

BIBLE LESSON*Jeremiah 24–25***LESSON****On the Lord's side****JEREMIAH 24:7**

And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 24–25**

In the Bible, we often see the division of people into two groups—one who obey God's command and one who defies. We see this in Chapter 24 in the form of an allegory of good figs and bad figs. God showed Jeremiah two baskets of figs, one "very good" and another "very naughty" [Jeremiah 24:2] and He revealed to him the different consequences they are to face for their attitude and behaviour [Jeremiah 24:5–10].

Both groups would suffer, albeit for different reasons. The people of Judah would be captured to Babylon but the Lord acknowledged and promised to look after the good figs. Their sufferings were for their own good, so that they would grow spiritually. But the bad figs would suffer great punishment.

Even as the people of Judah suffered, they would be judged for only 70 years [Jeremiah 25:1–11]. God never forgets His own people. Their sufferings are but a chastisement for them to repent. This is in contrast to the judgement that was going to befall Babylon [Jeremiah 25:12–14] and the other 18 nations [Jeremiah 25:13–38]. The Lord might have made use of Babylon to chastise Jerusalem but the cruel ways of Babylon would eventually be judged.

Indeed, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God [Hebrews 10:31]. Are we walking worthily for our Lord? Or are we living in some hidden sins? Have we hearkened to God's call for us to repent? It is not too late. God may chasten us but He will never forsake us. How blessed it is to be God's children!

THOUGHT

Reflect on the lyrics of the hymn, "Who is on the Lord's side?"

BIBLE LESSON*Jeremiah 26***LESSON****Repent and obey God****VERSE 13**

Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 26**

Here is a portion of the sermon that Jeremiah preached to Judah, which offended them so much that he was nearly killed for it. It was recorded that Jeremiah was willing to die for delivering—without flinching—such a message from God as he was commanded to.

Compare this with the gospel preached from “prosperity churches” in current times. The “health and wealth” messages that these churches preach are a diluted form of God’s Word—pleasant to the ears and easy to accept. How many preachers today preach the Word of God without compromise? The probable consequences of preaching an uncompromising gospel are unpopularity and reduction in church attendance. The consequence of an unrepentant sinful spirit is death. Ignoring the obvious—the lure of earthly success—is so strong that many preachers choose to preach sermons to entertain and delight their audiences. Jeremiah was not such a preacher. He delivered God’s Word as commanded in the place and time designated by God.

More importantly, in Jeremiah’s admonishment of the people to repent, we find the evidence of God’s grace. This is the prevailing theme throughout the Bible. God repeatedly withholds His wrath to punish sinners and gives sinners time and opportunity to repent so that we can escape the eternal fire, to the honour of His justice and holiness.

The only reason for this grace is His love for us. Therefore, we should amend our sinful ways now, obey God’s Word and God will be merciful to our wretched souls.

PRAYER

Thank you for the mercy shown as we repent of our sinful ways.

BIBLE LESSON

Jeremiah 27–28

LESSON

God is sovereign

JEREMIAH 27:5

I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

God declares His awesome power. Here, He reminds us that He created the earth, including the creatures in it and man. God is sovereign and He will decide how He wishes to deal with situations or matters as He sees fit. God asserts His own indisputable right to dispose of kingdoms as He pleases. Judah fell to the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar, an evil king, was used to fulfil God's promise of judgement on sin.

God may use unexpected people or circumstances to correct us. We have to be ready to accept these corrections, even if it comes from an unexpected source. Those who refuse to serve the Creator shall justly be made to serve their enemies. Jeremiah urged Judah to prevent their destruction by submitting to God.

A meek spirit, by quiet submission to the hardest turns of providence, makes the best of what seems bad. The poor in spirit, the meek and humble, enjoy comfort and avoid many miseries to which the high-spirited are exposed. It is, in all cases, to the best of our interest to obey God's will.

Whatever anyone has of the good things of this world, they are what God sees fit to give. We ourselves should therefore be contented and not envy others who may have more than we.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 27–28

CHALLENGE

Trust God and be contented, whatever your situation is.

BIBLE LESSON

Jeremiah 29

LESSON

**Searching for God with
all your heart**

VERSE 13

*And ye shall seek me, and
find me, when ye shall
search for me with all your
heart.*

Here, we witness God's long-suffering, love, mercy and grace. The people of Judah had been taken captive by the Babylonians not because the enemy was mightier but because God had decreed it as a punishment for the sins of Judah. Even in the midst of this punishment, God remained in control and sent Jeremiah to encourage, guide and warn them.

More importantly, we learn that God never forsakes His children. He promised deliverance after 70 years of captivity and His prophet implored the people to search for Him with all their hearts. What an assurance for the captives. Though the exiles were in a difficult place and time, they should not despair for they had the privilege of prayer, of God's presence and His grace. God can be sought and found when we seek Him urgently and whole-heartedly. Neither strange lands nor emotional distress can break this communion. You, too, can enjoy such communion with God.

Are you going through any difficulties in life lately? Pray and consider if it is a trial to mould you or a divine punishment due to some sin that you have. If it is due to sin, humble yourself and take in the punishment meted out. The people of Judah were similarly told to accept reality and adapt to the situation.

Remember, pride must first be eradicated before repentance can follow. Thereafter, seek God with all your heart. God has promised that if we search for Him with all our hearts, He will be found.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 29

PRAYER

Dear God, please forgive us of our sins and help us to seek You wholeheartedly every day.

BIBLE LESSON

Jeremiah 30

LESSON

God's covenant

VERSE 22

*And ye shall be my people,
and I will be your God.*

The sermon recorded for us in Jeremiah 30 and 31 is one of a very different context compared to the ones in the preceding chapters. Most of what Jeremiah had said hitherto takes form in reproof and admonishments but in these two chapters we find only precious promises of a return from captivity and the glorious things reserved for the Church in the days of the Messiah. The prophet was told not only to preach this but also to write it because it was intended for the comfort of the generations to come.

It is here promised that, after their joyful restoration, the captives would have a happy settlement. Their city would be rebuilt, their numbers increased, their government established, God's covenant with them was renewed and their enemies destroyed and cut off. Hearing God speak of the covenant again reminded the Israelites that they were God's people and He was their God. This was a great comfort to them during their captivity.

Likewise, God is also the God of the Gentiles. We have the assurance that we are His children and He is our God. God would continue to show us His mercy, though the wrath of God against the wicked would still be as terrible as a whirlwind. His wrath, as well as His love, will all be manifested.

God will comfort all who turn to Him but those who approach Him must have their hearts engaged in doing His work with reverence, devotion and faith.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 30

PRAYER

Dear God, help us to obey and glorify You as Your children.

BIBLE LESSON

Jeremiah 31

LESSON

**God's wonderful plan for
Jews and Gentiles**

VERSE 36

*If those ordinances depart
from before me, saith the
LORD, then the seed of
Israel also shall cease from
being a nation before me
for ever.*

This chapter continues with the comforting words that we had read in the previous one. It encouraged the captives, assuring them that God would in due time restore them and their children to their own land, and make them a great and happy nation again. He would send them the Messiah, in whose kingdom and grace many of His promises would be fully realised.

As sure as the heavenly bodies would continue their settled course, according to the will of their Creator to the end of time, so surely the Jews would stay a separate people until the appointed time for its restoration.

Words can scarcely set forth more strongly the coming of God's kingdom. The rebuilding of Jerusalem shall be one of the greatest things God would do for the Church. The personal happiness of every true believer, as well as the future restoration of Israel, is secured by God's covenant. This divine love surpasses knowledge. To those who receive it, every present mercy brings about earnest gratitude.

As Gentiles, we need not be jealous of the covenant that the Jews have with God. God has not left us out. God's love is universal and we all have the gift of eternal life, if only we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. God loves us and has sent His only begotten Son to die in propitiation for our sins. Have you accepted Jesus as your personal Saviour?

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 31

PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for sending Your son Jesus Christ to die on the Cross. I accept Jesus as my personal Saviour and look forward to the day we can meet in heaven.

BIBLE LESSON

Jeremiah 32

LESSON

Jeremiah and the worthless field

VERSE 15

*For thus saith the LORD
of hosts, the God of Israel;
Houses and fields and
vineyards shall be possessed
again in this land.*

Jerusalem was about to fall into the hands of the King of Babylon. Jeremiah was instructed by God to buy a piece of land occupied by enemy soldiers. This certainly looked like a bad investment. But Jeremiah obeyed and showed his faith in God’s promise to bring His people back from their captivity in Babylon one day to rebuild Jerusalem.

To the people around him, Jeremiah was a fool to have bought a piece of land that was already captured by the enemy. Even he himself doubted at first whether it was a wise decision. He sought assurance in prayer: “Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase ... I prayed unto the LORD” [v. 16]. In his prayer, Jeremiah became aware that God was “great in counsel, and mighty in work: for Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” [v. 19]. Jeremiah trusted the Lord.

Trust does not come easily, even to Christians. It is sometimes hard for us to believe that God can fulfil promises that seem “impossible” in our eyes. But we must trust Him. God loves us and knows our doubting minds. Whenever we wonder if it is “practical” to obey Him, we should pray and study His Word. It helps clear our doubts.

God directs everything in our lives for the best. We must not dispute His will but should always seek to know it.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 32

THOUGHT

We have no reasons to doubt God’s faithfulness.

BIBLE LESSON*Jeremiah 33***LESSON****Promise of restoration****VERSE 7**

And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

Jeremiah predicted a restoration of Israel to the favour of God. He would rebuild Jerusalem, not because the Israelites cried out in pain but because He kept His promise. However, the Babylonian punishment was not a change in God's purpose for His chosen people. His justice is always tempered with His mercy. Although Jerusalem would soon be destroyed, it would be restored 70 years later.

The Israelites were taken captives to the most powerful empire on earth at that time. It seemed impossible for them to gain freedom. But nothing is impossible with God. In 539 BC, King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon. He not only freed the Israelites but also allowed them to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. God thus used Cyrus to deliver the Israelites out of their physical captivity.

The Israelites had long been worshipping pagan gods despite repeated warnings and punishments from God. Finally, after the Babylon exile, the Israelites were broken from their sin of idolatry. And God restored them from the slavery of sin.

God's restoration was not confined to the life of the remaining Israelites captured by Babylon. It was through them that the Saviour would be born to restore mankind from the slavery of sin as well. God restored the Israelites to live in His promises. If they turn away from Him and back to idolatry, they would be punished again. Likewise, those who believe in Christ are fully restored to God and His Kingdom. Take heed not to fall back into sin and eternal damnation.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
JEREMIAH 33

THOUGHT

Experience the joy of restoration that Christ brings to us, through the power of His Word.