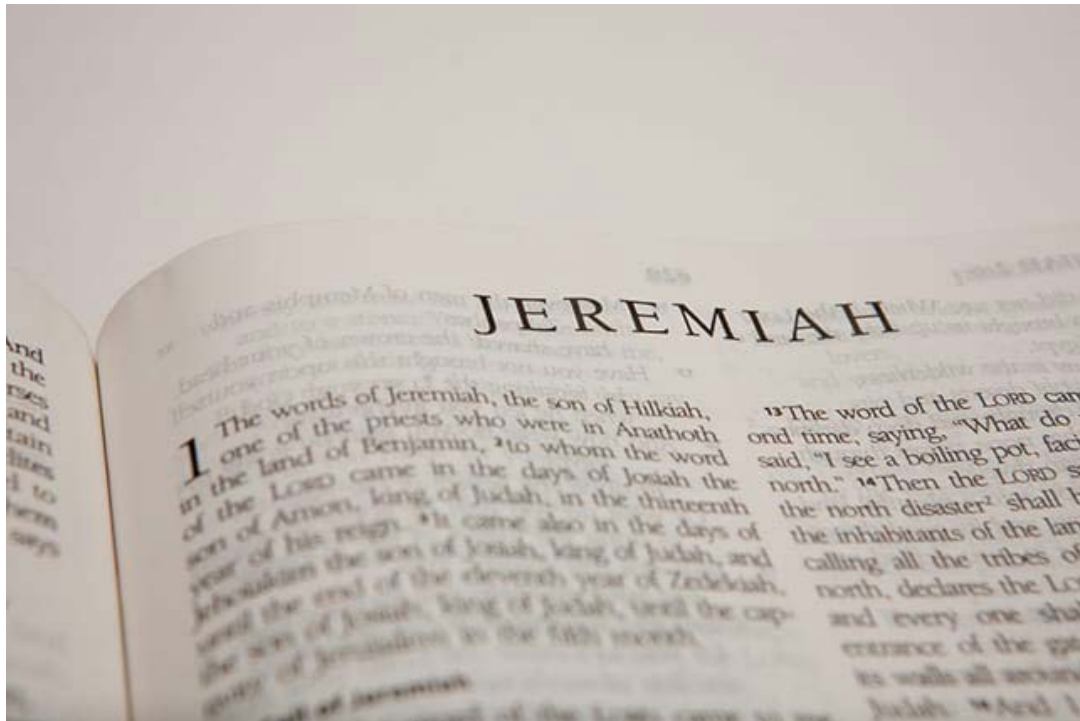


THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH
PROMISE AND WRATH:
JEREMIAH 24, 25



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study

The Fellowship of Ailbe

Promise and Wrath: Jeremiah 24, 25
Copyright 2020 T. M. and Susie Moore
Susie Moore, Editing and Finishing
The Fellowship of Ailbe
www.ailbe.org

Except as indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All psalms for singing adapted from The Ailbe Psalter. Except as indicated, all quotations from Church Fathers from Ancient Christian, General Editor Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

Introduction to Jeremiah 24, 25

God keeps His Word. His people may or may not. They may ignore Him, turn away from Him, and even take up other “gods” to worship. But God keeps His Word.

And His Word brings both blessings and judgment, as the people of Judah and Jerusalem would discover. Jeremiah continued his ministry in Jerusalem, pleading with the people on behalf of the Lord to repent and return to Him.

But they would not. So God would keep His Word of judgment against them, just as He had said.

We’re pleased to provide *Scriptorium* studies in PDF format at no charge. We hope you will find them helpful and encouraging as you press on in your journey toward spiritual maturity with the Lord.

Please visit our website, www.ailbe.org, to discover the many other resources available to serve your needs. The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Visit our website also to subscribe to our worldview study *ReVision*, our devotional newsletter *Crosfigell*, and our many other resources.

If you find these studies, or any of our other resources helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 360 Zephyr Road, Williston, VT 05495.

T. M. Moore, Principal
tmmoore@ailbe.org

1 Good Figs

Pray Psalm 126.1, 2.

When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion,
We were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the nations,
“The LORD has done great things for them.”

Sing Psalm 126.1, 2.

(Truro: [*Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns!*](#))

When God restored our fortunes all,
we were like those who sweetly dream.
Our mouths with joy and laughter filled,
made Him our constant song and theme.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 24.1-7.

Prepare.

1. What vision did God show Jeremiah?
2. In what time period was this vision set?

Meditate.

Most of the book of Jeremiah is set in the last days of the Kingdom of Judah, when Zedekiah was king (v. 8). But Jeremiah had been at his calling for some years before Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon set up Zedekiah as king. God led Jeremiah to bring forward for Zedekiah aspects of his years of ministry before Zedekiah's day. The purpose of this was to try to convince Zedekiah of the Lord's faithfulness, and of the certainty of His Word.

Here is a strange vision. We usually think of prophetic visions as looking forward in time. This one looks back. Jeremiah is shown two baskets of figs “set before the temple of the LORD” after Jeconiah (Coniah) had been carried away and before Zedekiah was made king (v. 1). God wanted Jeremiah to see clearly what was at stake here, so that he would not back down from his message, even when the going began to get rough.

The good figs represent those faithful people of Judah who were being carried away to Babylon (v. 5). God would bring them back to Jerusalem after a period of captivity (v. 6) – not all of them, of course, but faithful people *like* them, and perhaps *descended from* them. In chapter 29, Jeremiah will write to encourage these same people with further instructions from the Lord.

Note the promise God makes to those who return: He will give them a heart to know Him (v. 7). This has been Israel's problem since before the conquest of Canaan: They just did not have a heart for God (Deut. 5.29). God Himself would have to “circumcise” their hearts so that they would be clean and able to obey Him (Deut. 30.1-10). Here the Lord ties back to this earlier promise to show that the day of the new heart is getting closer. Jeremiah will add to this promise a bit later, and then Ezekiel will reinforce it in Ezekiel 36.26, 27.

The new heart is what we need. The new heart makes us God's people. Only when our hearts are made new can we receive the Light of the Lord to know, love, and serve Him (Eph. 1.15-23). So, while dark days were

just ahead for the people of Jerusalem, God's mighty promises – that He would be among them as their God, and they would be His people – were getting closer by the day.

And that's still true for us. Maranatha!

Reflect.

1. What does it mean for God to give someone a new heart?
2. What does having a new heart enable us to do?
3. What does it mean to “know” the Lord? How would you explain this idea to an unbelieving friend?

Here is added the main benefit, that God would not only restore the captives, that they might dwell in the land of promise, but would also change them inwardly; for except God gives us a conviction as to our own sins, and then leads us by his Spirit to repentance, whatever benefit he may bestow on us, they will only conduce to our greater ruin. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Jeremiah 24.7

Lord, thank You for my new heart! Fill it with Your Light today, and send me forth to...

Pray Psalm 126.3-6.

Ask God to give you opportunities today to sow good Kingdom seed into your Personal Mission Field.

Sing Psalm 126.3-6.

Psalm 126.3-6 (Truro: [*Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns!*](#))

Then the astonished nations said,
“The Lord has done great things for them!”
Indeed, great things our God has done,
Whose Name we praise, Amen, Amen!

Restore our fortunes, Lord our King!
Let grace like flowing streams prevail.
All they with tears of joy shall sing
who sow while yet they weep and wail.

They who in tears of sorrow sow
and cast their seed on every hand,
with joy shall reach their heav'nly home,
and bring the harvest of their land.

2 Bad Figs

Pray 140.6-8.

I said to the LORD: “You *are* my God;
Hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.
O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation,
You have covered my head in the day of battle.
Do not grant, O LORD, the desires of the wicked;
Do not further his *wicked* scheme,
Lest they be exalted.”

Sing Psalm 140.6-8.

(Old Rockingham: [*O Lord Most High, with All My Heart*](#))

You are my God, O God, my Lord!
Give ear, show mercy to my pleas!
Salvation grant by Your strong Word;
grant not their wicked, evil schemes.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 24.8-10.

Prepare.

1. Who are the “bad figs”? What will happen to them?
2. How do you see that God is sovereign in the fate of the “bad figs”?

Meditate.

The second part of Jeremiah’s vision reaches from Jeconiah’s day to the present, where the “bad figs” represent the people of Judah and Jerusalem under the kingship of Zedekiah (v. 8). God is finished striving with Zedekiah. He will “give up” the king and all his family and retinue into captivity, scattering them among various kingdoms within the Babylonian Empire.

God’s patience with sin is not indefinite. Zedekiah had already witnessed three deportations of people because of their sin – one to Egypt and two to Babylon. God was striving with His people through each of these periods of judgment, because He only gives His people up reluctantly. He strives with people, by various means – especially the preaching and sharing of the Word – to turn their hearts unto Him (Gen. 6.3; 2 Pet. 4.5). But He will not strive forever; in His time, He gives people up to their sinful choices and the destructive consequences that issue from them (Rom. 1.18-32).

And His time had come for Zedekiah and his generation. They would know “trouble” and “harm” at the hands of the Lord (v. 9). They would be a reproach, a byword, a taunt, and a curse to the people among whom they were sent as captives (v. 9). And whatever was left of them in the land, God would eliminate by various forms of terrible judgment (v. 10).

It is truly a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10.31), especially when you have disregarded or denied His Word, thinking you know better than He how you ought to live. Even for the believer, when we stray from the Lord, or neglect the disciplines that enable us to grow in and follow Him, He will strive with us to bring us back to the path; and that striving can be unpleasant at times (Heb. 12.3-11).

It’s best to keep listening to God’s Word and resting in His Spirit, so that He can shape us increasingly into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3.12-18). Good figs – that’s what we want to be.

Reflect.

1. Have you ever experienced God striving with you? If He did strive with you about a matter, what do you think that would look like?
2. What is it about God that *requires* Him to act decisively against sin?
3. Jesus was both the good figs and the bad figs before His Father. Explain.

*The meaning then is, that though the condition of those who had been driven into captivity was for the present harder, yet God would deal more severely with those who remained, because he had for a time spared them, and they did not repent, but hardened themselves more and more in their wickedness. John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Jeremiah 24.8-10**

Help me to follow the example of Josiah and other faithful believers, Lord, as I...

Pray Psalm 140.1-5, 12, 13.

Ask the Lord to guard you from sinful thoughts, wicked temptations, and the evil intentions of spiritual forces of wickedness in high places. Commit yourself to walk uprightly before Him today.

Sing Psalm 140.1-5, 12, 13.

Psalm 140.1-5, 12, 13 (Old Rockingham: [*O Lord Most High, with All My Heart*](#))

From evil, violent men, I pray,
deliver me, preserve me, Lord!
Their hearts they bend to evil ways,
and serpent's venom is their word.

Guard me, O Lord, from wicked hands,
from violent men preserve my life!
They sow my path with wicked plans,
with nets and snares and cords of strife.

The Lord, I know, my cause shall take,
and justice for me surely do;
The righteous will thanksgiving make,
the upright e'er shall dwell with You.

3 Twenty-Three Years and Counting

Pray Psalm 78.1-4.

Give ear, O my people, to my law;
Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings of old,
Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.
We will not hide *them* from their children,
Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD,
And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.

Sing Psalm 78.1-4.

(Foundation: [How Firm a Foundation](#))

Give ear, O my people, attend to my word,
dark sayings and parables sent from the Lord,
things we have before by our fathers been told,
which we would not dare from our children withhold.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 25.1-7.

Prepare.

1. How long had Jeremiah been prophesying at this point?
2. Was he alone in this effort?

Meditate.

Flashback to the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign. We recall that he succeeded his brother, Shallum, both of them sons of Josiah, after Shallum (Jehoahaz) was carried off into captivity in Egypt (2 Kgs. 23.31-34). Jehoiakim would reign eleven years, three of them as a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar, before dying in Jerusalem (2 Kgs. 23.36-24.6). Jeremiah had been at his ministry for twenty-three years when God gave him this word in chapter 25 for the king and the people.

He preached this message throughout Judah and Jerusalem (Jer. 25.1, 2). He must have moved around a lot in so doing, and that's not hard to imagine for a ministry that had gone on for 23 years by this point (Jeremiah's ministry would continue for at least another fourteen years). Other prophets served with Jeremiah during this time (v. 4), and together with him, they proclaimed the same basic message: Repent of the sins you have committed in turning away from the Lord to false gods, lest you provoke the Lord to anger and judgment (vv. 3-6).

No "ten steps to a happier and more prosperous life"? What about "when we all get to heaven"? Or should he have said something about "how to have a great marriage" or "how to succeed in your work"?

Sorry, people of Judah and Jerusalem. That's not what you needed. Jeremiah understood the situation in the nation. He saw the drift from the ways of God from the days of Josiah to the time of Jehoiakim. He passed by the idols, stationed throughout Jerusalem at various places, including the temple precincts. He saw the false prophets promising peace and happiness and prosperity to one and all.

Jeremiah understood the Word of God for the people among whom he lived and worked, and he proclaimed

it faithfully. They didn't like it, as we shall see, but he didn't care. It's what they needed to hear, and he was going to tell it straight from the Lord's mouth to their unwilling ears.

The people would not listen (vv. 4, 7). And now the anger of God was about to break out on them. Just three short years from the time of this message, Nebuchadnezzar would come and begin the drawn-out process of deporting the people and destroying the city and temple of God.

Do we seek the Word of God for what we want to hear or for what God wants us to hear? Are we listening to His Word or just seeking one of our own?

Reflect.

1. How can we keep from reading the Word of God for what *we want* rather than what *God wants us to hear*?
2. How can we know when we are beginning to drift from the Lord's will?
3. When is repentance necessary? What does repentance involve?

He mentions the great number of years in order to emphasize God's long-suffering in putting up with unbelievers for so long. I sent my servants the prophets to you, he says. I urged you to abandon the road to ruin and travel by the other road that produces life. I, in fact, promised you blessings for doing this. But you did not listen, and instead you chose the worship of idols. Theodoret of Cyr (393-466), On Jeremiah 6.25.3-7

Keep me in Your way today, O Lord, and help me to follow Your Word as I...

Pray Psalm 78.4-16.

Use this time to recall, as many as you can, all God's good works which He has done for you. Then commit this day to walking according to His Word.

Sing Psalm 78.4-16.

Psalm 78.4-16 (Foundation: [How Firm a Foundation](#))

The glorious deeds of our God in His might,
and all of the works He has done in our sight,
together with all of the words of His Law,
would we on ourselves and our children bestow.

Lord, let all our children arise and declare
the truth of the Lord every day, everywhere,
and set all their hopes in God's wonderful Word,
and never forget all the works of the Lord.

Our fathers were stubborn; they would not obey;
when faced with their foes they in fear turned away.
God's work of redemption they wholly despised,
forgetting the pow'r He had shown to their eyes.

4 Captivity and Return

Pray Psalm 28.6, 7.

Blessed *be* the LORD,
Because He has heard the voice of my supplications!
The LORD *is* my strength and my shield;
My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped;
Therefore my heart greatly rejoices,
And with my song I will praise Him.

Sing Psalm 28.6, 7.

(Angel's Story: [O Jesus, I Have Promised](#))

Blessed be the Name of Jesus, for He will hear our prayer.
His strength protects and shields us with mercy and with care.
In Your heart rejoices; You help us by Your Word.
To You we raise our voices to praise and thank You, Lord.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 24.8-14.

Prepare.

1. How did the Lord refer to Nebuchadnezzar? What does that mean?
2. What promise did the Lord hold out for His people?

Meditate.

Here is our first indication that Jeremiah is writing all this down in a book (v. 13). Of course, he had to have been, because we have the book today. But it is a measure of God's grace that He directed certain of His prophets to record their ministries and messages in books, "for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world" (*Westminster Confession of Faith 1.1*).

Jeremiah told Jehoiakim and the people of his day that Nebuchadnezzar was bringing the forces of Babylon "against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around" (v. 9), and he would wreak widespread destruction. The Babylonians had been preparing for this since the days of Hezekiah, once they learned the fabulous riches that were stashed away in Jerusalem (2 Kgs. 20.12-18). Now at last the hour of judgment had come.

This would be the first of three assaults Nebuchadnezzar would mount against the city. It is recalled here to demonstrate to Zedekiah the certainty of God's Word. As He had spoken through Jeremiah in the time of Jehoiakim, so was He now speaking to Zedekiah.

But Zedekiah and the people would not listen; thus, they would suffer an even greater destruction than that visited on the city and nation during Jehoiakim's reign (vv. 10, 11). But God is an equal opportunity Judge. He used the Babylonians to judge the people of Judah and Jerusalem; and He would raise up the Medes and Persians to judge the sinful Babylonians. Then, after seventy years of captivity, God would return His people to their land (vv. 12-14). He disciplines His people when they need it, but He does not abandon them.

Jesus has promised to be with us always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28.20). We may need to undergo discipline from the Lord at times (Heb. 12.3-11), but this is only so that He can restore us to His love and His

righteous path. His promise to bless will never fail. Keep your eyes fixed on that.

Reflect.

1. The people were judged because they had not “heard” the Word of God (v. 8). What does that mean?
2. Is it possible to read the Bible and listen to good preaching and still not “hear” the Word of God? How can we know when we have “heard” the Word as God intends?
3. God has His eye on the works people do, both those who know Him and those who do not. How should this motivate us?

*...the Prophet shows here that such would be the devastation of the land, that there would be no thoughts about marriages, that all hilarity and joy would cease, that there would be no preparations of food, no grinding of corn, and that, in short, all feasts usually kept by the light of candles would be no more celebrated. Here, then, he describes to the life that devastation which had been before mentioned. John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Jeremiah 25.10**

Keep me in Your path, O Lord, so that I...

Pray Psalm 28.1-5, 8, 9.

Call upon your Good Shepherd to guide and keep you today, and to use you for His glory.

Sing Psalm 28.1-5, 8, 9.

Psalm 28.1-5, 8, 9 (Angel's Story: [O Jesus, I Have Promised](#))

I cry to You, our Savior, O, be not deaf to me!

Lord, speak to me with favor, lest I should dying be.

Hear now my supplications when for Your help I cry.

Receive these, my oblations, before Your throne on high.

Lord, count me not among those who walk in sinful ways.

With words of peace their tongue glows while evil fills their days.

Your works they disregard, Lord, while evil fills their hands.

Destroy them by Your Word, Lord, and let them no more stand.

Our strength are You, O Savior, our strong defense and sure.

Anointed with Your favor, we rest in You secure.

Save us, and bless us, Jesus, upon us turn Your face.

With shepherd's care, Lord, keep us forever in Your grace.

5 Judgment Near and Far

Pray Psalm 7.1-5.

O LORD my God, in You I put my trust;
Save me from all those who persecute me;
And deliver me,
Lest they tear me like a lion,
Rending *me* in pieces, while *there is* none to deliver.
O LORD my God, if I have done this:
If there is iniquity in my hands,
If I have repaid evil to him who was at peace with me,
Or have plundered my enemy without cause,
Let the enemy pursue me and overtake *me*;
Yes, let him trample my life to the earth,
And lay my honor in the dust.

Sing Psalm 7.1-5.

(Finlandia: [*Be Still My Soul*](#))

O Lord, my God, in You do I take refuge;
save me from those who my poor soul would tear!
Deliver me from my foes' angry deluge,
lest I be swept beyond all hope and care.
Let not injustice, let not evil stain me,
lest to the dust my glory trampled be.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 25.15-29.

Prepare.

1. Whom else did God judge besides His people?
2. What were the nations supposed to learn from the calamity coming upon Jerusalem?

Meditate.

It makes sense that, since God was going to judge His people for adopting pagan beliefs and ways, He would also bring His judgment on those who were promulgating those beliefs and ways. His Word to Jeremiah now takes aim at all the nations which have caused His people to stumble.

The “cup” is symbolic here. I doubt that Jeremiah literally made these nations drink the cup of God’s wrath. But the cup is frequently used in Scripture as a symbol of God’s judgment, and I think that’s how it’s being used here (vv. 15, 16).

A complete catalogue is provided of all the nations that will fall to Nebuchadnezzar and the armies of Babylon (vv. 19-26). Jeremiah was to bring the judgment of the Lord to them all. Though he’d preached in all the cities of Judah, it’s not likely that he traveled to each of these places. Rather, he may have confronted the ambassadors or other representatives of these nations who were in or coming and going from Jerusalem. We note as well (v. 17) that Judah and Jerusalem are included in the Lord’s judgment.

Did Jeremiah use a cup as he preached this message? Possibly, and if he did, then all who heard him would have been reminded of his words each time they lifted a cup to their lips. Jeremiah had previously instructed the people with a potter’s vessel. Now a cup was his vessel of choice to proclaim the judgment of God.

God is sovereign over all nations. He has written His Law on the hearts of every person (Rom. 2.14, 15). Those who refuse to acknowledge God and His Word, and who turn to idols of various sorts – and the sinful lifestyles such idols promote – can expect the wrath of God to be revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1.18-32). When God comes battering against all the walls with which people have surrounded themselves against Him, let's make sure that, like Jeremiah, we are safely ensconced in Him and in His Word.

Reflect.

1. Why is the “cup” a good symbol for God’s judgment? What else does the cup symbolize in Scripture?
2. How is Paul’s message in Romans 1.18-32 like message given here to Jeremiah?
3. Jeremiah warned those under God’s wrath. Do we need to do the same? Explain.

He then says, that a cup had been delivered to him by God's hand; by which words he intimates, that he did not come forth of his own will to terrify the Jews and other nations, but that he faithfully proclaimed what had been committed to him; and he also intimates, that God spoke nothing now but what he meant shortly to execute; and this is what is to be understood by the word cup. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Jeremiah 25.15

Cleanse me of all my sins, Lord, and help me to serve You faithfully today as I...

Pray Psalm 7.6-17.

Call on the Lord to protect you today – through temptations, in the midst of trials, as you take on every task. Praise and thank Him for all His kindness and favor toward you.

Sing Psalm 7.6-17.

Psalm 7.6-17 (Finlandia: [*Be Still My Soul*](#))

Arise, O Lord, rise up in wrath to save me!
Let rage and judgment fall upon my foes!
From all around to You let thanks and praise be.
Rise up on high; the wicked curse with woes.
O Judge of all, observe my just demeanor
And vindicate me by Your grace, O Lord.

Bring to an end the evil of the wicked,
but let Your righteous ones established be.
You are my shield, my soul will not be stricken;
You save the upright; You will rescue me!
You are a righteous Judge in every way;
a God of indignation every day.

Let all repent or know Your piercing sword!
Your bow is bent and ready for the fight!
Take deadly weapons in Your hand, O Lord,
and fiery arrows, aimed against the night.
The wicked fall and stumble in their mischief,
but to my soul Your grace will bring relief.

All praise and thanks to You, O righteous Savior!
My hope, my trust, my confidence are You!
Embrace me with Your kindness and Your favor,

Promise and Wrath: Jeremiah 24, 25

and to Your glory make me ever true.
We sing Your praise and glorify Your Name,
Who brings our foes to judgment and to shame.

6 Savage Lion

Pray Psalm 57.1-3.

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me!
For my soul trusts in You;
And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,
Until *these* calamities have passed by.
I will cry out to God Most High,
To God who performs *all things* for me.
He shall send from heaven and save me;
He reproaches the one who would swallow me up.

Sing Psalm 57.1-3.

(Fabien: [*Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens Adore Him*](#))

Lord, be gracious, gracious to me, for my soul retreats in You.
In Your shadow keep me safely till the storms of life are through.
I will cry to You, the Most High; You do all things well for me.
You will save me when I thus cry, routing all who threaten me.

Read and meditate on Jeremiah 25.30-38.

Prepare.

1. In what condition would God's judgment leave the nations?
2. What would happen to the "shepherds" of God's people?

Meditate.

This is Jeremiah's most urgent message yet, and the reason is clear: Nebuchadnezzar has arrived for the third time, and he has laid siege to Jerusalem. This time he would make sure he didn't have to come back again.

Jeremiah pictured the Babylonian armies as a ravening lion (v. 30). No one can stand against them, and their roaring will cover all lands and peoples (v. 31). Disaster is coming, "And a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the farthest parts of the earth" (v. 32).

A roaring and ravening lion, and a terrifying and disastrous whirlwind: Clearly, the destruction about to come on Judah and all the surrounding nations would be total.

No one will bother to bury the dead, either, and they'll just rot away on the ground (v. 33).

The shepherds of God's people – king, priests, and prophets – will see the destruction of their nation and cry out before they too are slaughtered and dispersed (vv. 34-36). And though the Babylonians would be the *proximate* cause of all this disaster, God Himself is the Lion raging against them in His fierce anger (v. 38). He is the *ultimate* cause of Judah's destruction, "because of His fierce anger" against the hard hearts and wicked ways of His people.

It is truly a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Believers in Jesus do not fear the eternal wrath of God for their sins, because Jesus has paid the price for them and borne them away. But we should fear the Lord enough that we hate sin, because we know that He disciplines those whom He loves when they stray from the path of righteousness (Heb. 12.3-11). Jesus is still the Lion of the tribe of Judah, after all.

Reflect.

1. What was God's relationship to the Babylonian armies? Does He still do this in our day?
2. Which aspects of this passage show Jeremiah's increasing sense of urgency about this situation?
3. The last words of this passage are "His fierce anger." Why is that significant? Is there still room to repent, or has that been removed?

Jeremiah joins together two clauses, that God would forsake his Temple, as when a lion departs from his covert, and also that enemies would come and find the place naked and empty; in short, he intimates that they would be exposed to the will and plunder of their enemies, because they would be at that time destitute of God's aid. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Jeremiah 25.38

Show me my sins, O Lord, and I will repent, lest...

Pray Psalm 57.4-11.

You may have to deal with some "raging lions" of your own today; but the Lion of the tribe of Judah is with you. Seek His strength and commit your day entirely to Him and for His glory.

Sing Psalm 57.4-11.

Psalm 57.4-11 (Fabien: [*Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens Adore Him*](#))

Send Your truth and lovingkindness; raging lions seek my soul.

Threats and sland'rous words without rest they against me fiercely roll.

Be exalted o'er the heavens, let Your glory fill the earth!

To Your Name all praise be given, let all men proclaim Your worth!

Nets and pits they set before me; overwhelmed, my soul bows down.

Let them all in their own works be thrown and scattered on the ground.

Let my heart no more be shaken, I will sing Your praises, Lord!

Harp and glory, now awaken to extol God's faithful Word!

Praise and thanks among the nations I will sing with all my might!

For Your truth and love are stationed far above the highest height!

Be exalted o'er the heavens, let Your glory fill the earth!

To Your Name all praise be given, let all men proclaim Your worth!

7 “I Will...”

Pray Psalm 86.10-12.

For You *are* great, and do wondrous things;
You alone *are* God.
Teach me Your way, O LORD;
I will walk in Your truth;
Unite my heart to fear Your name.
I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.

Sing Psalm 86.10-12.

(Andrews: *Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*)

For You are great, You wondrous deeds do;
You are the only and sovereign Lord.
Teach me Your way, let me give heed to,
with all my heart, Savior, all Your Word!
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
praise Your Name forever, Lord!

Review Jeremiah chapters 24, 25; meditate on Jeremiah 24.7.

Prepare.

1. How will God’s people finally come to know and love Him?
2. What is the essence of God’s covenant, as summarized in this verse?

Meditate.

People are fallen, flighty, feeble, foolish, and frequently deluded, disobedient, and just plain dumb. We are changeable creatures; but this is no excuse for not knowing and loving God. He has made Himself abundantly well known to all people, just as He had done in the days of Jeremiah (cf. Rom. 1.18-21). We simply can’t be relied on, either to do the right thing or keep our word.

But God is not like us. He is unchanging in all His ways. His Word is completely reliable and true. As we saw in Jeremiah 24 and 25, God had told His people early on that they must keep covenant with Him, or He would discipline and judge them, giving them up to the consequences of their foolish choices (cf. Deut. 28). God had sent Jeremiah – and other prophets with him – to call the people of Judah and Jerusalem to repentance. For nearly forty years, Jeremiah faithfully reminded the people of God’s goodness and His Law. He warned them of judgment to come if they did not repent.

And now judgment was at the door. Three times Nebuchadnezzar would come to Jerusalem and take people and possessions away to Babylon. Three times he would give them a new king. And through all this time, Jeremiah continued to call the people to repentance. Yet they refused to repent and return to the Lord. God had said He would bring His wrath against them for their rebellious ways, and now He would keep His Word to the utmost.

But His promise to create a people for Himself and His glory would not fail. The essence of God’s covenant with His people is that they would be a holy people unto Him, and He would be their Shepherd and King: “they shall be My people, and I will be their God...”

But for this to happen, the people would need a new heart. Only God could provide this, and, true to His Word (cf. Deut. 30.1-10), He would do precisely that.

So while seventy years of judgment lay just ahead of the people of Jeremiah's day, beyond that, a new day of covenant promise and fulfillment was in store. And God, Who said "I will" both to judgment and restoration, would not fail to keep His Word.

Reflect.

1. How has God fulfilled the promise of His covenant for us?
2. What does God expect of us as His covenant people?
3. How can we make sure that our hearts are always set on the Lord and His ways?

... the Prophet speaks of a much more excellent favor, that God would not only mitigate punishment, but that he would also inwardly change and reform their hearts, so that they would not only return to their own country, but would also become a true Church, a name of which they had vainly boasted. For though they had been chosen to be a peculiar people, yet, as they had departed from true religion, they were only a Church in name. But now God promises that he would bring them, not only to enjoy temporal and fading blessings, but also eternal salvation, for they would truly fear and serve him. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Jeremiah 24.7

Thank You for Your covenant, Lord, and for making me one of Your people, so that I...

Pray Psalm 86.1-9.

Review all the great works and promises of God. Praise and thank Him for His faithful Word, and rejoice in His goodness, forgiveness, and lovingkindness.

Sing Psalm 86.1-9.

Psalm 86.1-9 (Andrews: [*Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*](#))

Bow down Your ear, O Lord and hear me;
I am afflicted and much in need!
Rescue my godly soul, be near me;
save me, O God, all my crying heed!
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
all day long I pray and plead.

Lift up my soul, fill me with gladness;
Lord You are good, You will soon forgive.
Show me abundant lovingkindness;
let all who call on You ever live.
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
heed to my poor pleading give.

When in my trouble, Lord, I call You,
You answer me; there is none like You!
There are no works like Yours, and all whom
You have created shall worship You.
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,
all shall glory give to You!

Promise and Wrath: Jeremiah 24, 25

Questions for reflection or discussion

1. What is God's covenant? Why should we want to be part of this covenant?
2. Why do we need a "new heart" to enter God's covenant? How do we get that new heart?
3. Why was God bringing His judgment against the people of Judah and Jerusalem? What could they have done to avoid this?
4. What can you do to become more faithful in your witness for the Lord, like Jeremiah was for all those years?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Jeremiah 24, 25? How are you putting that lesson to work in your life?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at www.ailbe.org to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 360 Zephyr Road, Williston, VT 05495.

Thank you.