

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing Part L: God's Protection Of His Obediently Courageous Prophet (Jeremiah 26:1-24)

I. Introduction

- A. When God called Jeremiah to his prophetic ministry, He predicted Jeremiah would be opposed by the nation, but that Jeremiah was to trust God to protect and enable him credibly to withstand his foes, Jer. 1:17-19.
- B. However, were Jeremiah to cower in fear before his foes, undermining the credibility of his character and preaching of God's Word, God would punish him by causing him to be dismayed before his foes, Jer. 1:17b.
- C. Jeremiah 26:1-24 records incidents where Jeremiah courageously faced foes in contrast to another prophet who had the same message as Jeremiah, with the resulting contrast in God's blessing being a big lesson for us:

II. God's Protection Of His Obediently Courageous Prophet, Jeremiah 26:1-24.

- A. By obeying God in his call as a prophet courageously to withstand foes, God protected Jeremiah, Jer. 26:1-19:
 - 1. At the start of the reign of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah who had responded positively to God's Word (2 Kings 22:1-20), the Lord told Jeremiah to go proclaim in the temple the need for Judah's people to repent in accord with the warnings of His many other prophets or God would make the temple a pile of ruins and the city of Jerusalem a curse as had occurred to Shiloh where the tabernacle had formerly stood, Jer. 26:1-6.
 - 2. After the priests, false prophets and people heard Jeremiah give this message, they laid hold of him, saying he would surely die for preaching on the possible future destruction of their temple and city, Jer. 26:7-9.
 - 3. The civil officials heard of this arrest in the temple, so they came up from the palace and took their seat of judgment at the entry of the New Gate in the temple, Jer. 26:10. The priests and prophets told the officials and the crowd present that Jeremiah deserved to die because he had prophesied against the city, Jer. 26:11.
 - 4. Instead of cowering, Jeremiah courageously provided a threefold defense of his actions, Jer. 26:12-15:
 - a. First, he claimed that he was not a false prophet, but a true prophet of the Lord that God had sent to them deliver the message he had proclaimed to them, Jeremiah 26:12.
 - b. Second, he added that were they to repent, God would not send the predicted disaster, Jeremiah 26:13.
 - c. Third, Jeremiah added that he was in the hands of his foes, that they could do with him as they desired, but that if they executed him, they would surely bring God's wrath upon themselves because he was an innocent man that God had truly sent him to speak the message he had given to them, Jeremiah 26:14-15.
 - 5. The officials decided Jeremiah should not die, a verdict supported by some elders who cited the prophet Micah (Micah 3:12) who had made similar statements about Jerusalem's fall 70 years earlier, and they told how king Hezekiah had not slain Micah, but repented so that God had not judged the city, Jer. 26:16-19b.
 - 6. Thus, these elders warned the people that they were about to bring disaster on themselves if they either slew Jeremiah or did not heed his message, one that was verified by past prophet Micah! (Jer. 26:19c)
- B. However, by fleeing from his foes, another prophet with Jeremiah's same message was slain, Jer. 26:20-23:
 - 1. Another prophet, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim, also prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah, using words similar to Jeremiah's words of judgment for sin, Jeremiah 26:20.
 - 2. When king Jehoiakim with all his soldiers and officials heard Uriah speak, the king sought to put him to death, and Uriah, unlike Jeremiah, did not courageously stand his ground, but fled into Egypt, Jer. 26:21.
 - 3. His fear undermined the credibility of Uriah's message and person, so God did not protect him: Jehoiakim sent men down into Egypt to capture Uriah, bring him back to Judah where Jehoiakim had him slain with the sword and his body disgracefully dumped in the burial plot of the common people, Jer. 26:22-23.
- C. However, even after the death of Uriah who had preached the same message as Jeremiah, since Jeremiah had courageously stood his ground in obedience to his Jeremiah 1:17 calling, God used Ahikam, son of Shaphan who had earlier helped good king Josiah (2 Kings 22:12-20) keep Jeremiah from being executed, Jer. 26:24.

Lesson: *Though Uriah preached the same message as Jeremiah on the destruction of the temple, Jerusalem and Judah unless the people repented, since Uriah then fled from his foes, he undermined his credibility, so God did not protect him so that his foes captured, executed and buried him in disgrace. However, since Jeremiah obeyed God by courageously standing his ground, maintaining the credibility of his call and message, God protected him.*

Application: *If God calls us to a ministry, may we courageously withstand opposition to that ministry to clarify the credibility of our calling and ministry before others if we would expect God to bless us in that ministry.*