

# ***RUIN, REBELLION, AND RESTORATION***

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Jeremiah 25:1-38

## **“ I AM TALKING, BUT YOU ARE NOT LISTENING!”**

**INTRODUCTION:** As we develop relationships over the years, we learn the critical differences between talking and actually communicating with someone. Our world today is full of voices and forms of media that literally inundate us with sounds and noises, yet it is still difficult to establish lines of communication with many people. It should be obvious that we have people who are far better at talking than listening. Scripture often points out how people choose not to listen to what they really need to hear.

**BACKGROUND:** The people of Israel were on the verge of having their worst fears realized, while at the same time living in complete denial of what was about to happen. Although they had been blessed to have copies of the Scriptures, and capable men were sent to teach them what the LORD was saying, they steadfastly chose to ignore the voice of God. They were under the leadership of a king who did not know the Lord, and as we all know, ungodly leaders make life difficult for those under their authority.

### **I. THE LORD HAS NO PROBLEM WHEN IT COMES TO SPEAKING, BUT SINNERS CHOOSE NOT TO HEAR WHAT HE IS SAYING. (Jeremiah 25:1-7)**

A. God's message to Israel became more intense as Nebuchadnezzar rose to power in Babylon. They were reminded of how long the Lord had been speaking to them and they had refused to listen.  
***How long has the Lord been trying to get you to respond to His words?***

B. Jeremiah made it very clear that He had poured his heart into warning the people to change their ways for over twenty years. Other prophets had spoken to them also. By ignoring God's voice, the loss of blessings would be the result, as their occupation of the Promised Land was based upon their obedience to God. (Deuteronomy 29:19-20)

C. Listening to the Lord and obeying His voice is the key to a fruitful and satisfying life. Only those who listen to the Lord know what to say to others. (Isaiah 50:4-5)

D. Our holy God often demonstrates His love by displaying His anger against sin. What good parent would not be outraged to see their children being harmed or hurting themselves? When human beings, created in God's image, choose to worship idols and follow demons, they step out of God's will and into God's wrath, bringing destruction and death to themselves and others.

### **II. YOU MAY CHOOSE YOUR SINS, BUT THE LORD OF THE HARVEST WILL CHOOSE THE CONSEQUENCES. ISRAEL DID NOT EXPECT THE RESULTS GOD GAVE THEM. (Jeremiah 25:8-14)**

A. The judgment against Israel was consistently communicated as being the result of their continued disobedience and willful ignorance of God's prophets speaking to them. They had refused to give the land a Sabbath rest for 490 years, so God determined they owed Him 70 years for being greedy instead of trusting Him. ***Are you taking a Sabbath and trusting the Lord to provide?***

B. God called Nebuchadnezzar His servant, not because of a relationship with Him, but because He can use anyone and everyone as He sees fit. He also used Cyrus of Persia. After using Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon as His instrument of chastening, the Lord would also punish them for their sins against Him and their cruelty against God's people. (Isaiah 10)

**III. GOD IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DISPENSER OF JUSTICE. EVERY NATION THAT DEFIES HIM WILL DRINK THE CUP OF HIS WRATH, AND AMERICA IS NOT EXEMPT. (Jeremiah 28:15-32)**

A. The cup terminology in Scripture represents what the Lord has in store for someone, whether an individual or a nation. Jeremiah was given symbolic language (not a literal cup) to deliver a message of judgment to the nations and their leaders. There are cups of blessings (Psalm 23) (1st Corinthians 10:16) (Psalm 116:12-14) and cups of judgment .(Matthew 22) (Jeremiah 49:12; 51:7) (Job 21:20) (Psalm 60:3) (Isaiah 51:17) (Ezekiel 23:31)

B. Israel, as God's chosen messenger nation, would have to drink the cup first. Good parents discipline their own children before they correct the neighbor's kids! (Hebrews 12:4-13) *Judgment must begin at the house of the Lord!* (1st Peter 4:17)

C. Since God will not let His own children get away with disobedience without consequences, you can rest assured that He will punish those who rebel against Him and harm His children!

1. Egypt was judged because Pharaoh Neco instigated an Alliance against the Babylonians, and Josiah was sadly killed for becoming involved in that battle. Uz (Job 1:1) was northeast of Edom. The Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon were objects of Babylon's wrath. Moab, Edom, and Ammon were all "blood relatives" of Israel and in the Transjordan area. Dedan was a son of Abraham by Keturah. Tema was a son of Ishmael. Buz was a tribe that came from Nahor, brother of Abraham.

D. These verses and the detailed lists of nations involved give evidence that God's judgment was inevitable. Israel and its neighbors would be punished by Babylon, and eventually Babylon would be punished for its cruelty against others. Jeremiah 25:32 speaks of disaster spreading from nation to nation. The principle of reaping and sowing applies in many areas.

**IV. WHEN GOD'S WRATH IS POURED OUT, THE FALSE SHEPHERDS OF ALL KINDS WILL HAVE NO WHERE TO HIDE. THEIR FOLLOWERS WILL BE DESTROYED AND NOT MOURNED. (Jeremiah 25:33-38)**

A. Jeremiah describes a staggering loss of life with bodies lying on the ground "from one end of the earth to the other" (Jeremiah 25:33) It was a foreshadowing of what will take place during the Tribulation, when blood will flow for 200 miles near Jerusalem. (Revelation 14:20)

B. The Lord's anger will be on full display against the shepherds who are the political leaders of the nations. Jeremiah prophesied that nothing but slaughter and dispersion were in their future. They would be broken in pieces, just like the illustration he used at the potter's house earlier. Just as a lion leaves a den that has been destroyed, the Lord would abandon His own land after His judgment, rendered by the Babylonians, would make the land desolate.

**(Mark 9:7) God the Father spoke from heaven when God the Son was revealed in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. He said: This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him, which means obey everything He says. Are you listening?**

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