

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part XXIV: Recognizing God's Complete Sovereignty Over Us That We Heed Him (Jeremiah 10:17-25)

I. Introduction

- A. One's degree of obedience to God is directly proportioned to the degree he senses his accountability to God, and the degree one senses His accountability to God in turn depends on how sovereign he thinks God is.
- B. Jeremiah 10:17-25 reveals the absolute sovereignty of God, and Jeremiah responds with a humble appeal that teaches us of our need to recognize that sovereignty over us that we completely obey the Lord in our lives:

II. Recognizing God's Complete Sovereignty Over Us That We Heed Him, Jeremiah 10:17-25.

- A. Ending a long section on the prediction of Judah's coming Babylonian Captivity, Jeremiah directed the people of Jerusalem who would then be under the coming Babylonian siege to gather up their bundles of meager belongings from the ground to carry them off to Babylon, Jer. 10:17 ESV; Bible Know.Com., O. T., p. 1143.
- B. God explained that He was preparing to sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time much as a shepherd would sling out a stone from his slingshot, flinging them out seemingly at abandon in that He would bring distress upon them, a distress they would feel because of the intensity of its trauma, Jeremiah 10:18 ESV.
- C. Jerusalem's future response to the invasion and captivity by Babylon is expressed in Jeremiah 10:19-22:
 - 1. In experiencing the invasion and captivity, Judah's residents would claim they had been badly injured, that their wound was incurable, yet that it was suffering they had no choice but to endure, Jeremiah 10:19.
 - 2. Using the language of mere nomads to reflect Judah's transitory life, the land's residents would claim their tent was destroyed, all its ropes snapped, their sons no longer alive so that no one was left to pitch their tent and set up their shelter, Jeremiah 10:20; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Jer. 10:19-20.
 - 3. Judah's spiritual leaders, her shepherds, would have proved to be senseless, not inquiring of the Lord for His wisdom and guidance, so they no longer prospered and all their flock was scattered in captivity, v. 21.
 - 4. Jeremiah then called the people to listen to the report that was coming from the land of the north where the advancing Babylonian army was advancing, that their arrival would leave Judah's towns desolate and a haunt of jackals due to the ensuing devastation by the invaders, Jeremiah 10:22.
- D. Deeply moved at this coming plight on the people of Judah, Jeremiah himself admitted that a man's life was not his own, that he was not actually free to direct his own steps, Jeremiah 10:23. God had real and complete sovereignty over him just as God had complete sovereignty over Judah's inhabitants so that regardless if they had wanted to live their lives independent of God, they could not avoid the inevitable consequences of that choice, which in Judah's case involved divine punishment by the Babylonian invasion and captivity!
- E. Accordingly, Jeremiah pleaded with the Lord, identifying himself with his nation of Judah and its suffering, asking God to correct him, but only with His justice and not in His wrath lest he cease to exist due to the overwhelming devastation of God's sovereignly expressed wrath, Jeremiah 10:24 NIV.
- F. Jeremiah then asked God to pour out His wrath on the Gentile nations who did not know the Lord, those who did not call on the Lord because they had devoured Israel and destroyed her land, Jeremiah 10:25.

Lesson: *Jeremiah realized through God's revelation that the suffering his people of Judah would experience with the invasion and captivity under Babylonian dominance would be severe and inescapable due to God's absolute sovereignty over them to judge them regardless if they had wanted to live in ways God had not dictated. Thus, Jeremiah pleaded with the Lord to treat his people only in justice and not in wrath lest they cease to exist, and that God remember to pour out His wrath on the Gentiles who would have devastated Judah's people and land.*

Application: *(1) We must realize that our lives are not our own: God has absolute sovereignty over us as His people, and He decides what to do with us based on whether we heed or disobey Him, cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. (2) So, in deep reverence for the Lord, may we realize that every thought we harbor and every act we perform is exposed to Him and that we will be held accountable to Him for them. (3) Armed with these facts, may we then not even think of doing anything that disobeys the Lord that we escape His inevitable discipline, but rather that we obey Him to gain His equally inevitable blessing. (4) These realizations must also lead to a realization that we were not put on this earth to choose our own paths in life as is often taught by the secular world, but that we belong to God and thus are obliged to take the path of His choice for us. This leads to a life that is surrendered to the will of God instead of directed to achieving our own objectives. (Romans 12:1-8)*