

JEREMIAH 23:1-8

LESSON: THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH —May 3, 2020

INTRODUCTION:

In **Chapter 22** God says to the prophet Jeremiah, *"I want you to go up and talk to the king himself, face to face."* This is the first time Jeremiah is sent to deliver a message to the face of the king himself. The message goes forth to each king of Judah to hear the Word of the Lord: 1.) Message to the house of the king of Judah—David (Jer.21:11-14-22:1-10). 2.) Message to concerning Shallum (Jehoahaz), the son of Josiah, king of Judah (Jer.22:11- 17); He reigned 3 months. And concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah (Jer.22:18-23). 3.) Message to Coniah (Jeconiah) the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah (Jer.22:24-30). He reigned 3 months and 10 days.

LESSON: I. THE NEED FOR PASTORAL CARE JEREMIAH 23:1-4

23:1 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. The Lord God speaks through Jeremiah a pronouncement of "Woe" upon Judah's pastors; some versions say shepherds. Jeremiah was an Old Testament prophet of doom and gloom. He was sent to prophesy God's judgment. This verse's declaration is because the pastors/shepherds have destroyed and scattered the sheep. They've done the exact opposite of the basic requirements for any shepherd. "Woe" means a judgment of deep despair and/or curse. 'Who are these shepherds? They are the kings of the nation; rulers and government leaders of God. ²The first two verses of this passage address Jehoiakim's and Zedekiah's failed leadership that led to exile. A shepherd's role was to gather the sheep together and protect them. The shepherds of Judah, however, made policy decisions that placed the people in peril and ultimately led them into their exile. By right of their office, the kings of Judah had exerted a tremendous influence on the people, scattering them away from God. Remember the people are the sheep of His pasture. The sheep do not belong to the rulers but God is the true Shepherd.

23:2 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. God makes it clearer and clearer the error of these pastors/shepherds. They didn't feed God's people; they drove the people away, and they didn't even visit the people. Therefore, as they did not do what God required of them, God lets them know that they have not gotten away with their evil. God will pour out judgment upon them as they had done themselves.

23:3 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. After telling the pastors/

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shepherds what they didn't do and what will happen to them, He turns around and tells them what He will do to fix this problem. The sheep were scattered by the false shepherds, but God also states here that He had also driven them. However, He will be the One who will re-gather and bring His remnant out of all those countries they were driven to. The people would be brought back to the land after the Babylonian captivity. A remnant will return (*those that have escaped destruction*) and they will be fruitful and increase. The result is that ³*The failure of human leaders prepares us for the intervention of God.* When people in our lives fail us, look for God to step in. Disappointment with leaders and frustration of things that we sometimes think we aren't supposed to feel as Christians, we come to realize how that disappointment opens us up to God's work within. He is able to regather or bring you back to the fold and enable you to be fruitful and multiply.

23:4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord. Though the former pastors/shepherds didn't take care of the people, God will appoint and set-up responsible shepherds to care and feed His people. This Shepherd will not cause the people to fear, nor be dismayed, neither lacking nor none of them missing.

II. THE COMING SHEPHARD JEREMIAH 23:5-8

23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. Jeremiah raises this ray of hope that God will honor this Covenant with David (2Sam.7:1-25). He will raise up a righteous Branch who will reign and prosper as king, and execute judgment and justice in the earth. He would be a "branch" coming from David's lineage. Isaiah wrote, Is.11:1 (KJV) *"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots"* The term "branch" means ⁴"shoot" or "sprout", and signifies the new life that the Messiah was to bring to the Davidic monarchy, which was presumed dead.

23:6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness. During the Righteous King's reign *"Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely."* The name by which He will be called is *'the LORD our righteousness'* (vv. 5-6; cf. 3:17; 33:16; Ezekiel 48:35; 1 Corinthians 1:30). ⁵This title is a translation of " J e h o v a h T s i d k e n u ." Interestingly, the term Tsidkenu is another form of the name Zedekiah. This was the name of the King who was ruling in Judah when Jeremiah made this prophecy. The name Zedekiah *means "The Lord is my Righteousness."* But King Zedekiah was far from righteous in his own life! Jesus is OUR righteousness! He did all things justly! Therefore, out of the fallen dynasty of Israel, life would spring through an individual Messiah, upon whom the nation, as well as the world's hopes would rest.

23:7 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;— While Judah will be saved, Israel will not be afraid, and it will be that in a future time the Lord says they will no longer say *"The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt."*



³ Discovery Publishing © 2009. www.pbc.org

⁴ <http://www.studytoanswer.net/judaism/jahtsidqenu.html>

⁵ <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/a-reason-to-rejoice-k-edward-skidmore-sermon-on-christmas-74664.asp?page=3>

www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html

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23:8 But, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land. But the Lord says that they will say that The Living Lord which brought up and led the seed of the house of Israel out of the North Country, and from all countries whither God had driven them, they will dwell in their own land.

SUMMARY:

This chapter begins with woe to pastors/shepherds who feed His people. On account of their scattering, driving away, and not visiting the sheep of the Lord, God lets them know that He will visit them with evil. But God then gives hope that His remnant will be brought back to the fold. They will be fruitful and increase. He goes further by saying that He will set up shepherds over them to properly care for them. They will no longer need to fear, be dismayed or have lack (**23:1-4**).

They didn't feed the sheep. Look for the days to come, He says that a Righteous Branch shall rise up and a King shall reign and prosper. He will then execute judgment and justice in the land. Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will be safe, calling His name The Lord Our Righteousness, and it will be that in a future time the Lord says they will no longer say "*The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.*" But the Lord says that they will say that The Living Lord which brought up and led the seed of the house of Israel out of the North Country, and from all countries whither God had driven them, they will dwell in their own land (**23:5-8**).

APPLICATION:

When God speaks a promise, He is well able to perform it. Are there promises you're still waiting on? No matter how sinful the nation of Israel was, His judgment was sure and His promises were surer!

