

An Exposition of Jeremiah 6: 13-17

INTRODUCTION

- A. In many ways, the conditions that prevailed during the time of Jeremiah relative to the people of God parallel our own time, I am convinced. There was much shallowness and many of the men of God had become corrupt and sought simply to placate the people in their messages. They ignored the present apostate state of Judah and spoke "smooth sayings."
- B. The prevailing conditions at the time of Jeremiah:
It is true that the reformation of Josiah swept away the worst of these abominations. But an inner return to Yahweh did not result from this reformation.
For the reason that the improvement had been more on the surface and outward, and was done to please the king, Jeremiah charges up to his people all their previous sins, and the guilt of the present generation was yet added to this (16:11 f).
Together with religious insincerity went the moral corruption of the people, such as dishonesty, injustice, oppression of the helpless, slander, and the like.
Compare the accusations found in 5:1,7,26; 6:7,13; 7:5,9; 9:2,6,8; 17:9; 21:12; 22:13; 23:10; 29:23, etc. Especially to the spiritual leaders, the priests and prophets are these things charged up.
- C. Jeremiah, the man:
Jeremiah was called by the Lord to the office of a prophet while still a youth (1:6) about 20 years of age, in the 13th year of King Josiah (1:2; 25:3), in the year 627 BC, and was active in this capacity from this time on to the destruction of Jerusalem, 586 BC, under kings Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.
Even after the fall of the capital city he prophesied in Egypt at least for several years, so that his work extended over a period of about 50 years in all..."
- D. Jeremiah is often described as a very tender and sensitive who had the responsibility of delivering a very cogent message of repent or be destroyed by God. He is sometimes seen to wrestle with his special commission, especially in view of his tender nature (20: 7-11). In view of the absence of true repentance, it was the task of Jeremiah to announce the inevitable doom awaiting Judah, a captivity that would come from "the north," Babylon (25: 1-7; 8-11).
- E. He was God's man and had a special mission: Jeremiah 1: 5-10; 20: 7-9; 23: 25-28.

DISCUSSION

- I. JE 6:13.
- A. Jeremiah is often described as a very tender and sensitive who had the responsibility of delivering a very cogent message of repent or be destroyed by God. He is sometimes seen to wrestle with his special commission, especially in view of his tender nature (20: 7-11).
- B. In view of the absence of true repentance, it was the task of Jeremiah to announce the inevitable doom awaiting Judah, a captivity that would come from "the north," Babylon (25: 1-7; 8-11).
- II. JE 6:14.
- A. The false teachers dealt superficially with the problems and claimed peace or "all is well" when the doom was imminent (cp. JE 25).
- B. They preached a pseudo peace, cp. I TH 5: 2, 3, IS. 48:22.
- III. JE 6:15.
- A. When there is shame attendant to the commission of sin, there is hope for repentance.
- B. Compare Jeremiah 3: 3 and 8: 12.
- C. Also look at I Timothy 2: 9.

- IV. JE 6:16.
- A. The English Standard has, "Stand by the roads, and look."
 - B. The idea seems to be that the wise traveler exerts care and effort to be going in the right direction. He is aware of multiple choices but only one is right and he compares (cp. EP 5: 10, 11, I TH 5: 21, RO 12: 1, 2).
 - C. Explore and stress the idea of "old paths." (Cf. JE 18: 15.) They needed restoration and so do we!
 - D. The idea of "...find rest for your souls" seems to ultimately and especially allude to Jesus' words (MT 11:28-30).
- V. JE 6:17
- A. The "watchmen" were the prophets (HA. 2: 1, 2).
 - B. Alas, it is too often the case that God's people are not interested in true teaching, but will heap to themselves false teachers (2 TI 4: 2-5, cp. IS 56: 10, JE . 44: 16).

CONCLUSION

- A. God's people did not listen and they were carried away into Babylonian captivity. They refused the cry for restoration. We have a choice; we can either accept the challenge of returning to the old paths or be carried away into spiritual captivity!
- B. Because they would not listen, Judah was carried away into a seventy year period of Babylonian captivity (JE 25).