

Jeremiah 23

2-26-98

1. Intro:

1.1. **Q:** What is your leadership style? Listen to me, or follow me?

1.1.1. **Q:** Do you push or pull? Do you Lead or Drive?

2. BAD SHEPHERDS/GOOD SHEP'S/GREAT SHEP... (1-8)

2.1. Bad Shepherds (1,2)

2.2. **Vs.1** - Last week we discussed the last 4 kings of Judah(all bad).

2.2.1. The Woe starts off to "these" shepherds.

2.2.1.1. Zedekiah, Shallum, Jehoiakim, & Jeconiah.

2.3. What the kings & his subordinates did determined the livelihood of the common citizen. Therefore, shepherd refers to the kings in the O.T. not nec. the religious leaders.

2.4. **Vs.2** – Instead of leading they Drove the sheep!

2.4.1. Like shepherds today!

2.4.2. **Q:** What's your style of leadership?

2.5. Good Shepherds(3,4)

2.6. (eg) Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Maccabees are some of the good shepherds/leaders who will come back from the north/Babylon & feed the sheep.

2.7. Great Shepherd!(5,6)

2.8. "David's family tree may have been cut down, but a branch(shoot) would grow from the stump & become ruler of the nation." (ww)

2.9. "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUS" (Jehovah Tsidkenu)[root Tsedek]

2.9.1. **2 reasons of importance!**

2.9.2. **[1]** The last king of Judah was Zedekiah("Rt. of the Lord"). His life did not reflect his name! So, we note the "contrast".

2.9.3. [2] This speaks of one who would not only **reflect** the rt. of God; but **was** the rt. of God; but could also **convey** it to His people making it their own possession.

2.9.3.1. We have been made rt. – **Read** Rom.3:21-26 (justify=righteous)

2.9.3.1.1. **God takes notice of clean hands, not full hands.** [Latin Proverb]

2.9.3.2. “No judge has the right to clear the guilty or to condemn the innocent!”
(Dwight Pentecost)

2.10. **The Greater Exodus!(7,8)**

2.11. There is a New & Greater Exodus a’comin!

2.12. God seems to hold out the promise for “the homecoming”, to help them endure the captivity later.

2.13. The kings **Scattered**(2); one day God’s King would **Gather**(8)!

2.14. He obviously has **more in mind** then just the return from Babylon(8b).

2.15. This is a repeat of 16:14,15.

3. **BAD PROPHETS, GOOD PROPHETS! (9-22)**

3.1. **Vs.9** - There seems to be far more **concern** & **heartbreak** over **false prophets** than over brutal officials(of vs.1,2).

3.1.1. “For w/o Justice a nation suffers; w/o Truth it Sickness!” (Kidner)

3.2. **Vs.11** – They were secularizing the Holy house of God.

3.3. **Vs.14b** – They seemed to be taking the “shame” out of sin.

3.4. **Vs.14c** - It seems the practice of both heterosexual & homosexual sins were taking place.

3.5. **Vs.15** – They are not simply “failing to lead” – No, but “leading them to fail!”

3.5.1. **Prov.25:26** “A righteous man who falters before the wicked Is like a murky spring and a polluted well.”

- 3.6. **Vs.16** – People who lack **direction**, lack **discernment**, & will believe anything!
- 3.6.1. With improper direction, pretty soon before you know it you will be barking or quaking “in the name of God”, Or shrewdly **driven** into **lying legalism**, instead of being **lead** to the **green grass of grace!**
- 3.6.2. Careful folk, we must **discern** prophesies, visions, dreams.
- 3.6.3. If they say they are speaking “**for**” God, you Must test it “**by**” the Word of God!
- 3.6.3.1. **Is.8:20** “To the **law** and to the **testimony!** If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
- 3.6.4. You want to make sure anyone giving you counsel is: **a)** Called by God **b)** Walk w/God **c)** Obey Gods word themselves!
- 3.7. **Vs.18** – There is one who not only **stands in the counsel of the Lord**, but is “eternally in the bosom of the father.”
- 3.8. **Vs.22b** – They say nothing of sin & repentance – only Peace & Prosperity(17).

4. **I HAVE A DREAM! (23-29)**

- 4.1. This was one of the greatest sayings of the inescapable presence of God. {His Omnipresence}
- 4.1.1. He is at the farthest stretch of the universe, & is as near as where you sit right now!
- 4.1.2. A little boy was heading home from his Sunday School class when stopped by a neighboring farmer, **where you been?**...The boy replied Sunday School! **"M'm, a very fine way,"** the neighbor said, **"for a boy to spend his time. If you'll tell me where God is, I'll give you a brand new dime."** Quick as a flash his answer came. **"I'll give you a dollar, Mister, if you'll tell me where God ain't."**
- 4.1.3. **"God is an infinite circle whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere."** Saint Augustine of Hippo
- 4.1.4. **How in the presence of our Lord can anyone could go on thinking about himself?**

- 4.2. **Vs.23** – Jehovah wasn't a **local Deity!**
- 4.3. **Vs.24** – Jehovah wasn't a **blind God!**
- 4.3.1. **Ps.115:5** "Eyes they have, but they do not see;"
- 4.3.2. Their cleverest disguises are in full view of God!
- 4.3.3. **Amos 9:2** "Though they dig into hell, From there my hand shall take them; Though they climb up to heaven, From there I will bring them down; And though they hide themselves on top of Carmel, From there I will search and take them; Though they hide from My sight at the bottom of the sea, From there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them; Though they go into captivity before their enemies, From there I will command the sword, And it shall slay them. I will set My eyes on them for harm and not for good."
- 4.3.4. He is there when on the grass beside still waters, & in the moonlight in Gethsamane!
- 4.3.5. **Did you know...** that intricate detail has been sculpted on the Statue of Liberty's head(her hair and her crown). They are at an angle which for many years, no one could see(until the invention of helicopter & airplane). Yet detail was given to it by its sculpture. The same craftsmanship as the feet was the head.
- 4.3.5.1. So we should live every part of our life, knowing Someone does see every part of our life.
- 4.4. **Vs.27** – Humans love the sensational!
- 4.4.1. It distracts the mind from reality as effectively as any heresy.
- 4.5. **Vs.28** – Gain nourishment from the "Wheat of the Word"!
- 4.5.1. New Devotional – "Wheaties"!
- 4.6. **Vs.29** – **Hammer** – Tear down/build up. Break the hardest rocks.
Fire – Consumes waste, purifies what it touches.
- 4.6.1. Jeremiah had the wood burning in his **heart**(20:9), & on his **lips**(5:14).
- 4.7. "No wonder false teachers are so popular! The sinful heart does not want to be **burned & broken** by the fire & hammer of the word!" (ww)
- 4.7.1. A **rabbi** was asked a question by a pupil, referring to **Deuteronomy 6:6--** "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart." "Why is it said this way?" the pupil asked. "Why are we not told to place them in our heart?" The rabbi answered that it is not within man's power to place the divine teachings directly in his heart. "All that we can do is place them on the surface of the heart so that when the heart breaks they will drop in."

4.7.2. They liked “chewin chaff” thou it brings No nourishment!

4.7.2.1. *Like chewing wax!* – {Remember those little was candies in the shape of a bottle, they had a little liquid squirt inside.}

5. **WHEN DREAMS BECOME NIGHTMARES! (30-40)**

5.1. **Vs.33** – Oracle(massa) = Burden.

5.1.1. Some translations translate this (N.L.B.) “Suppose one of the people or one of the prophets or priests asks you, 'What prophecy has the LORD burdened you with now?' You must reply, '**You are the burden!** The LORD says he will abandon you!’”

5.2. **Vs.39,40** - Note the opposite of “I will never leave you nor forsake you!”

5.3. **Q:** What do we learn from this terrible down grading of God’s word?