

Jeremiah Chapter 5

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Chapter 5

Theme: Destruction of Judah and Jerusalem for good reason of widespread wickedness of several kinds.

Outline:

- 1-5** Judah's Men Low or High Love Lies
- 6-9** Destruction for Idolatry and Adultery
- 10-14** Destruction for Rejecting Prophets
- 15-19** Destruction for Serving Strange Gods
- 20-24** No Fear of God in the Land of Judah
- 25-29** Wicked Men Limiting Favor Prosper
- 30-31** Ministerial Conspiracy Against Truth

Preparatory Reading: Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; Jeremiah 23; Zephaniah.

Related Links:

- A. *Introduction to the Book of Jeremiah ... here.*
- B. [Babylon – History and Prophecies.](#)
- C. [Why Are Nations Blessed or Cursed?](#)
- D. *Proverbs Commentary – Proverbs 29:18.*
- E. [The Fear of the LORD.](#)
- F. [The Prophets of God.](#)

Introduction:

- A. Love Jeremiah regardless of past impressions or present challenges to grasp the sense and the lessons.
- B. God's ferocity in the terrible judgment of Jerusalem and Judah is easily justified by her many sins.
- C. God sees and knows you perfectly; He can list your sins as easily as He will the Jews in this chapter.
- D. God sees and knows how much and why you fear and love Him, so repent to fear and love Him more.
- E. The decline and degeneration of America is due first and most to her preachers compromising truth.

Judah's Men Low or High Love Lies – Verses 1-5

1 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and ***know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.***

- A. We have seen already, and we shall see again, that Jeremiah can speak for God Himself.
 - 1. Do not worry which speaker; it will change back and forth; fully grasp the message.
 - 2. Do not worry how chapters 4 and 5 are related until needed; fully grasp the message.
- B. Jeremiah in this section exposed Judah for widespread wickedness deserving judgment.
- C. God called for a search of Jerusalem to find even one man committed to right and truth.
 - 1. What about Jeremiah? Baruch? Ebedmelech? Shaphan? Hilkiah? Gedaliah? Others?
 - 2. Prophets and their sermons were dramatic. This is hyperbole for rarity and scarcity.
 - 3. You say similar things – *No one believes the truth any more!* But what about you?
 - 4. You say similar things – *The whole world has gone stark mad!* But what about you?
 - 5. The Bible has similar hyperbole elsewhere (Ps 12:1-2), but what about the Psalmist?
 - 6. Isaiah preached a similar warning (Isaiah 59:4,14-15), but what about the prophet?
 - 7. Other than the very small remnant of the faithful few, the city was barren of godly.
 - 8. The search was in public places of concourse, not homes with the hidden believers.
 - 9. The distinction between good and bad was such that prayer was prohibited (Jer 7:16).
- D. He would pardon the city from judgment, if but one man was found in the way of truth.
 - 1. God allowed Abraham to reason Him down to ten righteous souls for city of Sodom.
 - 2. But He will declare elsewhere that even Moses and Samuel could not help (Jer 15:1).
 - 3. Therefore, we understand a hyperbolic scarcity and that He needed wider godliness.
 - 4. God is merciful as far as He can be; He would have pardoned Judah for some good.
 - 5. But the nation and city were given to falsehoods religious, practical, and personal.
 - 6. Thus far, by verses 4 and 5, Jeremiah examined Jerusalem's commoners (Jer 5:4-5).
- E. Jeremiah exposed commoners (verse 4) as ignorant of revealed religion and educated elite (verse 5) as rebellious against it, similar to another hopeless situation (Is 29:9-14).
- F. God sees all men; Jesus knew all men; only a few press in the strait gate (Mat 7:13-14).
- G. Lesson: Let you, your family, and your church be different with many or most counted.
- H. Lesson: Two crucial traits are judgment (justice or fairness) and truth (honest dealings).

2 ***And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.***

- A. Swearing by the words, *The LORD liveth*, is worship of Jehovah earlier noted (Jer 4:2).
- B. Hearers might think or say, but what about all the good and faithful men in Jerusalem, the men in the city I have heard swear by our God Jehovah; what about those good men?
 - 1. Jeremiah by God had the answer – their words sounded good; their actions were vile.
 - 2. God cannot stand talking of Him or His things (Isaiah 9:17; 29:13-14; 48:1; 58:1-2).

3. Paul also warned about heretics with good words and fair speeches (Rom 16:17-18).
- C. Lesson: Swearing is an act of worship and delights our God when done correctly ... **Swearing and Oaths**.
- D. Lesson: Swearing needs godliness, by Jehovah only, for right reasons, with right action.
- E. Lesson: There are always far more that look or sound like Christians than there truly is.
- F. Lesson: Do not offend God with lukewarm pretensions; choose Baal, and praise him.

3 O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

- A. What eyes does God have on the truth? Eyes of discovery, approval, or respect of truth?
- B. We choose expectation of the truth, for truth was referred to in all three verses this far.
 1. In pursuit of truth from Judah, God had chastened them various ways with no profit.
 2. Think truth in all ways – religious, moral, practical, relational, speech, thoughts, etc.
- C. They would not grieve; they refused to change; they stubbornly chose rebellion instead.
- D. Lesson: When chastened or convicted, run humbly toward the LORD as fast as you can.
- E. Lesson: Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as idolatry (I Sam 15:23).

4 Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God.

- A. God's indictment of Judah continued – this here is not discovery but rather conviction.
 1. Jeremiah drew a summary this far that common, simple Jews did not grasp godliness.
 2. Without much intelligence, education, or responsibility, they were religious losers.
 3. The adjectives *poor* and *foolish* are not sinful traits but cultural or societal measures.
 4. Base Jews may have known agriculture or trades, but not the law of God (John 7:49).
- B. Therefore, Jeremiah changed in the next verse and sought among the elite of the city.
- C. The terms of examination here are identical to the terms of examination next, being *knowledge of the way of the LORD* and *judgment of their God* – revealed godly religion.
- D. Lesson: We cannot ever claim ignorance of His revealed religion, for He has taught us.
- E. Lesson: We do not mind at all being the poor and foolish of this world (I Cor 1:26-29).
- F. Lesson: Let us always tell God we are His ignorant babes (I Kgs 3:5-9; Matt 11:25-27).

5 I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the LORD, and the judgment of their God: but these

have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.

- A. The terms of examination here are identical to the terms of examination before, being *knowledge of the way of the LORD* and *judgment of their God* – revealed godly religion.
- B. Jeremiah, still looking for a man to gain Jerusalem's pardon, tested the city elite, who would have been the kings, scribes, princes, priests, pastors, and prophets (Jer 2:8,26).
- C. The elite, the rulers, the educated, were not ignorant – they were flagrantly rebellious.
 - 1. Knowing the way of the LORD and judgment of God, they sinned presumptuously.
 - 2. They broke the yoke and burst the bands God had put on the Jews by Moses' law.
- D. God's indictment of Judah here ended – Jeremiah was not truly learning anything new, but rather exposing the reason for no loving truth – ignorance and worse, rebellion.
- E. Jeremiah exposed commoners (verse 4) as ignorant of revealed religion and educated elite (verse 5) as rebellious against it, similar to another hopeless situation (Is 29:9-14).
- F. Lesson: Knowledge brings greater responsibility and thus greater risk of greater sins.

Destruction for Idolatry and Adultery – Verses 6-9

6 Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.

- A. *Wherefore*, much like *therefore*, drew a conclusion from above – pain for no godliness.
 - 1. God's destructive vengeance on Judah is here to punish the evil lack of godly men.
 - 2. God's destructive vengeance on Judah is here to punish the rebellious educated elite.
 - 3. However, we separate this section from the previous as transitional to further sins.
- B. The LORD used several animal figures causing great fear – a lion, a wolf, a leopard.
 - 1. Judgment and punishment of Judah would be by Chaldeans like the dreaded beasts.
 - 2. Speaking metaphorically, any movement would meet one or more beast for death.
 - 3. A lion is fearless and fierce; a wolf sneaks about at night; a leopard looks from high.
 - 4. Their cities and then Jerusalem were besieged with exactly this situation in reality.
 - 5. When king Zedekiah and troops left the city, the Chaldeans got them (Jer 52:7-11).
 - 6. The fearful language of being torn in pieces by these fierce creatures is God's choice.
- C. Why was their situation so dire and doomed? Due to their many sins and backslidings.
- D. Why was the vengeance so cruel and severe? Because Jehovah is holy and hates sin.
- E. Lesson: David warned that slighting sin will result in violent vengeance (Ps 50:21-22).
- F. Lesson: Do not let backsliding become a way of life. Hold fast. Do not turn back again.

7 How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

- A. The children here, like most other places, are not children by age but citizens of Judah.
- B. God asked a legitimate question, *How shall I pardon this?* Such sins must be punished.
- C. Recall, this chapter and the previous lesson had mention of a possible pardon (Jer 5:1).
 - 1. There could be no pardon as suggested earlier – for Jerusalem had no faithful men.
 - 2. The transgressions of the Jews were many and their backslidings increased (Jer 5:6).
 - 3. God must execute vengeance, by three beasts or others ways, for great evil two ways.
- D. First, they were guilty of the sin mentioned so many times already – worshipping idols.
 - 1. The specific crime is swearing by another god (Jer 12:16; 23:7; Am 8:14; Zeph 1:5).
 - 2. But those idol deities were no gods, so appealing to them as an authority was insane.
 - 3. How could a nation or person convert from Jehovah to inanimate stumps or stones?
- E. Second, after God blessed them with prosperity, they turned luxury into lasciviousness.
 - 1. Are adultery and harlots here religious/spiritual or literal/physical? We choose the latter by differentiation from the first sin and by mention of wives that is next.
 - 2. Full men, with little work and idle minds, will lust for sex (Ex 32:6; Ezek 16:49-50).
 - 3. Fornication and fasting are not good companions, but rather fornication and feasting.
 - 4. See this point illustrated by the condition of the lustful stallions in the next verse.
 - 5. God had already indicted Judah for defiling abominations by prosperity (Jer 2:7).
- F. Jewish men lined up without shame like soldiers at harlots' houses to visit prostitutes, for the sin of adultery was rampant in Judah (Jeremiah 9:2; 23:10; 29:23; Ezek 22:11).
- G. Lesson: Grasp the question: *How shall I pardon thee for this?* Folly demands your pain.
- H. Lesson: America's great prosperity can lead to luxury and lasciviousness (Deut 32:15).
- I. Lesson: America's luxury can make lovers of pleasure more than God (II Tim 3:1-5).
- J. Lesson: A help against lascivious thinking or living is to get busier with more work.
- K. Lesson: How can a Baptist ever be a Catholic or other infant-sprinkling sacramentalist?

8 They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.

- A. The character and conduct of stallions in the morning is not a mystery to the observant, and the similar time of greatest arousal in men is also well known by thinking persons.
- B. Fed stallions so aroused confirm luxurious living leading to adultery in the verse before.
- C. Like Judah of old, America has turned to many evil pleasures due to ease, luxury, etc.
- D. God's indictment of all Judah was universal adultery – no good man to be found at all.

E. Lesson: Whatever input or activity or lack thereof leads to lustful thinking, get rid of it.

9 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

1. This is not the kind of visit you want from the LORD; you want favor, not vengeance.
2. There cannot be pardon; there must be vengeance for the two sins previously declared.
3. All the sins combined together and summarized by the last two demand punishment.
4. Our God is very personal – grieved and quenched – and His soul must avenge such evil.
5. Lesson: Your life either delights God with pleasure or offends Him due to compromise.

Destruction for Rejecting Prophets – Verses 10-14

10 Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they are not the LORD'S.

- A. God is King of nations; here as King of kings He ordered king Nebuchadnezzar to work.
 1. If our God can order the greatest king around, He can certainly direct our president.
 2. Grasp the positive directive and then the definite limit. What international precision!
- B. Let us review the orders from headquarters to the Chaldean king and Jehovah's servant.
 1. Besiege the city and build ramps against her walls to gain access to it and destroy.
 2. But do not annihilate every person you encounter, for I have a plan for this city in the future, so I need a few to repopulate it in 70 years, and we both like Jeremiah!
 3. Take away Jerusalem's battlements, for I am no longer defending my rebellious city.
 4. **Battlement** = a parapet (or barrier) or towers on a city wall to protect its defenders.
- C. Never forget God arranged for Nebuchadnezzar to spoil Egypt to pay his army for work they did for Him against the city of Tyre (Ezekiel 29:18-20). Celebrate glorious truth!
- D. An inspired token of future hope is here to not annihilate or eliminate (Jer 4:27; 5:31), for God would preserve Judah and Jerusalem for David's anointing (Is 10:27; Matt 1:1).
- E. Lesson: God rules armies and tells them what to do and what they cannot do (Pr 21:1).
- F. Lesson: Do not trust princes or horses for safety, but God only (Ps 20:1-9; 146:1-10).

11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

- A. I no longer protect my people – Israel and now Judah – for their crimes against divinity!
- B. Jeremiah then introduced the treachery of the Jews – rejecting and mocking prophets – as if the treachery thus far of swapping gods and turning luxury into lust was not enough.
- C. For their treachery, God had purposed their destruction, Israel first and now Jerusalem.
 1. Both nations were guilty of ministerial rejection – refusing to obey prophets He sent.
 2. Both nations were guilty of ministerial corruption – sinful and lying pastors, priests.

12 They have belied the LORD, and said, It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine:

- A. The Jews slandered Jehovah by scorning His prophets' message of Judah's desolation.
 - 1. They lied – *the prophets do not represent God; their words are not His words to us.*
 - 2. They lied – *we will not be harmed by Babylonians, for we have walls and the temple.*
 - 3. They lied – *we shall not experience the sword killing or famine starving as they say.*
- B. **Belied** = To tell lies about; esp. to calumniate by false statements. To assert or allege falsely, or with a lie. To give a false representation or account of, to misrepresent; to present in a false character. To give the lie to, call false, contradict as a lie or a liar; to reject as false, deny the truth of. To call (a thing) false practically, to treat it as false by speaking or acting at variance with it; to be false or faithless to.
- C. The last three clauses are the words of the mocking Jews continued into the next verse.
- D. Lesson: Do not mock a preacher or his sermon when from God's word. You belie God.

13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

- A. These are words of the Jewish scorners, continued from the last three clauses previous, contradicting, mocking, and scorning the preaching of the prophets against them.
 - 1. They lied – *the prophets shall become wind; their blustering threats shall disappear.*
 - 2. They lied – *the word is not in them, what they cry against us is not from Jehovah.*
 - 3. They lied – *the prophets themselves shall be judged as they describe for their sins.*
- B. We may not use the *wind* as the rebels did here (Job 6:26; 8:2), but we speak of hot air.
- C. These treacherous leaders mocked Jeremiah's words (Jer 14:13-16; 18:18-23; 20:7-13).
- D. We take the last clause as spoken by the rebels against God's prophets for the simplest reading of it and by the resulting judgment next as God's conclusion against them.

14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

- A. Here is the conclusion to the controversy – not the rebel's lying words, but Jehovah's.
 - 1. The wicked Jews treacherously opposed and mocked the preaching of God's men.
 - 2. But there was a reckoning – by the LORD God of hosts (second use here; Jer 2:19).
- B. God judged them for what they said against His prophets by exalting Jeremiah's words.
 - 1. Jehovah told Jeremiah (singular *thy*) His judgment for the Jews' mocking (plural *ye*).
 - 2. He would confirm, exalt, and surely fulfill Jeremiah's word to burn and devour them.
 - 3. Rather than Jeremiah's words being wind, they would be fire to burn up the wicked.
 - 4. God's words in Jeremiah was a fire (and a hammer) in comparison (Jer 23:25-29).

- 5. Jeremiah promised sword and famine – both deaths killed (Jer 11:22; 9:21; 18:21).
- 6. God exactly fulfilled every word He had given Jeremiah to preach to them (Zec 1:6).
- C. Lesson: Do not mock the preacher and his warnings; fear the revenge (II Cor 10:3-6).
- D. Lesson: Let no man say a preacher goes too far when preaching scripture; it is the truth.
- E. Lesson: No man of God should fear any, for the LORD God of hosts is on his side.

Destruction for Serving Strange Gods – Verses 15-19

15 Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

- A. Here is the King of nations declaring what He would do to punish His idolatrous nation.
 - 1. The LORD Jehovah, identified by name in this verse, governs nations (Psalm 22:28).
 - 2. He raises up kings and puts them down as He pleases (Daniel 2:21; 4:17; Prov 21:1).
 - 3. The judgment described here is one of the greatest calamities in human experience.
 - 4. No nation or its rulers ever make a decision large or small not ruled by our Potentate.
- B. The great nation (empire) that Jehovah would bring to punish the Jews was Babylon.
 - 1. Babylon was far away (about 1000 miles), leading the army to greater rage and spoil.
 - 2. Babylon was a mighty nation made up of Chaldeans and other confederate nations.
 - 3. Babylon was ancient; Nimrod founded it after the Flood (Gen 10:9-10; Micah 5:6), and it was there in the plains of Shinar the Tower of Babel was built (Gen 11:1-9).
 - 4. The Jews speaking Hebrew would not know the Syrian of the Chaldean conquerors, which makes it very hard to understand offers or make entreaties, as Babel proved.
- C. Lesson: For the history and prophecies of Babylon, literal and mystical, *Babylon ... Babylon – History and Prophecies*.
- D. Lesson: Never fear politics; our God reigns (Jer 10:7; Pr 21:1; Eccl 5:8; Dan 2:21; 4:17).
- E. Lesson: For more of a Bible perspective of politics, *The Christian and Politics*.

16 Their quiver is as an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men.

- A. Here are two aspects of the Chaldean army – excellent equipment and powerful soldiers.
- B. Quiver is a representative weapon for Babylon's military preparations and equipment.
 - 1. A quiver does not hurt, but arrows held in it; skilled archers created an open grave.
 - 2. It is compared to an open grave for the efficiency and skill of its archers to take lives.
 - 3. The powerful word picture is a skilled army that will easily kill all those fighting it.
- C. The soldiers of Babylon's confederation were choice men drawn from many armies, and they had much experience in war from having conquered much of the Middle East.

D. Lesson: When God moves to judge a nation or person, His thoroughness dwarfs yours.

17 And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

- A. Napoleon and Hitler learned the ancient rule, *An army marches on its stomach*. If logistics do not provide enough calories and nutrition, an army cannot sustain fighting.
- B. However, in this case, the Jews would provide the food by the large Babylonian army taking their harvest, their bread, their flocks, their herds, their vines, and their fig trees.
- C. If soldiers eat the food of the populace, famine results, as God had warned (Jer 11:22).
 - 1. Those that suffer quickly and severely are children, as Jeremiah saw (Lam 2:10-11).
 - 2. God foretold delicate mothers eating their children (Deut 28:56-57; II Kgs 6:26-29).
 - 3. Josephus recorded that this happened as well during the Roman siege of Jerusalem.
- D. Fenced cities were walled cities, not with the magnitude of Jerusalem, but with walls.
- E. By use of sword – all military weapons – the Chaldeans would besiege walled cities.
- F. With no access or egress, cities are quickly impoverished and then famine follows.
- G. Children that were once the joy of families are now an incredible burden to feed.
- H. Lesson: All provisions and security, of any kind, are nothing against God's judgment.
- I. Lesson: Our God is holy, dreadful, and terrible by the kinds of punishment He exacts.
- J. Lesson: Thank the God of heaven that you have never experienced anything like this.

18 Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I will not make a full end with you.

- A. The LORD Jehovah again gave a token of hope and mercy in the elect He would save.
- B. He had made this promise before; the repetition in these places is kind (Jer 4:27; 5:10).
- C. However, and it cannot be forgotten, the few saved were not wicked (Jer 44:14; 50:20).
- D. Yet, there would be an end, as this chapter says, an end of their free living (Jer 5:31).
- E. Lesson: God's mercy providing hope is not for unrepentant, scornful, sinning rebels.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours.

- A. God's great fairness is seen by the many reminders of the cause of His furious judgment.
 - 1. The warnings are in advance, for Jeremiah's forty years ended with Jerusalem's fall.

2. God raised up Jeremiah (and other prophets) to give more than sufficient warnings.
- B. God's great fairness is seen by the comparable punishment He meted out for their sins.
 1. The prophecy is God sending foreigners to destroy Judah with captives to Babylon.
 2. They forsook God for strangers, so God forsook them and deserted them to strangers.
- C. The Jews had forsaken their familiar God for strange gods, so God would do the same.
 1. Note His creativity – you used your land for idolatry, now it will be another's land.
 2. Note His creativity – you served strange gods, now you will serve strange masters.
- D. Lesson: Do not slight or neglect warnings that God has brought to you by Spirit or word.
- E. Lesson: Our God is incredibly merciful, but do not presume on His mercy or you lose.
- F. Lesson: God's creativity in judgment, like all His works, is creative and rebel-crushing.

No Fear of God in the Land of Judah – Verses 20-24

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying,

- A. Here is a new part or section of God's kind warnings to the stubbornly wicked rebels.
- B. He was very kind to make declarations and to publish the information for their salvation.
- C. God never judges without a warning, for He is righteous and fair from Eden to the end.
- D. Enjoy what follows in four verses as God describes His power and goodness with water.
- E. Lesson: Public teaching, called preaching, is His way to get truth and warnings to you.

21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not:

- A. God had earlier called them foolish people and sottish children for ignorance (Jer 4:22).
- B. Here He will be a more specific in what follows to identify the exact sin of these rebels.
- C. He blasted them for having the faculties of seeing and hearing but without any ability.
- D. Jesus did the same 500 years later when preaching to Jews of His time (Matt 13:13-16).
- E. Lesson: God's existence and His will for your life is not a mystery, but simply obvious.
- F. Lesson: Like He gave you eyes and ears, He has also taught you truth and warned you.
- G. Lesson: If you have eyes to see and ears to hear, it is a great blessing deserving praise.

22 Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?

- A. The basic, crucial, foundational issue at stake for Judah was their lack of fearing God.
 1. Whether Moses or Solomon, the first rule is to fear God (Deut 10:12-13; Eccl 12:13).

2. God's first revelation to man is creation, which should cause fear (Romans 1:18-23).
- B. Hear it! God expects His rational creatures to fear Him, to tremble at His great presence.
- C. The inspired lesson here is the sea, which is used elsewhere for His power and wisdom.
 1. God decreed sand at the seashore to keep the waters back from destroying the earth.
 2. The water cannot and does not pass that little strip of sand other than His exceptions.
 3. Waves may toss and destroy ships just a little distance out, but they stop at the sand.
 4. Storms in oceans are terrible, and mariners fear them, but the sand wins every time.
 5. Florida has looked like Florida for a long time. How? By a perpetual strip of sand!
- D. When you stand on the beach of an ocean, you are nothing, yet God manages them all.
- E. Why did He pick the ocean for His lesson? Why not? Any part of creation should work.
 1. If God is this inventive and powerful, He can do anything, and I should fear Him.
 2. If God can do this with oceans and keep them at bay, He could do so to Babylon.
 3. If God can do this to let ocean rage do nothing, then He can shut our rebel mouths.
- F. Lesson: Do you tremble at God? You should. Do you tremble at His word? You should.
- G. Lesson: For much more about the fear of God, check out, *The Fear of the LORD ... Fear of God (2 Sermons)*.
- H. Lesson: For God exalting Himself to humble Job, watch, *Boasting about God ... Boasting About God – Job*.

23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

- A. Two questions of the previous verse get a negative answer – the Jews did not fear God.
- B. Why do we call the Jews of Judah and Jerusalem rebels? Because they were, like here!
 1. **Revolt** = To cast off (change) allegiance; rise against rulers or constituted authority.
 2. The Bible use of this rare verb helps (II Chronicles 21:8-10; Isaiah 1:5; 31:6; 59:13)
 3. Judah had wicked hearts – revolting from His authority and rebelling against laws.
- C. Lesson: Do not push back against God. Do not try anything your way. Submit to Him.

24 Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

- A. What a glorious comparison by God, if the Jews had grasped it, but the rebels did not.
 1. He inspired a description of His power to control and rule water of oceans (Jer 5:22).
 2. But the same God takes ocean water and carries it over land for crucial, fruitful rain.
 3. God testifies of His great goodness by giving rain for food for gladness (Acts 14:17).

- B. In either case, but especially by considering both, men should fear this glorious God.
- C. The power that limits oceans can also create and transport water for wonderful food.
- D. The goodness that designed the water cycle should teach that fearing God is good.
- E. Revolting and rebel hearts – ignoring His terror and goodness – are surely depraved.
- F. Why former and latter? Former rain in spring prepares the ground to help germination for the farmers hope; latter rain perfects and plumps the crops with moisture for harvest.
- G. Farming wisdom was given by God after Eden and works marvelously (Is 28:23-29).
- H. Lesson: Love oceans and rain. Learn to praise Him for both for the reasons given here.
- I. Lesson: Say in your heart right now – I fear God and love Him and will obey Him fully.
- J. Lesson: Confess to God that you know He changed your heart to fear Him (Acts 16:14).

Wicked Men Limiting Favor Prosper – Verses 25-29

25 Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.

- A. Judah was not enjoying fruitful harvests as Jeremiah had told and explained (Jer 3:2-3).
- B. The rebels, by their insane infatuation with foreign idols, had ruined food and gladness.
- C. It was their fault! It was not God's fault! They could remedy the situation! Stop sinning!
- D. This verse is put in this section and not before due to the coordinating conjunction *for*.
- E. Lesson: Sin does two things. It takes away God's goodness. It brings wrathful judgment.

26 For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

- A. Judah and Jerusalem now had a breed of men (not a few) that were unusually wicked.
 - 1. Such men were in other nations since Cain, but this was not usual for God's people.
 - 2. The change was degenerate national character, a decayed justice system, depravity.
 - 3. These were not ordinary sinners but malicious, vile characters plotting others' ruin.
- B. Here is sin! Sin that would not have occurred if Jehovah's perfect laws had been obeyed.
- C. Here is why! Why they did not have ordinary rain and good things were not provided.
- D. Lesson: The world around us and its lifestyle is no guide for us; we have a higher guide.

27 As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

- A. The wickedness described in the previous verse was not punished, so it continued apace.
- B. Forget pet stores with one bird to a cage. Think fowler stuffing a cage with caught birds, as the previous verse indicates by its use of *lay wait, set snares, set a trap, catch men*.

- C. The simile here is for the wicked men from the previous verse – they use that many lies.
- D. The metonym here puts the cause for the effect, deceit for rapacious plunder obtained.
- E. Sinners were prospering in Jerusalem, the city of the great King. The wicked men in context were getting rich by many lies to take advantage of others for ungodly gain.
- F. Lesson: Sin does pay in the short run. The prosperity of fools is true. God accrues wrath.
- G. Lesson: Do not envy prosperity of the wicked in a degenerate nation (Prov 3:31; 23:17).

28 They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

- A. God let these wicked rebels prosper, as He does, to punish worse (Jas 5:3; Rom 2:4-5).
- B. Wisdom makes a man's face shine, so does luxury (Eccl 8:1; Dan 1:8-16; Psalm 73:7); this in a way and degree greater than oil itself, though part of luxurious fare (Ps 104:15).
- C. They are liars, wicked, and more corrupt than usual (Ezekiel 5:6-7; 16:47-52; Jer 2:33).
- D. **Overpass** = To rise above; to extend or project beyond. To go (or be) beyond in amount, rate, value, excellence, etc.; to exceed, excel, transcend, surpass.
- E. From acts of commission to the acts of omission here, they sinned both ways (Jer 5:26).
- F. These terrible sinners prospered, but it was very temporary (Jer 12:1; Pr 1:32; Ps 73:12).
- G. Lesson: Sins of omission, like not helping the needy, are also sins to God (James 4:17).
- H. Lesson: God's goodness is for repentance, but if not, for greater wrath (Romans 2:4-5).

29 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

- A. This is not the kind of visit you want from the LORD; you want favor, not vengeance.
- B. The previous verses described the prosperity of the wicked; this verse brings vengeance.
- C. God is not mocked, not ever; be sure your sin will find you out (Gal 6:7; Num 32:23).
- D. Jeremiah warned perfectly – do not think sinners are getting away with sin by success.
- E. Jeremiah warned perfectly – God's judgment was coming in spite of apparent approval.
- F. Lesson: Never think that God approves a sinner prospering in the world (Ps 50:16-22).

***** Ministerial Conspiracy Against Truth – Verses 30-31 *****

30 A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land;

- 1. Now Jeremiah described another form of the great wickedness of Judah and Jerusalem.
- 2. **Wonderful** = Full of wonder; such as to excite wonder or astonishment; marvellous.
- 3. Wonder here is not good. It is wonder caused by horribleness of a new Jewish sin.
- 4. The second adjective – *horrible* – should get your attention it is not good wonder.

5. Jeremiah had already used *astonished* and *horribly afraid* for bad earlier (Jer 2:12).
6. John *wondered with great admiration* at the RCC Whore (Rev 17:6), but the words means he was astonished and surprised a Christian church is our greatest enemy.
7. **Horrible** = Exciting or fitted to horror; tending to make one shudder; extremely repulsive to the senses or feelings; dreadful, hideous, shocking, frightful, awful.
8. Lesson: Be wise to see degrees of sinfulness in the Bible and in the world around you.
9. Lesson: Sodomy is worse than idolatry, for it is God judging idolatry with perversion.

31 The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

1. The previous verse introduced a new astonishing and horrible thing of the rebel Jews.
 1. *What was the astonishing and horrible sin?* Preachers taught lies to deceive people.
 2. *What was the astonishing and horrible sin?* Priests, religious rulers, used those lies.
 3. *What was the astonishing and horrible sin?* The Jews loved ministerial corruption.
2. Prophets were to be God's messengers bringing divine truth from heaven to His people.
 1. God had made Israel great by His laws, but now prophets taught lies (Deut 4:5-8).
 2. When those prophets preach their own dreams and ideas, people perish (Prov 29:18).
 3. How does any person in any role in society know what to do without God's word?
 4. Academic knowledge is quite worthless compared to moral and divine knowledge.
3. But the prophets in Jerusalem and Judah preached lies of peace, not war, with Babylon.
4. These liars told dreams and visions to counter the truth of Jeremiah (Jer 23:17-32).
5. The priests were in cahoots with them to keep tithes coming (Jeremiah 6:13; 8:10; 23:11; Isaiah 56:10-12; Micah 3:11; Malachi 1:10; Titus 1:11; Philippians 1:20-21).
6. The people loved such lies to comfort them in their sins against Jeremiah's strictness.
7. Sinners always prefer smooth lies and fables, not truth (Is 30:10-11; II Tim 4:3-4).
8. Sinners prefer those that will flatter them and justify their sins (Micah 2:11; 3:5,11).
9. Remember Micaiah against the ministerial association of Ahab (I Kings 22:5-28).
10. What did God think of the pulpits preaching peace? He would violently end it by war.
11. This astonishing and terrible crime in Judah has now sent America into great darkness.
 1. Do not blame education or entertainment; proper preaching would change them both.
 2. How are fathers and mothers prepared for parenting, husbands and wives for marriage, magistrates for office, masters and employees for business ... by the pulpit!
 3. Why are education, entertainment, media sectors depraved ... compromising pulpits!
 4. The ignorance of America, and it is very great, is due to the pulpits choosing fables.
 5. Perilous times are not what you think – they are pulpit fables (II Tim 3:1-17; 4:1-4).
 6. Why do pulpits preach Joel Osteen nonsense? The people demand it (II Tim 4:3-4).
12. Lesson: God will remove preachers that preach truth to leave men dry (Amos 8:11-13).

13. Lesson: Love preachers and preaching of truth (I Thessalonians 5:12-13,20; I Tim 5:17).
14. Lesson: How often and fervently do you pray for existing pastors and for more pastors?
15. Lesson: Do you grasp that lying preachers contribute most to America's decline ... **Nations: Blessed or Cursed**.
16. Lesson: For much more about the prophets of God, check, *The Prophets of God* ... **The Prophets of God**.
17. Lesson: For God's opinion of ministerial association, **A Lying Spirit from God**.
18. Lesson: For much more about false prophets as Jesus warned, see these: ... **Sheep Clothing of False Prophets** and **Attacking the Bible**.