

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

#### Part LXII: God's Illustration Of Upright Consistency In Heeding Him

(Jeremiah 35:1-19)

#### I. Introduction

- A. When the Babylonians started to attack Jerusalem, Judah's king Zedekiah made a covenant with his people to release their fellow Hebrew slaves in obedience to the Mosaic Law. However, when the Babylonian army then temporarily withdrew its attack to battle the Egyptians, the people reneged on their covenant.
- B. This greatly displeased the Lord, so He had promised severely to punish Judah's people in Jeremiah 34:1-22.
- C. However, in contrast to Judah's inconsistency in obeying the Lord, Jeremiah 35:1-19 records God's illustration of upright consistency in how the Gentile Recabites heeded their forefather, so we view it for our insight:

#### II. God's Illustration Of Upright Consistency In Heeding Him, Jeremiah 35:1-19.

- A. The Lord showed Jeremiah the consistency of the Recabites in obeying their forefather Jonadab, Jer. 35:1-11:
  - 1. God told Jeremiah to bring the Recabites into a chamber of the temple and give them wine to drink, v. 1-2.
  - 2. When Jeremiah arranged for them to enter this temple chamber, when he set wine before them and ordered them to drink it, the Recabites refused to obey his command, Jeremiah 35:3-6a.
  - 3. They explained that their forefather Jonadab, son of Recab, had commanded his descendants not to drink wine, build houses, sow seed or plant vineyards, but to live as nomads in tents in a puritanical style of life that they might prolong their days in the land of Judah where they sojourned, Jeremiah 35:6b-7.
  - 4. Accordingly, these descendants of Jonadab had obeyed their forefather, be they men or women, v. 8-10.
  - 5. Only due to the extenuating circumstances of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of the land had the Recabites left the open country where were vulnerable to attack to move into the city of Jerusalem, Jeremiah 35:11.
- B. This consistent obedience in the Recabites illustrated the steady obedience God wanted from Judah, v. 12-15:
  - 1. God's word then instructed Jeremiah to tell the people of Judah to learn from the example of consistent obedience that the Recabite nomads had practiced in relation to their forefather, Jeremiah 35:12-14a.
  - 2. The Lord critiqued Judah's people as not hearkening to Him, their spiritual Father just opposite the illustration of the Recabites, for the people of Judah had disobeyed God's many efforts to get Judah's people to turn from following false gods opposite His commands to avoid such idolatry, Jer. 35:14b-15.
- C. God then promised to ***PUNISH INCONSISTENCY in obedience to Him from Judah*** and in ***CONTRAST*** to ***REWARD CONSISTENCY in obedience the Recabites had practiced toward their forefather***, Jer. 35:16-19:
  - 1. Since the people of Judah had disobeyed their Lord in contrast to how the Recabites had faithfully obeyed their forefather, God said He would bring on Jerusalem the calamity He had spoken against her, v. 16-17.
  - 2. However, God promised to reward the Recabites for their faithfulness in heeding their forefather, v. 18-19:
    - a. God assured the Recabites that in reward for their consistently heeding their forefather, they would never fail to have a man to "stand before Me," to stand before the Lord, Jeremiah 35:18.
    - b. The "stand before Me" phrase was used of people in Israel or Judah who served as prophets, officials of Judah's kings or priests in the temple (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1179), but since the Recabites were presumably related to the Gentile Kenites (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., vol. Five, p. 42) as sojourners, the "stand before Me" phrase likely indicated "the Recabites would always have descendants who would be able to worship the Lord," pointing "to a continuing line," along with other Old Testament Gentile believers like the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the leper (Luke 4:26-27), Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1180.

***Lesson:*** *In contrast to the way the people of Judah in Jerusalem reneged on their promise to God to release their Hebrew slaves, the descendants of Jonadab, the Recabites, CONSISTENTLY OBEYED their father's prohibition against drinking wine and his directive that they live nomadic lives to enjoy a long life in Israel as sojourners. God used the Recabites' consistent obedience to their forefather as just grounds to punish the men of Judah for their great disobedience to God's original commands to obey Him in avoiding idolatry. God also promised that the Gentile Recabites would not lack to have a man of their group stand before the Lord in worshiping Him.*

***Application:*** *(1) If God presented the Gentile Recabites as examples of consistent obedience in heeding the call of their forefather to live a puritanical, nomadic way of life that was not even required in Scripture, and if He promised to reward these Gentiles with permanence as a people before Him, He STRONGLY desires that we His people CONSISTENTLY HEED His Word. (2) May WE then value CONSISTENTLY HEEDING God's Word.*