

JEREMIAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Jeremiah chapter 13 as we continue our study through the Word of God. The Lord has spoken through Jeremiah warning the people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah of the covenant that they broke, the covenant that they made with God saying that they would follow after Him. Instead they went after false gods, were committing all kinds of sexual immorality, their whole lifestyle was immoral as they looked out for themselves instead of others.

But they refused to see their sin, they refused to change their ways and judgment was coming, maybe only several years away at this point and their heart is so hard that they will not listen, they will not obey what God is telling them through Jeremiah. They would rather listen to the false prophets who spoke about peace but the reality is, there was no peace coming for them because they turned from God.

I realize that it is hard to believe that people can be so blind to the truth, but as you look at history, you see that happen over and over again. Let me share this example with you. More than a decade before World War II began Adolf Hitler detailed his plans for conquest in his book *Mein Kampf*. And yet, we are told,

Yet, incredibly, the Western allies (particularly Britain and France) persisted in believing Hitler's false claim to be a man of peace. They stood idly by as he re-occupied the Rhineland (demilitarized after World War I), thus abrogating the Versailles Treaty, then annexed Austria, the Sudetenland, and Czechoslovakia.

Desperate to appease Hitler and avoid war, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain met with the Nazi dictator at Munich in 1938. Upon his return to England, Chamberlain triumphantly waved a piece of paper (containing a worthless pledge of peace from Hitler) which he claimed guaranteed “peace with honor . . . peace for our time.”

When Winston Churchill (one of the few never taken in by Hitler) rose in the House of Commons to declare that England had suffered a total, unmitigated defeat he was shouted down by angry members of Parliament. The deception was nearly universal; almost everyone misread Hitler’s intentions. Only after he invaded Poland in September 1939 did the allies finally acknowledge the truth. By then it was too late to avoid the catastrophe of the Second World War.

- John MacArthur, Revelation 1-11, p. 179

That was the Southern Kingdom of Judah; they listened to the false prophets and their empty words of peace and rejected the true prophets of God, like Jeremiah who spoke of the coming judgment. And it is truly like people today who say they love the Lord and reject the coming judgment of God, saying peace when there is no peace!

Here in Jeremiah chapter 13 the Lord is going to give Jeremiah some object lessons to show the people what has happened to them and the judgment that is to come and it is coming soon. With that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in Jeremiah chapter 13, beginning in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

JEREMIAH 13**VERSES 1-2**

1. This first illustration had to do with this linen sash or belt. A sash was a belt that not only held your robe close to your body, but when you girded your loins you would pull up your long robe and tuck it into your belt so you could move easier. And I'm sure this belt was beautiful, brightly colored and not faded because it had not been washed. And as Jeremiah walked through the streets with this belt on everyone would take notice of it, especially when it was in stark contrast to his older clothes that he was wearing. And I love the obedience of Jeremiah, he did not question the Lord, he just did what the Lord told him to do. May we have that kind of heart, one that is willing to listen and obey!

VERSES 3-5

1. After the people saw Jeremiah walking around with this beautiful belt or sash the Lord speaks to him again and tells him to take that belt and go to the Euphrates River and take the belt off and hide it under a rock in the water.

Now some have a hard time believing that Jeremiah traveled some 500 miles or so to the Euphrates River, which would have taken him months to do, just to bury this belt. Many feel that it was the area of Parah, which was located about 3 miles northeast of Anathoth, in the area of Benjamin.

Jeremiah could have gone to the city of Babylon and I do believe that he went to the Euphrates River. And the reason I do is because this is an object lesson and, as you will see, it is going to show how a beautiful people became dirty and were taken into captivity in Babylon!

2. Scofield has this helpful explanation about the location that Jeremiah went to. He wrote,

Some have questioned the possibility of Jeremiah's having actually buried his girdle, or belt, by the Euphrates, in view of the distance and the war conditions. However, there were periods in Jeremiah's ministry when the whole area was at peace.

It is not impossible that Jeremiah may have actually made a visit to Babylon, and if so, this event could easily have taken place at that time, as he might have buried the belt on his way there and might have dug it up on his way back.

It is also possible to interpret the Hebrew word as meaning, not the Euphrates but the Wadi Farah, a few miles north of Jerusalem. In this case he could have buried the belt at any time prior to the final Babylonian attack.

Thus there is reason to assume that this passage describes an actual event – not a mere vision or imaginary story. Jeremiah's marred girdle served as a symbol indicting Israel's unsatisfactory life and service.

- New Scofield Reverence Bible, New King James Version, pp. 784-785

So I do believe that Jeremiah buried this sash or belt in the Euphrates River as an object lesson for the people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Now you may be wondering how they will see this. Hold on because Jeremiah is going to tell us and again, this is an object lesson for the people to see!

VERSES 6-7

1. We are told the timeframe here, “**... after many days ...**” and then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah and told him to go back and take the belt or sash. That tells me if he buried this belt in the Euphrates River he must have been staying somewhere in Babylon because he didn't travel another several months to back to Babylon to get this belt.

And as Jeremiah goes and gets back his belt, this beautiful belt is now worthless. It is dirty, worn by the river and as we are told, it was “**... ruined. It was profitable for nothing.**” In other words, it was worthless!

2. Now for the object lesson, what the Southern Kingdom of Judah was going to learn from all of this.

VERSES 8-11

1. As Jeremiah placed this filthy, worthless belt upon his waist he would be an object lesson to the nation as the people asked him what happened to his beautiful belt that he had. The key to this illustration is found in verse 11, “**“For as the sash clings to the waist of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to Me,’ says the Lord, ‘that they may become My people, for renown, for praise, and for glory; but they would not hear.’”**”

You see, God wanted to hold His people close to Him but they refused, they went after other God's and they have become unprofitable to Him! The Westminster Shorter Catechism states, *“Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”* That is what we as Christians are to do, glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We are not to be swayed with the idols, the false gods that this world places before us because as we go after those things we become unprofitable, dirty, of no use to God, we are worthless!

In Revelation 4:11 we are told, **“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”** (KJV)

We are on display for the world to see our God like a belt or sash. The key is are we cleansed of our sin in the blood of Christ and the world sees the beauty of His holiness as they look at us or are we dirty and unprofitable because we have not been cleansed by the blood? The Southern Kingdom of Judah was dirty because they turned from the Lord.

Therefore, if you're living for yourself, your career, your money, or your own happiness, you'll be miserable and useless. But if you live to walk with and worship the Lord, you are fulfilling the reason for your existence. We were created for His good pleasure and if we find our lives wrapped around the Lord, people will see the beauty of His holiness, they will see Jesus!

Too often today we are man-centered or self-centered instead of God centered. We were not created for our good pleasure but for His and I will tell you this, if you live to please God, if you live to serve Him, then you will find good pleasure in your life. If you don't, all the pleasure you find will be short-lived and unsatisfying. Not only that, but most of the time that lifestyle will bring you into captivity as it did the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

VERSES 12-14

1. Here is the second object lesson, the wine bottles. Wine was a symbol of blessing and the Lord is telling Jeremiah that He is going to bless His people abundantly, and the picture is that every bottle will be filled with wine. This is like a proverb and it is similar to the one we use to say, "There will be a chicken in every pot!" Again, it spoke of prosperity.

And the people took the blessings of God and they negated the One who gave them all these things, **GOD!** And their response to Jeremiah is interesting, they are basically saying, "Of course they will be filled, the prophets have spoken of that. We are going to be prosperous. No judgment is coming upon us. It is about time you realized that Jeremiah." But that is not what Jeremiah was saying.

2. We see this idea of how prosperity, wealth, things can get in the way of our relationship with the Lord. We can forget that it is the Lord who has provided us these things. The Lord warned the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 8:11-20 of this very thing as He said through the prophet Moses, **“Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest - when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end - then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’ And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the Lord your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the Lord your God.”**

Here in Jeremiah we see that very thing. Pride in what they had, arrogance in what they were doing and God says that “**. . . all the inhabitants of Jerusalem [will be filled] with drunkenness!**” What does the Lord mean when He speaks of filling the people with drunkenness? He is speaking of judgment; it is a curse upon them for turning away from the Lord! It is not prosperity that is coming and all the wishful thinking and all that the false prophets said is not going to bring you back. You must return to the Lord!

VERSES 15-17

1. The third object lesson you might say is the dark mountains. And the idea is that God had given them His light and they rejected it. And thus, darkness will come upon them. The point that God is making is that if you are not faithful to the light you have, if you are not faithful to what God has given you, then He will remove that light and you will find yourself stumbling in darkness. Now please understand that darkness does not exist!

Now you may be shocked by that but let me show you what I mean when I say that darkness does not exist, you see, it is just the absence of light. Listen to this story and it will drive home that point.

The university professor challenged his students with this question. “Did God create everything that exists?”

A student replied, “Yes, He did!”

“God created everything?” the professor asked.

“Yes sir,” the student replied.

The professor answered, "If God created everything, then God created evil since evil exists, and according to the principle that our works define who we are, then God is evil." The professor was quite pleased with himself and boasted to the students that he had proven once more that the Christian faith was a myth.

Another student raised his hand and said, "Can I ask you a question professor?"

"Of course," replied the professor.

The student stood up and asked, "Professor does cold exist?"

The professor replied, "Of course it exists. Have you never been cold?" The students snickered at the young man's question.

The young man replied, "In fact sir, cold does not exist. According to the laws of physics, what we consider cold is in reality the absence of heat. Every body or object is susceptible to study when it has or transmits energy, and heat is what makes a body or matter have or transmit energy. Absolute zero (- 460 degrees F) is the total absence of heat. Cold does not exist. We have created this word to describe how we feel if we have no heat.

The student continued. "Professor, does darkness exist?"

The professor responded, "Of course it does."

The student replied, "Once again you are wrong sir. Darkness does not exist either. Darkness is in reality the absence of light. Light we can study, but not darkness. In fact we can use Newton's prism to break white light into many colors and study the various wavelengths of each color. You cannot measure darkness. A simple ray of light can break into a world of darkness and illuminate it. How can you know how dark a certain space is? You measure the amount of light present. Isn't this correct? Darkness is a term used by man to describe what happens when there is no light present."

Finally the young man asked the professor. "Sir, does evil exist?"

Now uncertain, the professor responded, "Of course as I have already said. We see it every day. It is in the daily example of man's inhumanity to man. It is in the multitude of crime and violence everywhere in the world. These manifestations are nothing else but evil."

To this the student replied, "Evil does not exist sir, or at least it does not exist unto itself. Evil is simply the absence of God. It is just like darkness and cold, a word that man has created to describe the absence of God. God did not create evil. Evil is the result of what happens when man does not have God's love present in his heart. It's like the cold that comes when there is no heat or the darkness that comes when there is no light."

The professor sat down!

- Source Unknown

What is Hell likened to? Outer darkness! Isn't that interesting! Why do we call Hell Outer Darkness? Because Hell is the absence of God and thus, it is darkness, complete darkness because apart from the light of God there is only darkness!

2. As we see in verse 17 Jeremiah is broken over what is happening to his people, the judgment that is coming upon them and this nation. It broke his heart. It reminds me of what John Knox felt as he looked over Scotland. Just a little background and you will see why he agonized over this land.

“Dark days surrounded the fledgling Protestant church in Scotland as evangelicals were routinely burned at the stake for their faith while their Bibles were incinerated. The mid 1500’s did not provide much hope humanly-speaking for change for this minority. Yet there was a man whose prayer life was known widely and whose prayers were feared more by Queen Mary of Scotland than ‘an army of 40,000 men.’ [He gazed upon the people lost and dying in their sins and] On his lips was heard the agonized prayer, ‘Give me Scotland or I die.’ God responded in grace and a widespread awakening came to Scotland.”

(http://biblicalmissiology.org/2011/08/29/%E2%80%9Cgive-me_____or-i-die%E2%80%9D/)

May we have that kind of love, of passion over people today who are dying in their sins! May we reach out to them in the love of Christ! May we be broken over what we see in our land today, the exploitation of sin and the condemnation of good! May we weep for the people and ask God to open their eyes and their hearts to Him!

VERSES 18-21

1. This fourth object lesson you might call a royal disgrace. This is most likely speaking of King Jehoiachin and his mother the queen, Nehushta, the widow of Jehoiakim. And both Jehoiachin and his mother were wicked and led the people accordingly. They were to shepherd God’s people like sheep but they were leading them astray and they were going to lose what God had entrusted to them. Not only that but they were going to be taken into captivity! (II Kings 24:15)

And Jeremiah is telling them, warning them to repent, to get right with God because the judgment of God was coming. Jehoiachin reigned only 3 months and 10 days before the King of Babylon took him away captive. He did not heed the words of Jeremiah. And this is what took place, **“And he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king’s mother, the king’s wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.”**

II Kings 24:15-16.

VERSES 22-27

1. This last object lesson is a picture of a loose woman and it speaks of their spiritual adultery. That they were married to the Lord and yet they sought after other gods and engaged in the worship of these gods with all kinds of sexual immorality, having sexual relations with the temple prostitutes!

And here is the tragedy; these people who were living in rebellion against God didn't have a clue why this was all coming upon them. Sin had blinded their eyes so they could not see and as hard as that is to believe, look at what is going on in the churches across America today and the sin that is lifted up they are blinded to!

How were these people to know what they did was wrong? How are people today to know what is right and what is wrong? Let's not make this complicated, God's Word shows us what is right, what is wrong, how to get right when we have gone astray and how to stay right! Again, it is not complicated but we must be willing to surrender to Him and we need to not only read God's Word, we must also apply it to our lives!

If we refuse we will find ourselves in bondage to sin. The Son has set us free but if you reject the Son, if you disobey the Son, you will find yourself in bondage and it will be hard as it was for the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The Babylonians were a ruthless people and there were no laws of war where you had to treat your prisoners in a decent manner.

2. Now verse 23 is interesting, listen again to what it says. **“Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.”** Of course it is impossible to change the color of a leopards spots just as it is impossible for a black man to change his skin to white. And the point that is being made is it is impossible for sinners to become righteous without God intervening. We are born with a sin nature and that only changes as Christ comes into our life and gives us that new nature.

But I also see another warning here. Don't practice sin because what you are accustomed to do will flow from your life. If you feed the flesh nature it will grow or you can feed the Spirit and see the fruit of the Spirit flow from your life!

3. Now as much as they did not see any evil in their doings, God saw all their wicked behavior and even in the midst of this judgment from God, they still refused to return to Him. As the writer of Hebrews admonishes us, as he just spoke of the men and women of faith, he then tells us beginning in verse 1 of Hebrews chapter 12, **“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.”** Hebrews 12:1-4.

We see here four points that Paul is making regarding running this race with endurance, not giving up, staying focused. We are to ***LOOK AT THE WINNERS*** and we see that in the first part of verse 1. Look at their examples and grow as you do. Be encouraged, strengthened in the faith.

Next we are to ***LOOK AT YOURSELF*** or examine your life, don't let things ensnare you or weigh you down as you are in this race.

The third point is that we need to ***LOOK AT JESUS*** because He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the One who can help us to run to win. We must keep our eyes upon Him.

And in Hebrews 12:28-29, we are told to *LOOK AT THE RESULT*. We are told, **“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”**

God is going to shake the heavens and the earth and the only things that will be left standing when He is done are the things of God. You see, if Jesus Christ is not your Lord and Savior then you will fall when He starts shaking things and you will be consumed in the fire of His judgment. Why is that? Because you can't stand before a holy and righteous God in your own righteousness, which are like filthy rags before Him!

For us as Christians, guess what? God wins and as His children we will enter into the Kingdom Age with Him. What joy that is until things start heating up for us, as they are not going the way we want them to go, and we begin to take our eyes off of Jesus and we lose sight of what God wants to do in our lives. Get refocused; don't let that happen, look to the joy that is set before us, being received up into glory with Him!

The Greeks had a race in their Olympic games that was very unique. The winner was not the runner who finished first as you would think. No, the winner was the runner who finished with his torch still lit. Folks, I want to run all the way with the flame of my torch still lit for Jesus and I am sure you do to!

The race of faith is not easy and thus, may we **LOOK AT THE WINNERS** to encourage us to go on, learn from their examples. May we **LOOK AT OURSELVES** and lay aside those things that are weighing us down, hindering us from moving forward. May we **LOOK AT JESUS** the Author and Finisher of our faith, keeping our eyes fixed upon Him so we are not distracted by other things that will hinder our progress and watching His example so we may walk accordingly. And may we **LOOK AT THE RESULT** as we will be taken to glory with Him one day! May we finish the race strong!

JEREMIAH 14

VERSES 1-6

1. As you read this you may be wondering how God can be so harsh. But God was patient, He was longsuffering, He warned them with the prophets and they refused to listen. Thus, since they went after other gods, false gods, then they should go to them for help. And of course, there was no help coming from them because they are not God!

2. Also keep in mind that the Lord is not speaking of one drought but a series of droughts that have come upon the nation for their rebellion against God. And this should not be a surprise to them, for God warned them of these things before they entered the Promised Land.

In Deuteronomy chapter 28, beginning in verse 23 we read, “**And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.**” Deuteronomy 28:23-24.

The problem was they refused to see their sin; their rebellion against God and thus, judgment has come upon them in a devastating way, with these droughts. Keep in mind that they were an agrarian society and they lived or died depending on the food they would be able to harvest. Thus, these droughts brought famine and death to the land!

3. Now in verse 3 where it says, **“Their nobles have sent their lads for water . . .”** the word **“lads”** is better translated **“servants.”** As the people sent their servants to go for water located in these cisterns, they came back with nothing, the cisterns were dry. And these cisterns were nothing more than underground water storage tanks that were cut out of the rock and would collect the rain water and store it. But in a drought there was no rain and thus, no water to drink.

Now their physical water supply matched their spiritual water supply, dry and barren. Remember what we read in Jeremiah 2:13, **“For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.”**

4. This was a time to cover their heads, not just to keep the hot sun off of them but as a sign of mourning. We see this in II Samuel 15:30, as David and his followers were leaving Jerusalem, going over the Mount of Olives, fleeing because David’s son Absalom had usurped the throne from David and we are told, **“So David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up.”**

5. And this drought did not just affect the people, obviously, but the animals as well. The deer, usually very caring of their offspring, now leaves her newborn alone to die because she is looking for water just to survive. She could not care for her young.

The wild donkeys were sniffing for water but could not sense any. And because of the drought the land was parched, and there was very little food to eat, which affected them physically. The sin of the nation affected more than just the nation! What is Jeremiah going to do since God already told him not to pray for the people back in Jeremiah 11:14? Let's read on and see.

VERSES 7-9

1. As I have said, God had already told Jeremiah not to pray for his people back in Jeremiah 11:14 and He is going to say it again in Jeremiah 14:11, so why is Jeremiah interceding for the people? Because Jeremiah recognized the grace and mercy of God and thus, he was falling upon that to stop this judgment from coming. Jeremiah is not asking for this judgment to be stopped because they were good people but for His namesake, all that He is. He does not want God to treat them like He is just a visitor staying for a short time and then leaving. He wants God to stay with them.

2. And please understand that Jeremiah does not see himself as any better than the rest of the people. He knows that before a holy and righteous God he falls far short. Thus, Jeremiah associates himself with the nation and thus, in this prayer he includes himself just as Daniel did in Daniel chapter 9. And yet they both were not the ones sinning against God.

When we pray for this nation, that is how we are to pray. Too often people give up; they think this nation is too far gone, too far away from God. We are no better and no worse than Judah was. Thus, we should follow the example of Jeremiah and pray for our nation no matter how hopeless it may look.

3. As you look at verse 9 we see Jeremiah liken God to a man who can't believe what he is seeing. Of course God knows everything and nothing takes Him by surprise. Remember what God said in Jeremiah 2:21, **“Yet I had planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant of an alien vine?”** God did everything possible to produce good fruit except force them. They decided to turn from Him and in doing so they deteriorated into an alien vine that produced bad fruit, not what God intended for them.

VERSES 10-12

1. At this point the age of God's grace had come to an end and the day of His judgment was coming. They had passed the point of no return and their hearts were still unchanged. God was patient, God was long-suffering with them, but that had now all passed, and that is why God told Jeremiah to stop praying for them, nothing would stop His judgment from coming at this point!

And that is interesting to me. Jeremiah is pleading with God to stop the judgment and God did not say, “Okay Jeremiah, I will send the rain, I will provide food for them, I will protect them from their enemies!” No, the Lord said once again, Jeremiah **“Do not pray for this people, for their good.”**

That may seem harsh but what do you think would happen if God did send rain, food, protection from their enemies? They would have gone back to their old ways and they would not have learned the lesson. God loves them too much to let them go down that path and thus, He is trying to show them where that kind of life leads and the only way out is through Him, not superficially but with their whole heart!

2. God just reminds Jeremiah that they will be judged according to their sins, their prayers are empty, judgment is coming. But Jeremiah still tries to intercede for His people; he does not give up as verse 13 shows us. Jeremiah had a love for his people and he kept interceding for them. Look at what he says.

VERSE 13

1. This is interesting to me. Now Jeremiah is telling God that it is not the people's fault but the false prophets. They are the ones speaking of health, wealth, and prosperity. They are the ones who are leading the people into all kinds of occultic practices. Don't blame the people. Listen to God's response to what Jeremiah had to say, I think you will find it interesting. As you will see He is going to hold the false prophets responsible for teaching them these lies but He is also holding the people responsible for listening to the false prophets instead of the Words that He has spoken! And the same is true today. We have the Word of God to expose the lies but you can believe whatever you want just understand there are consequences when you listen to the false prophets and not God!

VERSES 14-18

1. As I read this it seems to fit our day very well in regards to the false prophets who are not speaking for God. They are denying the judgment of God and they feel that they will make this world a better place and then Jesus will return. Nice thought but it is not true. The only way this world will get better is when Jesus returns, prior to His return He is going to pour out His wrath upon a Christ rejecting world. That is not true because I have said it but because God's Word tells us of these things and as you look at our nation and this world, we are ripe for judgment!

2. For Jeremiah, he spoke the truth and these false prophets were speaking out of the imagination of their own hearts. They were not speaking for God. And they are accountable for what they are saying; they are responsible for what they are teaching. And because of the lies they have spoken in the name of God, they will be consumed by this judgment.

3. Please understand just because the false prophets spoke forth these lies it did not excuse the people from their sin. It in no way excused the people for what they did. They were accountable for their actions; they were responsible for what they were doing. No one held a gun to their head and forced them to follow these false prophets. They chose for themselves.

Some may argue, “But they were not being told the truth so how can they be responsible for the lies they were told?” It is really very simple. They had the prophets of God who spoke forth the Word of God and they just refused to listen to them and they listened to the false prophets instead. They had the Word of God and they refused to listen. In Jeremiah 8:9 we read, **“The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD; so what wisdom do they have?”** Thus, they too were going to experience the judgment of God for their actions just like people today. God’s Word is there for them to check these things out and instead of listening to God they are listening to these false prophets and both will be accountable to God for their actions!

And we are no different today, like I have said and we are just as accountable. Acts 17:11 tells us, **“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”** If they searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul the apostle said was found in the Word of God, then all of us, all those who teach the Word are or should be subject to that. And you better search the Scriptures because not only is the teacher accountable for what he teaches, but you are accountable for what you believe and do.

4. As Jeremiah looks out he sees this picture of the coming judgment and he is devastated over what he sees. He is weeping over the destruction that is coming upon God’s people for their sins and their refusal to turn back to God, to repent of their sins. Out in the fields with no walls to protect them the people would be cut down like wheat that is being harvested. Within the walls of the city the people are starving to death. And finally, those who are not killed by the sword or have not died of starvation will be carried away captive to Babylon.

VERSES 19-22

1. Some feel that this is Jeremiah speaking here, pleading with God but I think this is the response of the people as judgment has come upon them. We see the words, “us” and “we” and “our” spoken. Could it be that Jeremiah is associating himself with the nation and that is why we see those words spoken? It could be but I do believe that these words are from the people and we get another indication why in these verses.

What is interesting to me is that this people who rejected the Words of God, they did not want to live for God, are turning to God when their backs are up against the wall, when there is no human way out of this situation. And here is the clincher for me. They are asking God why *HE* broke the covenant with them. God did not break the covenant with them, that is wrong! The problem was that *THEY* broke the covenant with God by turning from Him and going after these false gods, committing all kinds of sins before God without any remorse, no repentance. They flaunted their sin!

2. People today are no different. They live their lives apart from God until something devastating occurs. Then they pray to God to get them out of the situation or they blame God for what has come upon their lives. The reality is God has not brought this upon them but they have brought this upon themselves. Paul put it this way in Galatians 6:7, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

3. And as you read verse 22 you can see that after all that has come upon them they finally realize that these false god's cannot help them, only the true and living God can. In Jeremiah 2:27-28 we read "**... For they have turned their back to Me, and not their face. But in the time of their trouble they will say, 'Arise and save us.' But where are your gods that you have made for yourselves? Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your trouble; for according to the number of your cities are your gods, O Judah.**" You see, they realized these gods couldn't help them, so as they walked away from God they were still looking back at Him. Those gods satisfied their lustful desires but they could not help them in time of need. But it was too little, too late. Judgment was coming.

4. Our only hope, the only solution to all of our problems is Jesus. Where else are you going to go for He alone has the Words of eternal life! I will close with this. Jesus said, "**Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.**" Matthew 11:28-30. Won't you come?