

Thus Saith God's Word

by Rev. Ted Brooks

"Because He slew me not from the womb." (Jeremiah 20:17)

If it is said by many that Jeremiah's prophecy might be considered the great book on backsliders and he witnessed the danger of apostasy. All through his writing his message seems to be that of judgement without mercy for those who became apostates and defy God.

His message repeatedly refers to the immediate Babylonian captivity, the return of Israel after 70 years, another worldwide depression, a final regathering of Israel at the end of this age.

Jeremiah's purpose was to make clear to Israel the consequences of sin and apostasy to reveal to them their own future in the plan of God for man and to emphasize the fact that the destiny of every man is determined by his conformity or lack of conformity to God and his plan. Jeremiah's looking down through the ages of time and saw the destruction coming upon a people who had backslid on God.

Like a lot of people whom you and I are acquainted with who do not believe that the people of God can turn and forsake God which means to leave, refuse, "And the destruction of transgressors and of the sinners shall be together and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." (Isaiah 1:28)

No man could do this who had not known God at one time and who did not have Him to forsake. So you see, my friend, this clearly refers to backsliders who reject God to the point of being destroyed. Men are warned not to forsake God. (Deuteronomy 12:17; 14:27) The Lord predicted that his people would forsake Him and warned of the damnation that would follow if they did so. (Deuteronomy 31:16, I Chronicles 28:9, II Chronicles 15:2)

Let's make this real in our life time. "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty and maketh it waste and turneth it upside down and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." (Isaiah 24:1)

Isaiah was who God gave for a sign and a wonder to his people by his walking among them for 3 years naked and barefooted. He was not nude, he simply laid aside his peculiar prophetic garment. Can you not see this today, men who were called by God to preach God's word has laid aside their calling from God. They no longer ring out the message of the sins of Jeroboam who did sin and who made Israel to sin. (I Kings 14:16)

And because preachers have laid aside the message of God we now have statisticians telling us that in the last forty years in America we have a 500 percent increase in violent crimes.

When Jeremiah saw what we would be looking at, drugs, murder, rape, incest, high white collar crime, and he viewed the judgment of God, Jeremiah cried out "Cursed by my birthday, let it not be blessed, cursed is the man who brought my father the announcement of my birth. Let him be as the cities which God overthrow and repented not because he slew me not from the womb because I died not in my mother's womb." (Jeremiah 20:14-18)

My friend, as the song said, "You ain't seen nothing yet, read again Isaiah 24:1.

Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste and turned it upside down and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The Lord shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled; for the Lord had spoken his word... The earth mourneth and fadeth away the world languished and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. (Isaiah 24:1-5)

These were God's people chosen people whom he had delivered from bondage, walked them through the Red Sea, crossed Jordan and left behind a number of stones for a witness. When they came to Jericho it was straitly shut up "But they did it God's way with a march and the blast of the ram's horn and with a great shout, the wall of the city came down. (Joshua 6:1-8)

But something went wrong. Rehoboam who forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him and consulted with the young men, Rehoboam declared my finger shall be thicker than my father's loin." (I Kings 12:4-10)

It was here the people made them idols, images of other gods. It was here Achan did sin, stealing a Babylonian garment, the accursed things, and the anger of God was kindled against the children of God. (Joshua 7:1)

The voice of God cried out. Israel hath sinned and they have transgressed my covenant which I commanded them. (Joshua 7:11)

My friend, these are the same people whom God later said to them, "If my people which are called by name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14)

Well, you know the story. They did not turn from their wicked ways. They did not seek God, nor did they humble themselves.

My friend, you may not keep your end of the bargain, but God will keep his. "There was a great famine in Samaria and behold they besieged it until an ass's head sold for fourscore pieces of silver and the fourth part of a cub of dove's dung for five pieces of silver."

It was here that Benhadad was passing through that he heard a cry. "Help, help, my lord, O King and Benhadad said what can I do. If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the farm fear or out of the wine press?" In other words, your stores are empty and there is no more wine for joy. What can I do?

Now listen carefully, my friend. This woman cried. "This woman said unto me, give thy son that we may eat him today and we will eat my son tomorrow." (II Kings 6:25) "So we boiled my son and did eat him and I said unto her on the next day, give thy son that we may eat him. And she hid her son." (Verse 29) The point I am trying to drive into your soul and mind is that God is not mocked. Whatever a person sows, that is what he shall reap.

When God said to the people of God, "Seek me and turn from your wicked ways, humble yourselves." If was then that God said "See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." (Deuteronomy 30:15) IT was at that hour that God declared "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life that both thou and thy seed may live. That thou mayest love the Lord thy God and that thou mayest obey his voice." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20) Let me say this, my friend, God keeps a record. It was yonder in Nehemiah when He said "And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles and the rulers and the people that they might be recorded by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy." (Nehemiah 7:5) Jeremiah knew God kept a record. HE knew God meant what he said. "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty and maketh it a waste." (Isaiah 24:1)

When Jeremiah understood this, he cried out "Cursed by my birthday. Let it not be blessed. Cursed is the man who brought my father the announcement of my birth. Let him be as the cities that God overthrow and repented not. Let him hear the cry in the morning because he slew me not in my mother's womb. Because I did not die in my mother's womb." (Jeremiah 20:14-18)

Folks, look around you. Do you not see the killing? Are you not concerned? Are you not perplexed about the events that are taking place in our country? Do you not see the conditions that brought about the fall of the Roman Empire are being re enacted?

The goal that the Communists have set for our destruction are being fulfilled. Can you not see the decline in moral value, corruption in politics? Bad business is the order of the day. Have we passed the point of no return? I for one believe we have reached perilous times. Paul the Apostle declared, "This know #+ New Because He slew me not from the womb." (Jeremiah 20:17)

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among them for three years naked and barefooted. He was not nude, he simply laid aside his peculiar prophetic garment. Can you not see this today? Men who were called by God to preach God's word have laid aside their calling from God. They no longer ring out the message of the sins of Jeroboam who did sin and who made Israel to sin. (I Kings 14:16)

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"And it shall be as with the people so with the priest; as with the servant so with his mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower, as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The Lord shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled; for the Lord had spoken his word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world relinquished and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." (Isaiah 24:1-5)

These were God's people, chosen people, whom he had delivered from bondage, walked them through the Red Sea, crossed Jordan, and left behind a number of stones for a witness. When these that in the last days perilous times shall come. Brother Paul was speaking of a selfish time, evil times. "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholly." (II Timothy 3:1-5)

Our whole culture seems to be facing the possibility of a kind of nervous breakdown. Oh, my friend, we did have the cure, but the church took sides with the politicians who became the murderers of the helpless unborn. Abortion is now pervading our country. We are lost to recognize is it a person of a thing? Babies are a gift from God and ought to be so received. But the church folks are defiant, bold, insolent, arrogant in speech and conduct, willing to meet danger head on. You have become a church that you don't care what the word says do. The church confesses she will do as she pleased. It is her doors and nobody else's. The church has the mind to say I'm free to shape our service the way we feel pleased to.

Oh my friend, Israel had this attitude Show would do as she pleased. Did not you read of the two women who agreed to boil and did eat their own children? Do you not see around you the sickness of food? Are you not watching people who enter this country are asked to laundry their clothes and to both and washed their shoes because of disease?

You see this nation which was founded on the principles of God's word has now failed to build upon God's foundation. We have sought to bring him word, hay and stubble. Your works have not been works that were everlasting. The church has failed to walk to his high power, failed to be aware of who shall

ascend into the hills of God or who shall stand in his holy place. He who hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully.

My friend, God's calling for a meeting in Robeson County, not just with politicians but all the people to be made aware of his coming judgment. Friend, we were not sent to be here always, but what time we were to be here, we were warned not to be deceived, neither to give place to Satan, least he get an advantage. (II Corinthians 2:11)

You need to settle it now. You will reap what you sow. Preachers today know more about medical problems than they do of spiritual things. Around the altars are words like gall stones, back, knee joint pain, heart surgery, lung bypass, cancer, but my friend, we have replaced rejoicing and praising God with complaints. In the end the doctor will say "I did all I could."

Now let me speak or write to the young people and those who are without the forgiveness of Jesus our Lord.

Listen, young girl, young boy, you young married couples, have you ever pondered who will be in hell? Have you considered what hell will be like? You remember what I wrote earlier about Jeremiah who said why I died not in my mother's womb?

You will remember every opportunity you have had and wasted it. You will remember every prayer Mom and Dad prayed. I ask you again, have you considered what hell will be like?

Friend, God is never at a loss. It may seem with all the high crime rate that he is dead and it may look so because the land is over run with sin, but have you, young girl, counted the cost if your soul were to be lost? Young boy, have you considered what hell will be like?

Young girl, young boy, young parent, hell is a place all games will be over. There will be no more playing games. In life you are warned not to neglect, not to forget, don't come perturbed, you are warned to turn. "Let the sinner forsake his way." (Isaiah 55:7)

The problem you might have is because sentence against an evil work is not expected speedily therefore the heart is set fully to do evil. (Ecclesiastes 8:11)

I ask you again, young girl, have you counted the cost if your soul was to be lost? Do you know the condition of hell? One man we know of sent a report back and said "In hell he lifted up his eyes, in fire yet he could see, and in torment and he begged for water." (Luke 16:23-24)

Hell is no resort. It is not a place of retreat. It is not for a son and dad to go to get alone and have a man to man talk. It is not a place to settle your nerves.

Young boy, the time it takes to get there is in a moment. They go down to hell in a moment. (Job 21:13) The company which you will have will be mean men who are brought here, On earth they raped, killed, stole, but here they shall be humble. (Isaiah 5:15)

Young girl, the question is how do they get her. "Men are cast into hell. (Ezekiel 31:15-17)

Young boy, do you want to know where hell is? David the psalmist said "They go to the lower part of the earth."

The condition of this place, young boy is a place of sorrow, a place of fire. (Luke 16:23-24) If it ever had been possible and the church could have rented a bus and took a tour of hell one of the things which would have caught your eye would have been that there were no doors to escape. Whatever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might for there is no work, devices, nor

knowledge nor wisdom in hell where thou goest., (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

Son, daughter, on his earth you may be a genius with Internet, but in hell you won't be able to get out. There is no escape. Young boy, during your funeral it may take a while of a couple of days but the moment you deceased and during your funeral, like the rich man who lifted his eyes and he cried, he was already in hell.

Church, listen if you could take a tour of hell for one moment and if you could carry Robeson County with you, there would never be another killing in this county. One moment in hell there would never be another division in the church. One moment in hell and HBO television would shut down. One moment in hell there would never be the murder of the helpless unborn. One moment in all and all dirty books, magazines would be burned up. One moment in hell and you never would see or hear of a drug dealer.

If the church could ride the avenue of hell you would not see flowers on the banks of hell. Young girl you will never hear a robin sing. Young parent, there will be no children there to comfort you.

On this trip there will be no laughter and no joy as a Mom and daughter would sit together hand in hand on this bus all your differences would vanish. On this trip to hell you would take notice of no lights there, no water, no mercy, no pity and no Christians. Do you not see what a terrible place this is? Nothing down there but Christ's rejects, murders, blasphemers, swearers, haters of God, drunkards and liars, the very filthy, vile the cruel, mean. Young boy, young girl, this will be your lot, your neighbor eternal in hell. Down there is no hospital for the sick, no march for blood donors, kidney transplants., Do you not get the message? GO d is not mocked. (Galatians 6:7)

Jeremiah said cursed by my birthday. Why came I from the womb to see labor and sorrow?

Have you counted the cost?

Church., you cannot mock God with a false profession. He knows who loves him and who pretends to be saved. Moses penned it down "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23)

Sinner man, like a blood hound on the trail of a fleeing murderer, Divine Justice will soon overtake you.

I ask you again, have you counted the cost if your soul was to be lost? Think about it. One hundred years from now just about anyone of us will be beneath the clay. Some 75 years from now, 50 years, 15, 10, 5, months, days and weeks. You need to come now to Jesus. Sooner or later all of us will stand before God.

What about you Dad. You have been married all these years to a wonderful wife, lovely family, a son who has his Dad's image, a lovely daughter, are you going to let hell and the devil separate you from the grace and the love of God and family? You need to repent. Do it now. Soon the game of waiting and putting salvation off will be too late. "Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:13)

Young boy, young girl, don't let Satan deceive you. There is no escape. No matter how wise you plan. There is no escape from death. All here today will die, the doctors, pharmacist, carpenter, lawyer, preacher, all of us are sentenced to die. Are you ready?

Let me close now. I know there are those who do not believe that there is a hell.

Some several years ago I had friend who was well up in age. Each Saturday morning I would go over to shave him. On this particular morning he said to me, "Take your time, cause I have something I want to tell you."

He and I often discussed the Bible and God and his Son Jesus Christ, but this day I sensed a different voice of concern. He said to me: "Brother Brooks, do you see the little barn out there behind the house? I was out there one day cleaning up and when I turned the corner I met a man standing there and he called me by name and said, 'you remember how I use to preach and tell you that there was no such place as hell? Well don't believe a word of it. There is a place of hell.'"

Now listen carefully, the man whom he met at his little barn had been dead for a few years, but the old man said to me, "This is the truth."

Hell is real. Some will say forget hell. It is who has the most marbles that wins. Son there is a hell and forgetting it does not eliminate it. Hell is a place made for the devil. (Matthew 25:41)

Those who forget God shall be turned into hell and all nations that forget God. (Psalm 9:17)

Hell is place that can enlarge itself by opening its mouth., I close with his thought. America is like she is because she has neglected the laws of God. Amen.

Reflections

by Alta Nye Oxendine

73rd ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS

Even though I'd been hearing about the Oscars for weeks, I wasn't all that interested. Then I found myself watching most of the show, anyway. One thing that kept surprising, and intriguing me (because I must not have thought about it before) was the idea that the Academy Awards and I had been growing up together, during these 73 years since I was a baby!! An interesting coincidence.

But when Steve Martin suddenly announced that the "show" was over, I felt a letdown. Couldn't someone have said something like: "Best wishes to everyone here tonight, and to all who are watching on TV!" We try to do something like that in our religious get-togethers.

WORSHIP

Later, I watched and listened to a couple of Christian programs, including WORSHIP, the latenight show that actually shows off the magnificent scenery around the country put here by our Creator. I especially enjoy scenes of North Carolina and Montana (which I claim as my two homes) and other mountain states. (Looks like I'll always be a mountain girl at heart.)

During "WORSHIP" I'm always impressed by the great job the program planners have done, by accompanying the awesome scenes with appropriate music and important verses from the Bible. And I believe most people, even non-Christians, could relate to the short, everyday-life sermonettes by the young men who share their experiences in a spirit of humility, instead of a holier-than-thou attitude.

SPECIAL EXPERIENCES

The older I get, the more remarkable it seems that a shy, unspectacular girl from the Rockies (who suffered from an inferiority complex for so many years) could go on to have such an assortment of unusual experiences across this country, spanning 56 years, ever since graduating from our little high school, in a little town (Twin Bridges) in the wide-open-spaces, "big sky" state of Montana.

One such experience was a concert by Negro (African-American) Paul Robeson while I was a student at the University of Montana in Missoula. I was so in awe after hearing him sing that I could not believe I was actually shaking his hand at the reception held in the Student Union afterward.

Later, I remember, I asked Paul Williamson (a Negro classmate and fellow member of the Wesley Foundation that met every Sunday night in our downtown Methodist Church) if HE was going to follow in Paul Robeson's footsteps.

(Several years ago, I was shocked to discover that Mr. Robeson, one of my heroes, had become infatuated with the Communist Party and had spent several years in Russia. However, during my research into Communism in THIS country, I learned that Communist leaders had targeted Blacks long before the Civil Rights movement got underway. (They reportedly referred to their project as "The Negro Problem".) I'm sure that most African Americans (including Angela Davis and others in her later generation) joined because they believed Communism was their ONLY

path to really achieving EQUAL rights!

JUBILEE SINGERS

I'm glad I got to see most of the recent PBS show about the Jubilee Singers from Fisk University in Nashville. I visited Fisk while attending Scarritt College as a graduate student, nearly a century after the Jubilee Singers began thrilling audiences with their Negro Spirituals. (I've always loved the old spirituals!)



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