

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part XLVI: God's Contrast Of Godly And False Prophets, Jeremiah 23:9-40

A. God's Contrast Of The LIVES Of Godly And False Prophets (Jeremiah 23:9-15)

I. Introduction

- A. The prophet Jeremiah lived and ministered in godliness, but false prophets lived and ministered in wickedness, and the people of Judah were left choosing which ministry and lifestyle was that of God's *real* prophet.
- B. God Himself contrasted these prophets, starting with His contrast of the **lives** of good and false prophets in Jeremiah 23:9-15. We view this passage for application in discerning good from false messengers in our era:

II. God's Contrast Of The LIVES Of Godly And False Prophets, Jeremiah 23:9-15.

- A. Godly prophet Jeremiah was deeply disturbed at the polluted lives and thinking of the false prophets, Jer. 23:9:
 - 1. Because of Judah's false prophets, godly Jeremiah claimed his heart was broken in grief, Jer. 23:9a.
 - 2. Jeremiah suffered weakness and nervousness due to the wickedness of the false prophets, Jer. 23:9b.
 - 3. God's prophet was stunned, shocked like a drunk man in a stupor because of the holy words of condemnation by the Lord against the false prophets, Jeremiah 23:9c.
- B. The false prophets were sinfully calloused and profane, insensitive to God's holy words, Jeremiah 23:10-15:
 - 1. Jeremiah revealed that the land was full of adulterers to where God had judged the land to be dried up and parched with a lack of rain for this sin, Jeremiah 23:10.
 - 2. Both prophet and priest were "ungodly," the Hebrew verb being *hanap*, meaning "be polluted, profaned," morally unclean and insensitive to shame, Jer. 23:11a; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1158-1159. Such men would lack the sense of grief over sin, nervousness due to their great wickedness and a sense of shock, of being stunned at the holy words of God that condemned such sin as in Jeremiah's case in "II,A,1-3" above.
 - 3. Even in the temple of the Lord, this polluted and profane, coarse wickedness thrived, Jeremiah 23:11b.
 - 4. Accordingly, their own ways would entrap the false prophets like slippery paths in darkness into which such vile men would be driven and fall as God's punishment came on them, bringing disaster, Jer. 23:12.
 - 5. To show how vile was the evil of Judah's prophets, God compared the sins of the Northern Kingdom's idolatrous prophets with the vile evil of the prophets of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Jer. 23:13-14:
 - a. The prophets of Samaria had been unsavory to God in practicing immorality with cult prostitutes in pagan Baal worship and leading Israel's people astray into such idolatry (Jeremiah 23:13 ESV)
 - b. However, the prophets of Jerusalem committed adultery even with the regular people of the land and walked in lies, strengthening the hand of evildoers so that no one turned from his wickedness, the people all becoming as vile in their immorality to God as were the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jer. 23:14a,b.
 - c. Viewing the coarse vileness of the men of Sodom in Genesis 19:4-11 further describes their wickedness: (1) the men of Sodom, both young and old from every quarter of the city, publicly tried to abuse the angels of God who visited Lot, Genesis 19:4-5. (2) When Lot offered even to bring out his daughters for these vile men to abuse, they refused and forcibly tried to break down the door of Lot's house to seize the angels and abuse them (Genesis 19:6-9) to where the angels had to rescue Lot and strike the men of the city with blindness so they could not find the door, Genesis 19:10-11. (3) Thus, the immorality of the prophets of Judah was so great, so shameless and so vile that it not only had a corruptive influence on the righteous people like Lot, but made life dangerous for society just like it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - 6. Accordingly, God predicted He would cause the wicked prophets to eat bitter food and give them poisoned water to drink, figurative expressions of intense judgment, for from the prophets of Jerusalem that which was polluted and profaned (*hanupah* as the noun form of *hanap*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p 338) had gone out to pollute and profane the whole land of Judah, Jeremiah 23:15.

Lesson: *Godly Jeremiah experienced grief, weakness and shock at their sin and God's consequent condemnation of the false prophets. Conversely, the false prophets were so polluted, profane and insensitive, they committed shocking sins even in the temple and strengthened the hand of evildoers all over the nation as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Accordingly, God promised to bring disastrous judgment on the false prophets.*

Application: *(1) If we are not shocked and grieved over evil, we must examine our hearts. (2) If we ARE shocked at sin, may we like Jeremiah avoid it and its polluting, profaning fellowship.*