

1/27/02

Jeremiah 5-6

The prophet continues in his second sermon to declare the equitable judgment of God in chapter five and then returns again to the impending destruction by Babylon till the end of chapter six.

The focus of chapter four was the enemy from without, the nation of Babylon.

5:1-31 The equitable judgment of God.

5:1-5 *The futility of finding a man to exercise justice.*

5:1-2 God challenges the prophet to seek out a man.

5:1 The particular command and promise.

- 1) The prophet is told by Yahweh to run up and down through the streets of Jerusalem and seek a man in her open places, to see if there is a person who executes justice or seeks truth, so as to know for himself.
 - a) This of course excludes Jeremiah, Baruch and others.

b) This search is among the widespread corruption and depravity of her people.

* God told Ezekiel something similar, a man to stand in the gap. Ezk. 22:30

2) The promise of Yahweh is that if he could find such a person, Yahweh would pardon the city.

a) The corruption was no different than that of Noah's days. Gen. 6

b) The similar proposal took place with Abraham as he bartered with God over Sodom and Gomorrah. Gen. 18:23-33

5:2 God exposes the false words of the people.

- 1) They were taking oaths in Yahweh's name in falsehood.
- 2) They were using spiritual language without the reality of being spiritual.

5:3-5 The prophet responds to God's challenge to seek out a man.

5:3 The prophet affirms the truth of God's knowledge.

- 1) Jeremiah acknowledges the Omniscience of Yahweh regarding the people's

corruption, “O LORD, are not Your eyes on the truth?”

- 2) Jeremiah acknowledges the loving chastening of Yahweh to turn the people and their refusal. Amos 4:7-11
 - a) You have stricken them, But they have not grieved.
 - b) You have consumed them, But they have refused to receive correction.
- 3) Jeremiah acknowledges the hardened hearts of the people, “They have made their faces harder than rock.
- 4) Jeremiah acknowledges the ongoing rebellion of the people, “They have refused to return.”

5:4 The prophets searches out among the poor.

- 1) The prophet’s search revealed to him that the majority of the people were poor and foolish.
- 2) The majority of them had not learned the way and judgment of their LORD their God.

5:5 The prophet searches out among the great men.

- 1) The prophet in his search of the great men was the middle and upper class to the king.

- 2) The reason is that they have known the way of Yahweh and the judgment of their God.
- 3) But he confesses that these men were worst having completely broken all ties with Yahweh, in affect there was no difference between the poor and great one’s were all corrupt as Yahweh declared.

5:6-14 *The deserved judgment expounded.*

5:6 The inevitable judgment pronounced.

- 1) Yahweh would allow the animals to destroy the people.
 - a) Some believe these represent nations.
 - b) Others believe they represent facets of Babylon.
 - c) The context I believe is literal not figurative, even as this is the record in the Northern Kingdom as they brought in priest of Yahweh to teach them the ways of Yahweh. 2Kings 2:24. 17:25
- 2) The reason is for their transgressions are many and their backslidings have increase.

5:7-9 The people’s corrupt religious practices.

5:7 God can not pardon the people's unrepentance.

- 1) Yahweh rhetorically asks, "How shall I pardon you for this?", spiritual apostasy.
* The section begins and ends with rhetorical questions.
- 2) Yahweh says they treacherous idolaters, "Your children have forsaken Me And sworn by those that are not gods."
- 3) Yahweh says that rather than be grateful for their provisions, they became covetous to seek their sexual pleasures, "When I had fed them to the full, Then they committed adultery And assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses", social immorality through the sexual rites of their idols.

5:8-9 God likens their lives to the animal level.

- 1) Society is filled with adultery after the fertility cults, "They were like well-fed lusty stallions; Every one neighed after his neighbor's wife. Vs. 8
- 2) Yahweh is justified in His judgement. Vs. 9
 - a) "Shall I not punish them for these things? says the LORD."
 - b) "And shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?"

5:10-13 Their refusal to acknowledge God's word.

5:10-11 The remnant and the rebellious.

- 1) The wicked will be destroyed, "Go up on her walls and destroy." Vs. 10
- 2) The remnant will be preserved, "But do not make a complete end." Vs. 10
- 3) The distinction is declared, "Take away her branches, For they are not the LORD'S." Vs. 10
- 4) The entire nation is guilty, "For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously with Me," says the LORD." Vs. 11

5:12-14 The denial of God's judgment.

- 1) They were self-deceived saying they were right with Yahweh. Vs. 12
 - a) "They have lied about the LORD, And said, It is not He", denying His word.
* The prophet Zepheniah was recording the same thing about the people. Zeph. 1:12
 - b) They were confident in their minds, "Neither will evil come upon us".
 - c) They were absolutely certain in their minds, "Nor shall we see sword or famine."
* Minds that are debased and given up to their sin. Rom. 1:24-32

- 2) The prophets spoke falsely, Vs. 13
 - a) The false prophets are described as wind rather than being inspired by Yahweh's Spirit.
 - b) The Word of God was not in them, so Yahweh would judge them, "It be done to them." Vs. 13
 - * Oswald Chambers states regarding this verse, "Beware of saying, "I will never be in that state of mind."
- 3) Yahweh would make His word consume the people.
 - a) The Captain of the armies of heaven is the One speaking, "Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts."
 - b) Yahweh would judge their empty words by His inspired words, "Because you speak this word, Behold, I will make My words in your mouth fire, And this people wood, And it shall devour them."

5:15-18 *The fierce coming destruction by Babylon.*

5:15-16 The description of the nation of Babylon.

- 1) The nation coming against them would be from afar, "says the LORD."

- a) The entire nation is addressed by the phrase, "House of Israel".
 - b) The heathen is used by God for His purposes without violating His holiness.
- 2) The nation is mighty.
 - 3) The nation is ancient.
 - 4) The nation speaks a language they do not know nor understand. Deut. 28:49
 - 5) The declaration of the destructiveness of the nation of Babylon. Vs. 16
 - a) They will kill many, "Their quiver is like an open tomb."
 - b) They are men of war fearful and without mercy, "They *are* all mighty men".
- 5:17** The complete conquest by the nation of Babylon.
- 1) They shall eat up your harvest and your bread, Which your sons and daughters should eat. Vs. 17a-b
 - * About ninety percent or more farmed to feed themselves and the slaves!
 - 2) They shall eat up your flocks and your herds. Vs. 17c
 - 3) They shall eat up your vines and your fig trees. Vs. 17d
 - 4) They shall destroy your fortified cities, In which you trust, with the sword. Vs. 17e

* The devastation is emphasized by the four-fold mention of “eat up”.

5:18 The faithfulness of God to His word.

- 1) Yahweh would not make a complete end of the nation, He would leave a remnant. Vs. 18, 10
- 2) But sin would be judged.
 - a) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Rom. 1:18
 - b) Yahweh can not allow unholy lives to remain without judgment falling on them. Hab. 1:13

5:19-31 *The indifference and ongoing rebellion of the people will end in judgment.*

5:19 The people astonishment at their judgment.

- 1) Yahweh tells them that when they ask why He their God did all this, the prophet was to tell them that He gave them over to their free-will. Vs. 19
 - a) “Just as you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve aliens in a land that is not yours.”

b) Serving one’s own will and pleasure in the house of house will bring about our removal from the house of God!

5:20-22 The reasons for the judgment to the house of Jacob.

- 1) The entire nation is addressed. Vs. 20
 - a) The double imperative emphasizes the importance and appears only this time in the book.
 - b) The purpose is to awaken the people to their peril.
- 2) The atrophied spiritual condition of the people is described. Vs. 21
 - a) They were foolish people, senseless.
 - b) They were without understanding.
 - c) They had eyes and saw not, and had ears and hear not. Is. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:14-15

* This was the result of not cultivating their spiritual life, loosing the ability to function like a hand or foot. Jn. 12:38

 - a) The presence of blindness through ignorance is never condemned.
 - b) The presence of blindness through disobedience and perversity is condemned.
 - c) The hardening of a person’s heart by God is the outcome of the

hardening of their own heart, even as Pharaoh.

- 3) Their lack of common sense and wisdom is exposed by the rhetorical questions and the One speaking. Vs. 22
- a) Do you not fear Me?' says the LORD.
 - b) Will you not tremble at My presence.”
 - c) The One Who created and controls all things by Omnipotence, “Who has placed the sand as the bound of the sea, By a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, Yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it.”

5:23-24 The heart of the problem was that the people were unsubmissive and ingrates.

- 1) But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart; they have revolted and departed, self willed not like the ocean. Vs. 23
- 2) The evidence is that they did not consider and fear God in their hearts Who gave the former and the latter, in its season, appointed for the weeks of harvest. Vs. 24
 - a) They failed to attribute the goodness of Yahweh to provide rain, having no fear of Him and credited Baal. Hos. 2:8

- b) Today many credit their success to many thing such as “positive thinking”, “their education”, the New Age”, “Buddhism”, etc.

5:25-29 The social injustices were many and by all.

- 1) Their sins forfeited these benefits, “Your iniquities have turned these things away, And your sins have withheld good from you. Vs. 25
- 2) They were deceitful to their fellowman, “For among My people are found wicked men; They lie in wait as one who sets snares; They set a trap; They catch men.” Vs. 26
- 3) They had gotten rich through their deceit, “As a cage is full of birds, So their houses are full of deceit. Therefore they have become great and grown rich.” Vs. 27
- 4) They have corrupted justice for the most vulnerable of society, being most wicked, “They have grown fat, they are sleek; Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; They do not plead the cause, The cause of the fatherless; Yet they prosper, And the right of the needy they do not defend.” Vs. 28
 - a) The deed was the fruit of their evil motive, the root of the problem.

b) Prosperity has perils and to seek it out in ministry or as a Christian in life as the goal is condemned.

* Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 1Tim. 6:6-12

5) The judgment of God is not only right but long coming, "Shall I not punish them for these things?" says the LORD.

"Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?" Vs. 29

* Oswald Chambers declared, "The sin of a heathen nation never comes anywhere near the sin of what we call a Christian nation."

5:30-31 The corruption of the entire nation is summarize.

5:30 The prophet is shocked by the evil.

- 1) Jeremiah declares, "An astonishing and horrible thing Has been committed in the land." Vs. 30
- 2) The shocking element was that is was so inconsistent with the word of God, they had no excuse.

5:31 Religion is good business.

- 1) Jeremiah brakes it down to a three-point outline. Vs. 31
 - a) The prophets prophesy falsely.
 - b) And the priests rule by their *own* power. Jer. 6:13-14
 - c) And My people love to have it so.
- 2) Jeremiah brings it down to the most basic reality, "But what will you do in the end?" Vs. 31; Amos 4:5
 - a) Amos the prophet stated much the same to the Northern kingdom, "Therefore thus will I do to you, O

Israel; Because I will do this to you,
Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!”

Amos 4:12

- b) Spiritual stupidity leads to moral perversion and social injustice being past feeling. Eph. 4:19

6:1-30 The impending judgment and destruction of Judah.

6:1-8 *The urgent warning of the coming foe.*

6:1 The people being warned.

- * One might think, “Isn’t this kind of repetitious? That is the point, God continued patiently to warn the people and call them to repentance but they refused to obey!
- 1) The two tribes comprising the southern kingdom were Benjamin and Judah.
- 2) The compassion and love conflict of Yahweh is evident, “O you children of Benjamin, Gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem!” Jer. 4:5-6
* Jerusalem laid in the territory of Benjamin, the tribe of Jeremiah.
- 3) The command is to Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, And set up a signal-fire in Beth Haccerem “house of vineyard”; For disaster appears out of the north, And great destruction.

- a) The blowing of the trumpet in Tekoa was for warning against an invading army, the town was located in Judah, twelve miles south of Jerusalem and 6 miles south of Bethlehem towards the Dead Sea.

* The play on word is in the Hebrew for both word “blow” and “Tekoa” have the same root, it was the home town of Amos the prophet.

Amos 1:1

- b) The signal fire in Beth Heccerem, between Jerusalem and Tekoa, Tekoa was 4 1/2 miles west of Jerusalem or 2 miles south of Jerusalem?
* Fire would be used to communicate cities under siege confirmed by “The Lachish letters”.
- c) The reason is that disaster appears out of the north, And great destruction

6:2-3 The peril of the wife of Yahweh.

- 1) Yahweh likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman, who would be defenseless against her attackers. Vs. 2
- 2) The army of Babylon as shepherds with their flocks and will surround her all about and placed under siege. Vs. 3

6:4-5 The command is given to attack the daughter of Zion. Vs. 4-5

- 1) The command, “Prepare, “literally sanctify” war against her; Arise, and let us go up at noon, which was the usual time of the “siest” at the sixth hour, during the heat of the day, it is not Mexican in origin but Roman. Vs. 4a-c
- 2) Their eagerness would cause them to attack even by night as they ran out of day-light, “Woe to us, for the day goes away, For the shadows of the evening are lengthening. Arise, and let us go by night, And let us destroy her palaces.” Vs. 4d-5

6:6-8 The judgment is for her wickedness.

- 1) The captain giving the orders is Yahweh, the LORD of hosts as He said: “Cut down trees, And build a mound against Jerusalem.” Vs. 6a-c
* This to better position their war machines and battering rams. Deut. 20:19-20
- 2) The punishment is well deserved. Vs. 6d-7
 - a) “She is full of oppression in her midst.”
 - b) She is described metaphorically literally as a cistern “bowr”, “As a fountain wells up with water, So she

wells up with her wickedness.

Violence and plundering are heard in her.”

- c) Yahweh expresses His pain, “Before Me continually are grief and wounds.”
- 3) Yahweh pleads with her to be teachable instead of destroyable, “Be instructed, O Jerusalem, Lest My soul depart from you; Lest I make you desolate, A land not inhabited.” Vs. 8; Jer. 2:30; 5:3

6:9-15 *The warning is unheeded results in complete judgment.*

6:9-10 The awful price the people would pay.

- 1) Their destruction would be complete without exception, “thoroughly gleaned says the Lord of host”. Vs. 9
* Once again Yahweh dialogues with Jeremiah.
- 2) There was no one to warn, all were corrupt, “To whom shall I speak and give warning”. Vs. 10
 - a) Their ear was uncircumcised, spiritually deaf to God. Jer. 4:2, 4, 7:26
 - b) They cannot give heed for two reasons. Jn. 12:38
 - (1) The word of the LORD was a reproach to them.

(2) They have no delight in the word of Yahweh.

6:11-15 The prophet's expressed anger regarding the people.

- 1) Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD. I am weary of holding *it* in. So he pronounce it on the children, young men, husbands and wives and the aged. Vs. 11
- 2) Their homes, fields and wives will become the Babylonians. Vs. 12
* The authority is Yahweh's!
- 3) The reasons are many. Vs. 13-15
 - a) All small and great, everyone was given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. Vs. 13
* Saying what the people wanted to hear to fill their pockets!
 - b) The prophets had done a disservice by giving false hope, offering temporary relief in a life threatening situation. Vs. 14
* They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, `Peace, peace!' When there is no peace. 1Thess. 5:3
 - b) They were neither ashamed and had the ability to blush, therefor they would fall and be punished. Vs. 15
* Eph. 4:19

6:16-21 *The rebellion and repentance reaps certain judgment.*

6:16-17 Yahweh offers unrepentance again.

- 1) Jeremiah is **stand** by the cross-roads and **ask** the people to **walk** in the old paths of Yahweh's covenant and find rest for themselves but the said, "We will **not walk** in it." Vs. 16
* They refused to accept the way of darkness and death! Matt. 11:28-30
- 2) Yahweh also set watchmen, like Ezekiel, over them to warn them saying, "Listen to the sound of the trumpet!" But they said in a short and abrupt manner, "We will not listen." Vs. 17
* Ezk. 3:17, 33:1:19, Hab. 2:1

6:18-21 God call for a witness to the coming judgment.

- 1) The witnesses of Yahweh's divine courtroom are three, the nations, the congregation and the earth! Vs. 18-19
 - a) The promise is that He would certainly bring calamity on the people.
 - b) The judgment was the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not heeded Yahweh's words nor His law, but rejected it, therefore ripe for judgment.

* Selfishness produces long-term harm and short-term gain.

2) The witness of their offerings was false, it had no purpose, being unacceptable and unpleasing to Yahweh. Vs. 20

* 1Sam. 15:22; Amos 5:21-24; Mic. 6:8

3) The witnesses were to bear witness to the verdict of Yahweh's judgment due to the consequences of their unrepentance. Vs. 21

* "Therefore thus says the LORD:

"Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, And the fathers and the sons together shall fall on them. The neighbor and his friend shall perish."

6:22-26 *The prophet confirms God's warning and grieves.*

6:22-23 The instrument of judgment.

1) A great nation from the north country would be raised. Vs. 22

2) They are armed, cruel, merciless and fierce men of war arrayed against Zion. Vs. 23

6:24-26 The confirmation to Yahweh's word.

1) Jeremiah says the news has reached them and anguish has taken hold of the people as a woman in labor. Vs. 24

2) Jeremiah warns of the danger in the open country due to the enemy and the fear was on every side. Vs. 25

3) Jeremiah pleads with the people. Vs. 26

a) Jeremiah calls the people to humble themselves in sackcloth and roll in ashes as a last minute repentance. Vs. 26

b) The sincerity was to be marked by their mourning and lamentation as for an only son. Vs. 36

c) The reason is that the plunderer will suddenly come upon us. Vs. 26

6:27-30 *The commission of the prophet is reaffirmed.*

6:27 The Lord had called Jeremiah.

1) Yahweh had set him up and he was to be faithful.

* I have set you *as* an assayer, a tester of metals, and a fortress among My people. Jer. 1:18

2) To be the eyes of Yahweh.

* That you may know and test their way.

6:28-30 God has rejected the people for their evil.

1) They are all stubborn rebels, walking as slanderers. They are bronze and iron, They are all corrupters. Vs. 28

- 2) They have refused to be refined as silver and chosen to remain impure by the picture of the smelter. Vs. 29
* Led is the oxidizing agent which carries off the dross, yet the work has been done vain by the hardened heart of the people!
- 3) The people will be known as rejected silver because Yahweh rejected them. Vs. 30
* This is the conclusion of the second sermon of Jeremiah. Jer. 3:5-6:31