypt (chs. 40-44). His call included both Israel and the other nations of his time (1:10). The call was both simple and direct (1:4-5), but the prophet's reaction differed markedly from Isaiah's (Isa 6) and Ezekiel's (Ezek 1). Expositors differ about the age of Jeremiah at the time of his call. He was probably about twenty though *naar* ("child," 1:6-7) is difficult to define chronologically because this Hebrew noun only conveys the concept of relative age.

Feinberg, Charles L. "His background" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 6. 358-359. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1986.

Jeremiah 7: 1-7

¹ *This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:*

² *"Stand^o 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^b and your actions, and I will let you live^c in this place.*

⁴ *Do not trust^d in deceptive^e 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^f your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly,*

⁶ *if you do not oppress^h the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent bloodⁱ in this place, and if you do not follow other gods^j to your own harm,*

⁷ *then I will let you live in this place, in the land^k I gave your forefathers^l 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^u you have not known,*

¹⁰ *and then come and stand^v before me in this house, ^w which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe"—safe to do all these detestable things?^x*

¹¹ *Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers^z to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.*

DISCUSSION:

- This is Jeremiah's first public sermon. He is standing at the Gates of the Temple delivering this pointed message. Many had become to place faith in the Temple itself and saw it as the protection and salvation of Israel.
- According to vv. 4-7 how was their trust misplaced?
- What was the relationship between their lifestyle and their temple worship?
- Look at vv. 3 and 5-7. How could they avoid judgement?
- Look at v. 10. Do you think we sometimes try to cover for our sins by attending church?
- Compare v. 11 with Luke 19:36

Jeremiah 7:12-15

¹² *"Go now to the place in Shiloh^b where I first made a dwelling^c for my Name, ^d and see what I did^e to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.*

¹³ While you were doing all these things, declares the LORD, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer.

¹⁴ Therefore, what I did to Shiloh^k I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your fathers.

¹⁵ I will thrust you from my presence,ⁿ just as I did all your brothers, the people of Ephraim.'

DISCUSSION:

Shiloh was the location of the tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build during the journey to the Promised Land. There the people disobeyed God and put false hope in the structure of the tabernacle. The people of Jeremiah's time are doing the same thing.

- Why did they not learn from their ancestors?
- Read v. 13. How does disobedience keep us from hearing God's word?

Jeremiah 7:16-20

¹⁶ "So do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with me, for I will not listen to you.

¹⁷ Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

¹⁸ The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me to anger.

¹⁹ But am I the one they are provoking? declares the LORD. Are they not rather harming themselves, to their own shame?

²⁰ "Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: My anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground, and it will burn and not be quenched.

DISCUSSION:

- The Queen of Heave was a Babylonian fertility Goddess
- The idol worship was not just individual it was rampant among families and entire communities.
- How does one's refusal to worship the true God have ramifications for others?

Jeremiah 7:21-26

²¹ "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves!

²² For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices,

²³ but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.

²⁴ But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubborn inclinations of their evil hearts. They went backward and not forward.

²⁵ From the time your forefathers left Egypt until now, day after day, again and again I sent you my servants the prophets.

²⁶ But they did not listen to me or pay attention. They were stiff-necked and did more evil than their forefathers.'

DISCUSSION:

- According to V. 23 what did God really want from the people?

APPLICATION

We must be honest with ourselves and before God that we sometimes put our faith in religious repetition and neglect righteous living. Repentance is essential in maintaining a right relationship with the Lord. Recognize areas in your life that are inconsistent and God will forgive and lead you down His path.

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