

“RUIN, REDEMPTION, AND RESTORATION”

Studies in the Book of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 4:5-31

“Babylon is Coming to Town”

Introduction: Jeremiah provides an intimate and detailed look at the last days of the ancient kingdom of Israel. The ancient kingdom of Israel temporarily ceased to exist because of covenant unfaithfulness.

I. The Culmination of Critical Counsel (Jeremiah 4:5-10)

- A. Jeremiah is tasked with telling the people of Judah and Jerusalem to sound the warning alarm (trumpet) and gather the people to flee to the fortified cities. This was an urgent call to action based on an imminent invasion.
- B. The armies of Babylon are described as disaster, destruction, a lion, and destroyer of nations. God is using a pagan nation to execute His will. The Babylonian army would be invincible because God chose to use them.
- C. The only response is to lament. The king and princes are supposed to lead the military to defend the land and keep the people safe but they will have no power against the coming judgement. The priests were led astray into idolatry, worshipping false gods who are powerless to save. The prophets were supposed to tell the truth and help the people know the word of God, but they were deceived by their own idolatrous minds and spoke lies.
- D. Verse 10: Jeremiah is sarcastically mocking the message of the false prophets who spoke peace when disaster was coming (1 Kings 22:19-23). The false prophets appeared to be right until the Babylonian army conquered the land (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

II. The Consequences of Covenant Capriciousness (Jeremiah 4:11-21)

- A. The metaphor of a whirlwind is used to describe the invading army. Woe is the strongest form of verbal expression in prophetic literature. The strong word pictures evoked by the whirlwind metaphor communicates a hopeless situation. A cry for repentance is presented. God always requires faith and heart work. Has your heart been washed from wickedness? Do you have evil thoughts residing in you? The blood of Jesus is available to cleanse us from all sin (1 John 1:7).
- B. The tribal allotments of Dan and Ephraim were on the northern border of Judah. Siege warfare was a slow brutal method of starving your opponent (cutting off

supplies) while trying to break through their defenses. The siege of Jerusalem is estimated to have lasted over 2 years.

- C. The cause of this disaster is rebellion against the Lord (Deuteronomy 28). God clearly explained that the people's behavior is the cause of the disaster. Jeremiah responds with strong emotional language that expresses deep pain in response to a devastating war that will end the kingdom of Judah.

III. The Catastrophic Conclusion of Chastisement (Jeremiah 4:22-31)

- A. The people did not take the time to get to know God's word or obey it. They were wise to do evil but ignorant when it came to doing good. The vision in verses 23-26 is using language from the creation account in Genesis and applying it to the catastrophic destruction of the kingdom of Judah. The vision represents the finality of God's decision to allow the Babylonian armies to destroy the southern kingdom of Judah. People are missing from the scene because they are going to run away from the invaders (horsemen and bowmen).
- B. God returns to the adulteress woman metaphor. No methods of seduction or beautification will save. The very lovers (pagan idolaters) will seek her life. The level of death will be overwhelming and result in a deep expression of anguish.

“Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:28-31)

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Sunday, October 19, 2025