

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing**

#### **Part VIII: God's Appeal For Repentance And Blessing To His People Under Discipline (Jeremiah 3:12-18)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. God told Israel in the Second Commandment that He showed mercy unto a thousand generations of people who loved Him and who kept His commandments, Exodus 20:4-6 NIV.
- B. His rich mercy is seen in Jeremiah 3:12-18 in His offer of restoration and blessing following repentance if the captive people of Israel would only acknowledge her sin and repent. We view that passage for our insight:

##### **II. God's Appeal For Repentance And Blessing To His People Under Discipline, Jeremiah 3:12-18.**

- A. In the midst of a section on the "condemnation of sin," God led Jeremiah "to offer a message of repentance and hope to the Northern Kingdom" that was then in Assyrian Captivity in, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1134.
- B. That wonderful message, found in Jeremiah 3:12-18, starts where Israel then dwelt in oppressive, lowly Assyrian Captivity and reaches out to her still future Messianic Kingdom of great blessing (as follows):
  - 1. God told Jeremiah to proclaim to the Northern Kingdom of Israel that was then in captivity to return to Him, that if she did so, He would not look on her in His anger, for He was a merciful God, Jeremiah 3:12.
  - 2. All He asked was that Israel "acknowledge" her guilt (KJV, NIV, ESV), what we today say is "confess" one's sins (1 John 1:9), in her having rebelled against God to scatter her favors like a harlot by worshiping false gods under every green tree and in not obeying God's voice, Jeremiah 3:13.
  - 3. The Lord promised to bring a remnant of Israel, one from a city and two from a family, and bring them back to Zion, restoring their captivity, Jeremiah 3:14.
  - 4. As they returned, God promised to give His people shepherds after His own heart, men who would "feed" them with "knowledge" and "understanding," and we clarify these words from the Hebrew text (Jer. 3:15):
    - a. The word "feed" is *ra'ah*, "to pasture, feed" (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 708; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 944-945), and in this context it figuratively implies giving spiritual "feed" to people.
    - b. The word "knowledge" is *de'ah*, "factual information, knowledge," Ibid., p. 395.
    - c. The word "understanding" is *sekel*, "good sense; insight; discretion" in the sense of the practical application of known facts to life, Ibid., p. 968; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 877.
    - d. In other words, God promised to give His returning remnant spiritual shepherds who would feed them the facts of Scripture along with the wise applications of those facts to life, a Bible exposition ministry.
  - 5. Jeremiah 3:16-18 then predicted the Messianic Kingdom blessings that are still yet to come (as follows):
    - a. When the returning remnant enjoyed God's blessing in the land, being multiplied and increased in number and might, no longer would they say, "the ark of the covenant of the Lord," for it would not even come to mind nor be remembered nor missed, and neither would it be constructed again, Jeremiah 3:16.
    - b. The reason for this cessation of the ark is that the ark with its mercy seat on its top, though once being God's "throne," would be replaced by the city of Jerusalem that would itself comprise the throne of the Lord, and all the [saved] people of the nations of the world would gather together unto it, Jeremiah 3:17a. [We know that this will occur when Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, rules from Jerusalem in the Messianic Kingdom, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Jeremiah 3:16-17.]
    - c. Men worldwide would then gather to God's throne in Jerusalem, no longer following their own stubborn heart in going after false idols, nor thus influencing Israel and Judah to commit idolatry, Jeremiah 3:17b.
    - d. In addition, the division between the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah that began under David's grandson Rehoboam would be healed: the house of Judah would join the house of Israel under God, and together they would come from the land of the north where they had been in captivity to the land of Israel that God had given to their forefathers as a heritage, Jeremiah 3:18.

***Lesson:*** *In the midst of a long prophecy on discipline, God called to captive Israel to acknowledge her sin that He might restore her to enjoy the Messianic Kingdom with its blessings of unity, righteousness, being led by shepherds after God's own heart who would expound His Word, by the presence of God Himself on Israel's throne in Jerusalem and by unity between Judah and Israel along with worldwide fellowship with saved Gentile nations.*

***Application:*** *If we sin, may we confess it as soon as possible for God's rich restoration and abundant blessings of being fed His Word by messengers after His own heart, and by unity and fellowship with all of God's holy people.*