

Rebellion and judgement

MICHAEL ALEXANDER
Central Newspaper Services

Jeremiah 6:16-30

One of God's most important lessons is that of reaping and sowing. From scripture, we learn that whatever we sow has a result in the fruit.

The physical lesson is that an apple seed will always produce an apple, a pear seed, a pear and so on.

The spiritual lesson is that the choices we make are seeds sown. If we sow wisely and Godly, we will reap good fruit. If we sow foolishly and worldly, we will reap the consequences. Certainly Christians should be aware of this fact and I think that most non-Christians understand that there are consequences to every decision, good or bad.

Judah was facing a point of decision. In the pas-

sages studied today, Josiah was the last good king in Judah. He was an amazing king, for he chose to follow God and re-establish true worship, avoiding the heritage of idol worship practiced by his grandfather and father.

Our story today centers on the people of Judah and a prophet named Jeremiah, who preached during the time after Josiah's death and the evident return of the people to idol worship.

SIN AND PUNISHMENT

Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

Jeremiah 6:16.

When I read this verse, I am reminded of another

stubborn decision made in the history of the Twelve Tribes. There was a time when the people decided that they wanted an earthly king to rule over them, instead of allowing God to be their king [1 Samuel 8].

The prophet Samuel consulted God and God gave him a message to take back to the people. In that message, God warned the people that a king would be very costly to them and He asked them to reconsider their request. Even understanding the awesome price that this sin would cost, they insisted that God give them a king.

What a lesson! God gave them their desire and almost immediately, they realized the terrible consequences of their request.

Today's lesson demonstrates once again the poor judgment of the people God chose. In spite of God's plea to stay with the ways of the

old or the righteous ways brought by King David and other good kings, they refused to hearken to the message. They chose to sow seeds of rebellion.

REAPING THE JUDGMENT

Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

Jeremiah 6:19.

To get a complete understanding of the lesson, it is wise to study all the verses listed above. In the limited space available for this lesson, only a few points can be made.

Obvious in verse 16 is Judah's hard-hearted decision to rebel against God and His righteous way. I

can only imagine the pain that their refusal to obey brought God. However, God is a God of justice and His judgment is always perfect.

After their refusal to return to the righteous way of living, God delivered His judgment on the people. The seed of self-willed rebellion brought the pronouncement of God's impending punishment.

We know from history and from the scriptures that very shortly, Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians. The life that

God had given them was soon to be a thing of memory. No longer would they be the nation standing for the righteous God, but would be the slaves of a foreign power. How sad.

It is so important for people to understand that there are consequences to every decision. Hopefully, today's lesson will help us all be more careful in all of life's decisions.

Lesson based on International Sunday School Lesson.

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES

Belvidere-Ryland Church of Christ

Belvidere-Ryland Church of Christ will celebrate homecoming on Sunday, Oct. 6. Sunday School begins at 9:45 and worship service at 10:30. Guest speaker will be George BonDurant. A dinner and singspiration will be held immediately following the service.

Coastal Cathedral

Coastal Cathedral Church of God, 612 W. Elizabeth St., Elizabeth City, will host a series titled "Marriage on the Rock" every Sunday night, Oct. 6-27 at 6 p.m. This series is presented by Pastor Dale Forbes and is designed to strengthen good marriages and guide troubled marriages back onto the right path.

Epworth UMC

On Saturday, Sept. 28, members of Epworth United Methodist Church will host a rummage and bake sale on the church lawn (in case of inclement weather, the sale will be inside the church fellowship hall.) The sale will begin at 8 a.m. with rum-

mage items, as well as cakes, pies, cookies, etc. Starting at 10 a.m. barbeque plates will be sold on a first come, first serve basis. The sale will conclude at 1 p.m. The church is located on Main Street in Winfall between the post office and the middle school.

Mt. Sinai

Revival services will be held at Mt. Sinai Baptist Church on Swamp Road, Hertford at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 29 - Oct. 2. Howard Sutton is the host pastor. Rev. Jim Pollard, associational missionary for the Chowan Baptist Association, will be the guest minister.

Riddick Grove

The Riddick Grove Missionary Baptist Church family will give pastor, Rev. Ronnie T. Northam, and the First Lady an appreciation service on Saturday, Sept. 28, at 6 p.m. with the guest preacher Rev. Thomas Lee, pastor of Greater Wynn's Grove Baptist Church, Colerain. Music will be provided by the Albemarle Youth Choir under the direction of Felecia Reid.

New Birth Outreach Ministries

New Birth Outreach Ministries located at 103

South Edenton Road Street, will host a series of Womens' Conferences Sept. 30-Oct. 4, at 7:30 p.m. Preachers will be Evangelists Millie Jordan of Riddick Grove, Mary Skinner, Rosella Sanders of New Birth, Margaret Brothers of New Sawyers Creek Baptist, Bathsheba Ormond of Love Fellowship; with Evangelist Doris Granby ending the conference on Saturday, Oct. 5, at 7 p.m. in concert. Host pastors are Ed and Ann Smith.

FOUR SEASONS

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

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March 26—Enjoy the musical elegance of *Concertante* as they perform Strauss, Schoenberg, and Dvorak.

May 2—Season finale with Debussy, Beethoven, and Brahms.

Call 1-800-ECU-ARTS or 252-328-4788 for season tickets (\$50 general admission, \$25 ECU student/youth) or single attraction tickets (\$10 general, \$5 student/youth). Tickets also available at the door. All performances begin at 8:00 p.m. in Fletcher Recital Hall in the School of Music on Tenth Street at College Hill Drive in Greenville. For disability accommodations, call 252-328-4802.



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The Carpenter's Tools

Deer Heads or Angels?

It was the late Dr. M.R. DeHaan (Bible Teacher and Medical Doctor) who said, "The nearest thing to heaven on earth is the Christian family and the home where the husband and wife and parents and children live in love and peace together for the Lord and for each other. And the nearest thing to hell on earth is an ungodly home, broken by sin and iniquity, where parents bicker and quarrel, and divide, and children are abandoned to the forces of wickedness."

Tim Lahaye, in his book *How To Be Happy Though Married*, said "Marriage can be the most happy, or the most mediocre, or the most unhappy experience of all life." It was God who designed the opposite sexes to complement each other. He wanted a man and a woman to be joined in marriage so they might each give to the other what each one lacked. However, it is these differences that can complement and blend two unique individuals into one that can also serve as the animals that lead to division.

We must understand the differences in males and females in the sense of how we are fashioned. One trip to the restrooms at The Carpenter's Shop and you'll get the picture. As you walk into the ladies room you are greeted with angels; on the walls, on counter, everywhere. Angels decorate the ladies room and add a special touch to every woman's visit. On the other hand, take a journey to the men's room and you might wish you had a gun with you. Canadian geese are everywhere. Pictures, paintings, etc. One man asked us why we didn't put a deer head on the wall. Seems comical, but it is realistic.

Study the Book of Genesis and you'll discover that when Adam fell God cursed him with "earning his living and the sweat of his brow". Eve, on the other hand, was given the curse of pain in childbearing and the reminder that "her desire shall be for your husband". From this we learn that there are two things that are important to men - work and pastimes (hunt, fish, etc.). Women want time with their honey. They are relationship oriented. When Dad comes home from a long day's work, mom wants to talk about their love for each other. He battles in the mind with thinking about how much those perch are bitin'. Just know that you will need to keep all these things in balance. It makes for a wonderful relationship. Ephesians 5:25 reminds you men to "love your wives". Ladies, grab a fishin' pole and go with him. Men...not so many trips! Strike a balance. It will work.



By Wallace C. Phillips

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