

Jeremiah 25

Read Jeremiah 25:1-7: God is closing out a series of messages to Judah. We have been talking about bad kings, and bad figs (people). God speaks to Jeremiah in the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign. He basically tells Jeremiah to let the people know that time has expired. Now the prophetic warnings were coming true as he spoke. It was the end of his current message series of repentance in Jerusalem. Words were not working.

Jehoiakim was a bad king. Jehoiakim reigned from 609 BC until 598 BC. Jehoiakim's practices were the opposite of his good father; King Josiah. The fourth year of Jehoiakim would have been 605 BC. 605 BC was also the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. 605 BC was when the music stopped, and it all came crashing down. There was not much need to describe the consequences of sin after Nebuchadnezzar's army arrived in Jerusalem. Now everyone would see it for themselves and tremble with fear.

God had Jeremiah remind the Jews in Jerusalem that he had been preaching daily since the 13th year of King Josiah; which was 23 years prior; way back in 627 BC. He had been out early preaching every morning, hammering away every day. Jeremiah had been emphasizing the need for repentance from 627 BC until 605 BC. You might assume that Jeremiah originally came onto the scene when things were at their worst. Not so.

The Book of Jeremiah began at an interesting moment. Things were horrific prior to Josiah's reign. King Manasseh had been the worst Judean King of all time. Good King Josiah came afterwards and turned everything around. God sent a strong leader and a clear message to turn his people around.

The year that Jeremiah began preaching was the 13th year of good King Josiah. King Josiah became king when he was 8 years old. He was having the temple renovated, and someone stumbled upon a copy of the bible. It was an amazing find, since all of the bibles had been destroyed. The young boy king had it read to him cover to cover; and he immediately took action. He realized how his people were clearly in big trouble. He instituted an immediate *search and destroy* action against all cults and idol shrines. In the 12th year of Josiah's reign, he went after the filth of his nation with full force. Jeremiah began putting God's messages out there at the peak of Josiah's reforms; in the 13th year of his reign.

It is rare to see a country cleaned up. There is a modern example in El Salvador. At 34, Bukele was elected mayor of San Salvador on an FMLN ticket, vowing to reclaim dangerous areas from gangs, but was expelled from the party and set up his own. And it was on an anti-crime agenda that he was first elected president in 2019. Within a year, he'd embarked on his "Territorial Control Plan" to rid El Salvador of the "gang violence and extortion" that was plaguing the country. His success has been extraordinary, said Diario El Salvador. Before Bukele came to power, El Salvador was one of

the world's [most dangerous countries](#): the streets of the capital, San Salvador, "were filled with corpses". Yet Bukele's "courage and determination" has changed all that. In 2018, the homicide rate was 51 per 100,000 people: last year it was just 2.4 per 100,000 (about half the level of the US); shops no longer have to pay protection money; people can leave their homes without fear.

This seems counterintuitive. The nation was in its biggest and boldest reform campaign of all time, when Jeremiah began to preach repentance. You would think that the prophet would applaud what was happening.

The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. (Jeremiah 1)

For behold, I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north," says the LORD; "They shall come and each one set his throne At the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, Against all its walls all around, And against all the cities of Judah. I will utter My judgments Against them concerning all their wickedness, because they have forsaken Me, burned incense to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands. (Jeremiah 1)

Perhaps Jeremiah and Josiah were the *one-two punch* at the same time, sent by God. By the time Josiah died, Jeremiah had felt a strong spiritual connection to Josiah.

Jeremiah also lamented for Josiah. And to this day all the singing men and the singing women speak of Josiah in their lamentations. (2 Chronicles 35:25).

God saw the future. He saw what would happen after good King Josiah died. Things would return to their *natural depraved* state. God blessed good King Josiah, but the people reverted to bad habits. There is a difference between forced compliance and having hearts for God.

This is similar to what happened to Isaiah. His visions began the year that good King Uzziah died. Things were looking good at the moment. God was ahead of the curve. Uzziah's son Jotham was decent, but his son Ahaz was evil. God saw the waves of evil coming.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. (Isaiah 6:1)

Read Jeremiah 25:8-14: There are two reasons that the Jews were deported. The main problem was idolatry; which had to be cleansed from the land. Secondly, the Jews were obligated to observe land sabbaths. One year out of every seven had to be a stoppage of all farming activities. When the Jews refused to do so for 490 years; God simply did a 70-year forced observance all at once.

And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, ² "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. ³ Six years you

shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; ⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. ⁵ What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. ⁶ And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, ⁷ for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food. (Leviticus 25)

It is our nature to get as far ahead as we can. *Don't let up.* That can lead to working seven days per week. That can lead you to work further away from your family. That raw motivation can lead to bringing harm to others who stand in the path of our progress. This law requires men to show some restraint; and break the bond and the unbridled quest for accumulation. This is the same reason that we tithe. God does not need our money, but we need to create *bond-breakers*, and regain our perspective. It's like *going on the wagon* for a month every year. It would cut down on long-term alcoholism. God has laws that reinforce his will. Nature also has built-in rules about crop rotation, regrowth and restoration, etc.. The land itself seems to almost have an awareness of our acts of faith.

And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. (Genesis 4:10-11)

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)

Again, we have no power over circumstances and results. We can only make good decisions through prayer.

Read Jeremiah 25:15-29: Being successful and living in peace really only comes down to honoring and loving God. God tells Jeremiah that Judah's neglect of God and evil actions that he was guaranteeing an unbelievable series of curses. It was like drinking a strong hallucinogenic cocktail. This spilled over into a worldwide curse.

The curses that would unfold include Egypt, Assyria, the Philistines, Edom, Moab, and Ammon, Tyre, Sidon and the coastal nations, all of the Arab countries. The Persians and the Medes. Jerusalem should have been the light to the world. It had become the poison that made everyone sick.

Read Jeremiah 25:30-38: The inflammation and destruction of nations during Jeremiah's time is just a taste of what is coming. A worldwide bloodbath is coming our way. Like the Jews and

the ancient world, a day will come when the message has ripened at the judgement will seize all of the inhabitants of the earth.

When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. (Revelation 6:3-4)