August 13, 2023

Trust & Obey

Jeff Rogers / Empty Nesters Bible Study Jeremiah 40-44

The forty-fourth chapter of Jeremiah contains the prophet's last recorded words. Jeremiah 45 is a short prophecy given to Baruch two decades before (605 B.C.; see 45:1). Chapters 46 through 51 contain prophecies previously given against the nations. The oracles against Egypt were spoken in 605 B.C. (46:2), while the judgments against Babylon were announced around 594 B.C. (51:59). Chapter 52 is an appendix to the book that, as the Bible indicates (51:64b), was not written by Jeremiah himself. Thus chapter 44 contains the last recorded words of Jeremiah.¹

This is a good place, therefore, to recount the many sufferings of the Weeping Prophet. He was ignored, rejected, scorned, and humiliated. He was beaten, imprisoned, and put in the stocks. He was falsely accused and condemned as a traitor. Twice he was cast into a dungeon and left for dead.²

Finally, Jeremiah's devotion to the people of God carried him into exile. He spent his last years in Egypt, the land of the Sphinx and the pyramids. He must have lived there for some time, for by the time he uttered his last words, the Jews had scattered along the Nile: "This word came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews living in Lower Egypt—in Migdol, Tahpanhes, and Memphis—and in Upper Egypt" (44:1).³

I. Understand the History

- A. Jeremiah is freed to return to the remnant (Jeremiah 40:4-6a)
- B. Gedaliah, the Babylonian appointed governor of Judea, was assassinated by Ishmael (son of Nethaniah) (Jeremiah 41:1-3)
- C. Johanan (son of Kareah), prepares to lead the people to Egypt, fearing Babylonian reprisals for Ishmael's murder of Gedaliah (Jeremiah 41:17-18).
- D. The remnant, under Johanan's leadership, pauses to ask Jeremiah to pray (Jeremiah 42:2-3) and promises obedience to the Lord's voice (Jeremiah 42:5-6) (Contrast the life (41:17) to the lips (42:6).
- E. After ten days, Jeremiah provided the remnant the Lord's answer (Jeremiah 42:9-16)
- F. The remnant's disobedient actions (Jeremiah 43:2, 4, 7) and the promised judgment (43:10-13)
- G. God's promised supervision of the remnant's destruction (Jeremiah 44:25b-27).
 - 1. The blatant rejection (44:15-17)
 - 2. The utter short-sightedness (44:17b-18)

II. Comprehend the Applications

- A. <u>As the mind goes, so goes obedience.</u> (Romans 12:2, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*) Compare 41:17, 42:2-3, 42:6; 43:2; 44:16.
 - 1. The warning against doublemindedness (James 1:5-8, esp. vs. 8) (**James 1:8,** *He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*)
 - a) *Double-minded* Seen in a duality, division, opposing thoughts or intentions, resulting many times in indecisiveness. It is saying one thing and doing another.
 - b) *Unstable* ceaseless motion (unrest); lacking stability, fixity, or firmness. (Squishy!)
 - 2. The single-minded example of John the Baptist
 - a) (Matthew 11:7-11; **Matthew 11:7,** As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?)
 - 3. The Challenge to Believers to grow strong roots.
 - a) **Ephesians 4:14,** *So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

¹ Ryken, Philip Graham. *Jeremiah and Lamentations: From Sorrow to Hope*. Preaching the Word. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

B. As the family goes, so goes the nation.

- 1. The imperative of fatherly leadership
 - a) The past challenge (Jeremiah 44:9)
 - b) The present abdication (Jeremiah 44:15)
 - c) The brazen disobedience (Jeremiah 44:25)
- 2. The historical precedent.
 - a) Adam (Genesis 3:6, Eve ate the forbidden fruit)
 - b) Abraham (Genesis 12:10-20, Abram went to Egypt)
 - c) Jacob (Genesis 31:30-35, Rachel hid her false gods)

C. As obedience goes, so goes the blessing.

- 1. The Conditional Promise
 - a) The Blessing (Jeremiah 42:10, 11-12)
 - b) The Curse (Jeremiah 42:13-18)
- 2. The New Testament Example
 - a) A Concise Question (Luke 6:46)
 - (1) The question evokes a word of warning.
 - (2) The question is cause for investigation.

who is in heaven.

- (3) The question should cause examination.
 - (a) Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father
 - (b) 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10, The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved
- b) A Clear Illustration (Luke 6:47-49)
- c) A Crucial Application (Luke 6:46-49)
 - (1) Martin Luther, "It is faith alone that saves, but the faith that saves is not alone."
 - (2) **1 John 1:6,** *If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*
 - (3) **James 2:17,** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Luke 6:46-49

- 46 "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?
- 47 Everyone who comes to me and <u>hears</u> my words and <u>does</u> them, I will show you what he is like:
- 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.
- 49 But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

In his notes on this verse Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) wrote, "I think the difference here pointed out between these two covenants, lies plainly here, that in the old covenant, God promised to be their God upon the condition of hearty obedience; obedience was stipulated as a condition, but not promised. But in the new covenant, this hearty obedience is promised." MOWLEDGE OF SELF AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD



he basic structure of the relationship God has established with His people is the covenant. A covenant is
usually thought of as a contract. While there surely
are some similarities between covenants and contracts,
there are also important differences. Both are binding
agreements. Contracts are made from somewhat, eigal
barganing positions, and both parties are free not to sign
the contract. A covenant is likewise an agreement. However, covenants in the Bible are not usually between equals.
Rather, they follow a pattern common to the andnern NearEast suzerain-vassal treaties. Suzerain-vassal treaties (as
seen among the Hittite kings) were made between a conquering king and the conquered. There was no negotiation
between the parties.
The first element of these covenants is the preamble,
which lists the respective parties. Exodus 20:2 begins with the

which lists the respective parties. Exodus 20.2 begins with "am the Lope your God" (God is the suzerain; the people of Israel are the vassals. The second element is the historical prologue. This section lists what the suzerain (or Lord) has done to deserve loyalty, such as bringing the Hebrews out of slavery in Egypt. In theological terms, this is the section of grace. In the next section, the Lord lists what He will uire of those He rules. In Exodus 20, these are the Ten Commandments. Each of the commandments were considered morally binding on the entire covenant community. The final part of this type of covenant lists blessings and

cursings. The Lord lists the benefits that He will bestow upon His vassals if they follow the stipulations of the covenant. An example of this is found in the fifth commandment. God promises the israelites that their days will be long in the Promised Land if they honor their parents. The covenant also presents cruses should the people fail in their responsibilities. God warns israel that He will not hold them guiltless if they fail to honor His name. This basic pattern is evident in God's covenants with Adam, Noah, Abraham. Moses, and the covenant between Jesus and His church. In biblical times, covenants were raitlied in bloods. If

In biblical times, covenants were ratified in blood. It was, customary for both parties to the covenant to pass between dismembered animals, signifying their agreement to the terms of the covenant (see Jeremiah 34:18). We have an example of this kind of covenant in Genesis 15:7-21. Here, God made certain promises to Abraham, which were Here, soo made certain promises to Abranam, which were ratified by the sarrificing of animals. However in this case, God alone passes through the animals, indicating that He is binding Himself by a solemn oath to fulfill the covenant. The new covenant, the covenant of grace, was ratified by the shed blood of Christ upon the cross At the heart of

this covenant is God's promise of redemption. God has not only promised to redeem all who put their trust in Christ, but has sealed and confirmed that promise with a most holy vow. We serve and worship a God who has pledged Himself to our full redemption.

here is a mutual dependence between our kni

here is a mutual dependence between our knowledge of ourselves and our knowledge of God. As soon as I am aware of myself as a self realize that I am not God. I am a creature. I have a birth date, a time when my life began on earth. My tombstone at my death will not engrave eternity as my starting point.

My sense of creatrueliness drives my thinking back to my Creator or "up" to my Creator. I cannot contemplate God or anything else outside of myself until I am first aware of myself. Yet I cannot grasp the meaning of myself by the myself. Yet I cannot grasp the meaning of myself by the myself. Yet I cannot grasp the meaning of myself by the myself. Yet I cannot grasp the meaning of myself by the myself. Yet I cannot grasp the meaning of myself by the myself that is a subdivision of theology, the study of God.

The crisis of modern humanity is found in the rupture between anthropology and theology, between the study of found and the myself of my the story of God, then it indeed becomes "a tale / Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, / Signifying nothing," If we are considered without reference to God, we become a "useless passion" as out reference to God, we become a "useless passion," as philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre declared.

philosopher Jean-Haul Sartre declared. What is a "sueless passion"? A passion is an intense feeling. What is a "sueless passion"? A passion is an intense feeling. Human life is marked by intense feelings. They include such passions as love, hate, fear, guilt, ambition, lust, envy, jealousy, and a host of others. As creatures we have deep feelings about our lives. The question haunts us: Are all these feelings useless? Is all our striving and caring merely an exercise in futility, an excursion of vanity?

9:21 death. The actions of death are poetically personified as a stealthy thief or a conquering army. children . . . young men. See 6:11; Lam. 5:13-15 and notes. Death usually carries off older people.

but now it will remove the children and young men as well, leaving the community without hope for the future.

9:23, 24 See theological note "Knowledge of Self

The meaning of our lives is at stake. Our dignly is on the line. If human beings are considered alone, apart fix celationship to God, then they remain alone and righthicant. If we are not creatures made by and related to God, we are cosmic accidents. Our origin is insight to God, our dignly insight of God, and our destiny is equally insignificant. If we energe from the slime by accident and finally disentegrate into a void or abviss of nothingness, then we live our lives between the slime by accident and initially disentegrate into a void of abyss of nothingness, then we live our lives between two poles of absolute meaninglessness. We are peeled zeroe

poles of absolute meaninglessness. We are peeled zeros stripped naked of dignity and worth. To assign dignity to a human being temporarily that a between the poles of a meaningles origina and americal less destiny, is to include ourselves in pure unemander sentiment. We tease ourselves with self-delusion. Our origin and our destiny are tied to God The only ultimate meaning we can have must be theological The nuestion we ask was asked by the psalmist:

question we ask was asked by the psalmis

"When I look at your heavens, the work of your finger the moon and the stars, which you have set the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, which is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of muthat you care for him? Me you have made him a little leave than the heavenly beings and crowned him with gloy ad honor (Ps. 83-5).

To be created by God is to be related to God Thisite-capable relationship insures that we are not usels small.

or feeling. In creation we receive a crown of glory. A crown of glory is a tiara of dignity. With God we have dignity without God we are nothing

> and Knowledge of God' Wisdom, might, and are natural places for sinful human benests their trust. Yet none of these things can with the outpouring of God's wrath.

Pain hurts and we want it to stop.

Fear of the unknown outcomes.

Jealousy, we want what God has not ordained for us.

Fairness, life is not fair, and we want fairness.

Love, if God is so loving; the pain would not be present.

God does not coddle our fears with false promises...

- The Word of the Lord in the Old Testament was/is perhaps more than we could ever imagine. The Word of the Lord was meant to be seen with the eyes and heard with the ears, and there are several examples of this in Scripture:
 - Abraham and the word of the Lord (Gen 15:1,17)
 - Samuel and the word of the Lord (1 Samuel 3:1, 4, 21)
 - Jeremiah and the word of the Lord (Jeremiah 1:4-5, 9)
 - **John 1:1–2, 14,** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He* was in the beginning with God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

D.

- E. What verdict would God give on your life?
 - 1. Do we forget God in our daily life?
 - 2. Do we establish our own righteousness rather than pursuing Christ's righteousness?

3. Do we rebel against the Lordship of Christ when given clear instructions & commands?4. Do we add any other "gods" in our life (money, positions, fame, stuff)?5. Do you love God like a newly married bride?	