

Session 13 The Forerunner Message in Jeremiah 32-33

I. JEREMIAH 32 DESCRIBES THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT BEFORE JEREMIAH 33

- A. Jeremiah 33 describes Jerusalem's end-time restoration that occurs when Jesus returns.
- B. Jeremiah 32 describes events that occurred in 588/587 BC, near the end of Jeremiah's 40 years of ministry (626-586 BC), about one year before Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC.
- C. **70 years:** Israel's captivity in Babylon lasted 70 years (Jer. 29:10). There were three deportations of Jewish people into captivity in Babylon. The first group was taken in **606 BC** (including Daniel). The second group was taken in **597 BC** (it included Ezekiel). The largest group went in **586 BC** at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and temple. They returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple in 536 BC. Thus, the 70 years of captivity lasted from 606 BC to 536 BC.
- D. It takes a little effort to understand the dates clearly, but then the drama unfolds. Jeremiah began his ministry in his early 20s. Now, 40 years later, he is in his 60s and being put in prison.
- E. The two most devastating military events in Israel's history are the destruction of Jerusalem and temple—first in 586 BC by Babylonian armies, under King Nebuchadnezzar, and again in AD 70 by the Roman armies under the future Roman Emperor Titus. These two tragic events provide a template to understand the military attack of Jerusalem by the vast armies under the Antichrist.
- F. In Jeremiah 32, the Lord told Jeremiah to buy a field during the 2½ year period (588-586 BC) in which Jerusalem was attacked by Babylon (33:24).
 - 1. Jeremiah was to buy this piece of property as a prophetic act that spoke of the Jewish people one day returning to the land of Israel (33:15).
 - 2. Jeremiah was told to buy his cousin's Hanamel's field during a short reprieve when the Babylonian armies had withdrawn from Jerusalem due to the approach of an Egyptian army.
- G. Outline for Jeremiah 32-33

Jeremiah 32 (*This is not an end-time chapter, but it is an important introduction to Jeremiah 33*)

32:1-5	Jeremiah imprisoned for prophesying the fall of Jerusalem
32:6-12	Jeremiah bought Hanamel's field at Anathoth
32:13-15	Jeremiah asked Baruch to preserve the property deeds
32:16-25	Jeremiah's prayerful response to the Lord
32:26-44	The Lord's response to Jeremiah's prayer

Jeremiah 33 The restoration of Jerusalem and Judah

33:1-5	Jerusalem will be destroyed by Babylon (586 BC)
33:6-11	The Lord will cleanse and heal Jerusalem
33:12-13	The Lord will restore Israel's flocks and pastures
33:14-16	Jesus' leadership will make Jerusalem a righteous city
33:17-22	Promises to the house of David and the Levites
33:23-26	Promises to two chosen families— Israel and Judah

II. JEREMIAH IMPRISONED FOR PROPHECYING THE FALL OF JERUSALEM (JER. 32:1-5)

- A. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in 587 BC, one year before Jerusalem fell in 586 BC. Jerusalem was then in the second year of the Babylonian siege (Jer. 37-38). Jeremiah was imprisoned in the palace complex, accused of the treasonous activity of undermining the morale of Jerusalem by speaking of their defeat and deportation as slaves to Babylon.

¹*The word that came to Jeremiah...in the tenth year [587 BC] of Zedekiah king of Judah...*

²*For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house. (Jer. 32:1-2)*

- B. Jeremiah's words were viewed as treason in calling Jerusalem to surrender to the Babylonians and saying that King Zedekiah would stand before Nebuchadnezzar and be taken captive to Babylon (2 Kgs. 25:4-7). It seems that Zedekiah had pondered Jeremiah's words many times (Jer. 32:3-5).

³*For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, "Why do you prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon..."⁴and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape...but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon...⁵then he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall be until I visit him," says the LORD; "though you fight with the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed"?" (Jer. 32:3-5)*

- C. The purchase of Hanamel's field (32:6-12): The Lord told Jeremiah that his cousin Hanamel would ask him to buy his field in their home town of Anathoth, about 3 miles north of Jerusalem. Hanamel visited while the Babylon siege was temporarily lifted when the Babylonian army withdrew briefly to confront an Egyptian army that was advancing to help the city of Jerusalem.

⁶*And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁷"Behold, Hanamel...will come to you, saying, "Buy my field which is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is yours to buy it.""⁸ So I bought the field...¹⁰I signed the deed and sealed it, took witnesses... (Jer. 32:6-10)*

- D. It was not a wise purchase from a business perspective since Babylon had taken possession of most of the land around Jerusalem. Jeremiah's obedience required that he believe God's promises for Jerusalem. It required faith to buy land when money was needed to purchase food that was scarce.

- E. Jeremiah asked Baruch to preserve the property deeds (32:13-15). Israel was not going to return to the land for 70 years (29:10). The earthen vessels were sealed to preserve the title deeds.

¹³*Then I charged Baruch...¹⁴"Take these deeds, both this purchase deed which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days."¹⁵For thus says the LORD..."Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed..." (Jer. 32:13-15)*

- F. Jeremiah's prayerful response to the Lord (Jer. 32:16-25):

¹⁷*"Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth...There is nothing too hard for You...²⁰You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt...You have made Yourself a name...²²You have given them this land...²³They have done nothing of all that You commanded them to do; therefore You have caused all this calamity to come upon them.²⁴Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it...with the sword and famine and pestilence...²⁵And You have said to me... 'Buy the field for money..." (Jer. 32:17-25)*

III. THE LORD'S RESPONSE TO JEREMIAH'S PRAYER (JER. 32:26-44)

- A. The Lord's response to Jeremiah's prayer was to assure him that great goodness was coming. He began His answer by asking Jeremiah if he really believed in God's power (32:27), for the Lord was going to give Jerusalem over to Nebuchadnezzar who would burn all places they practiced idolatry, even the very houses on which God's people offered incense to idols (32:29).
- 26Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 27"...I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me? 28...I will give this city...into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon...29And the Chaldeans [Babylonians]...shall come and set fire to this city and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs they have offered incense to Baal...34They set their abominations in the house [the temple] which is called by My name...35...In the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech..." (Jer. 32:26-35)***
- B. The Lord promised to bring Israel back from exile in Babylon (536 BC) and at the end of the age.
- 37"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them...I will bring them back to this place...39then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. 40And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good, but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. 41Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul."*** (Jer. 32:37-41)
- C. **Gather the captives:** The Lord will gather them out of all countries to which He drives them (32:37), and He will cause their captives to return (32:44).
- D. **Transformed hearts:** The Lord will give them one heart and one way (32:39) and will put the fear of God in their hearts so that they will not depart from Him (32:40).
- E. **For their good:** The Lord is zealous to establish good for His people and their children (32:39).
- F. **The Lord will rejoice over them:** He will rejoice over them to do them good (32:42).
- G. **With all of My heart:** The Lord will plant them back in the land with all His heart and all His soul.

IV. THE RESTORATION OF JERUSALEM AND JUDAH (JER. 33)

- A. Jeremiah received a second prophetic word while in prison (33:1; 32:2). The Lord emphasized that Jerusalem was soon to be destroyed by Babylon (33:1-5). The Lord presented Himself as the One with power to create the earth (32:17). The Lord's very Name is a pledge behind His promises.
- 1Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut up in the court of the prison, saying, 2"Thus says the LORD who made it [the earth], the LORD who formed it to establish it—the LORD is His name: 3"Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'" (Jer. 33:1-3)***
- B. **Call to Me:** God calls His people to pray for big things related to His global kingdom purposes.

- C. The Lord prophetically described the desperation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem who tore down their houses and even the royal palaces to secure more wood and stone to reinforce the city walls against the Babylonian siege. He described the houses and city as filled with the bodies of their people who died in the siege. They could not leave the city to bury them in the cemeteries.

⁴For thus says the LORD...concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah, which have been pulled down to fortify against the siege mounds...⁵“They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but only to fill their places with the dead bodies of men whom I will slay in My anger...all for whose wickedness I have hidden My face from this city.” (Jer. 33:4-5)

- D. **Siege mounds:** Warlike instruments used by the besiegers from their batteries or breastworks.
- E. **Men of whom I slay:** The Lord takes responsibility for sending the Babylonian army to slay men.
- F. **Hiding His face:** This speaks of the Lord refusing to continue to protect the city or hear their prayers for help. The Lord told Jeremiah not to pray for their deliverance (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11).

V. THE LORD WILL CLEANSE AND HEAL JERUSALEM (JER. 33:6-11)

- A. The God who judges in 33:5 also promises to bring health to the very people He disciplined.
- ⁶“...I will bring it health...I will heal them and reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth.***
⁷And I will cause the captives of Judah and the captives of Israel to return...⁸I will cleanse them ...and I will pardon all their iniquities...
⁹Then it [Jerusalem] shall be to Me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all nations...who shall hear all the good that I do to them; they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I provide for it.” (Jer. 33:6-9)
- B. **I will bring health:** The promise of healing includes the Lord forgiving and cleansing His people of their sins, bringing their captives back, and rebuilding their ruined cities and farms.
- C. **I will reveal peace and truth:** He will give abundant peace and revelation of His word and ways.
- D. **I will cause the captives to return:** The “captives of Judah and Israel” speaks of more than their liberation from Babylon to return to Jerusalem to rebuild temple in 536 BC, as the exiles from the ten tribes of Israel were not a prominent part of that return to the land.
- E. **Cleanse and forgive:** They will know the joy of being forgiven and cleansed from all their sin.
- F. **Jerusalem shall bring joy, praise, and honor:** Jerusalem will be famous for bringing joy to people, praise to God, and honoring the Lord by fully obeying His leadership.
- G. **The nations shall fear and tremble:** All the nations shall fear and tremble when they hear and see all the goodness and the prosperity that the Lord will provide for Jerusalem (33:9).
- H. The sounds of gladness will magnify the goodness of God and His enduring mercy (33:11).

¹⁰Thus says the LORD: “Again there shall be heard in this place...¹¹the voice of gladness... the voice of those who will say: ‘Praise the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for His mercy endures forever’...For I will cause the captives of the land to return...” (Jer. 33:10-11)

VI. JESUS' LEADERSHIP WILL MAKE JERUSALEM A RIGHTEOUS CITY (JER. 33:14-16)

- A. Jesus' leadership will fill Jerusalem and the earth with righteousness and goodness (33:14-16).
*¹⁴“Behold, the days are coming...that **I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and...Judah...**¹⁵**I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.** ¹⁶**In those days...Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”** (Jer. 33:14-16)*
- B. **He will perform what He promised:** He will fulfill all of His promises to Israel and Judah completely. Only in a very limited way were these promises fulfilled when they returned from Babylon to Jerusalem in 536 BC under Zerubbabel.
- C. **A Branch of righteousness:** This speaks of Jesus, the greater Son of David. The promises can only be totally fulfilled when He is present in Jerusalem reigning as King of kings over all the earth.
- D. **Judgment and righteousness:** Jesus shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. God's end-time judgments will promote His salvation purposes. The end-time revival and judgments will awaken people to His righteousness—the Church will be purified, and millions will be saved.
*⁹When **Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants...will learn righteousness.** (Isa. 26:9)*
- E. **Jerusalem as a city of righteousness:** Jerusalem will be called “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Jesus will also be called that very name (23:6). Jerusalem will be a city filled with godly people.
*⁵...A King [Jesus] shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
⁶...This is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Jer. 23:5-6)*
- F. Jesus and His capital city will both be called by this name (Isa. 1:26; 62:2-4; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 48:35; Zech. 8:3). Jerusalem will consistently and boldly embrace and promote righteousness in contrast to her behavior in the Great Tribulation when she is called Sodom and Egypt (Rev. 11:8). Jerusalem's greatest righteousness will immediately follow the time of her greatest sin in the Great Tribulation.
*⁸...the great city [Jerusalem] which spiritually is called **Sodom and Egypt**, where also our Lord was crucified. (Rev. 11:8)*

VII. PROMISES TO THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND THE LEVITES (JER. 33:17-22)

- A. The Lord promised that Jerusalem would have perpetually godly leadership in her government and priesthood. Jesus will fulfill this as a King-Priest on the throne of David on the earth (Ps. 110:4). Christ's rule over the church today from heaven does not totally fulfill the details of this prophecy.
*¹⁷“...David shall never lack a man to sit on **the throne of the house of Israel**; ¹⁸**nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.**” (Jer. 33:17-18)*

- B. The monarchy and priesthood were foundational to Israel's theocracy in the Old Testament. They both seemed on the verge of extinction after the destruction of Jerusalem and temple in 586 BC, then especially after AD 70. The Levitical priests have not served in the temple since AD 70.
1. A descendant of David will always rule in Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 2:4; 8:25; 1 Kgs. 9:5; 2 Sam. 7:8-16), yet no descendant of David has been on Israel's throne for 2,500 years (Hos. 3:4-5).
 2. The Christological interpretation sees this as being fulfilled since the Son of David is on the throne in heaven.
- C. **Priests and Levites:** Levitical priests will continue to offer sacrifices of worship in the millennial kingdom (33:11). The burnt and grain (or meal) offerings were expressions of worship (Lev. 1-2). The Lord made a covenant with Phinehas of a perpetual priesthood (Num. 25:10-13) and promised the faithful priests of Zadok a priestly role in the Millennium (Ezek. 44:15).
- D. The Lord promised to restore the Davidic dynasty and the Levitical priesthood. By suggesting the hypothetical ending of day and night, the Lord emphasized that His covenants with David and the Levites cannot be broken.
- ²⁰“...If you can break My covenant with the day and...with the night...²¹then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.” (Jer. 33:20-21)
- E. Promises to two chosen families— Israel and Judah (Jer. 33:23-26).
- ²⁴“Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying, ‘The two families which the LORD has chosen, He has also cast them off’? Thus they have despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them.” (Jer. 33:24)
1. The Lord asked Jeremiah if he was aware that many were saying that God had rejected the “two kingdoms” (lit. “two families”).
 2. It seems that Israel was expressing their despair and unbelief in God's promises regarding their national destiny. The captivity left them in despair and unbelief.
- F. If God's fixed laws of nature controlling heaven and earth failed, only then would He reject Israel (33:25-26).
- ²⁵“...If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, ²⁶then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his descendants to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return and will have mercy on them.” (Jer. 33:25-26)
- G. The greatest argument for the restoration of Israel is the character of God.