

**JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)
PROGRAM 10 (#912010)
WEEK 2 (912302)
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a Production of
Precept Ministries International
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SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)

TITLE: Program 10 – Sound The Alarm!

FRIDAY

OPEN

If you knew an enemy was coming against you, if you knew that your life and your future were in jeopardy, wouldn't you want to know? Wouldn't you want someone to tell you? Oh, of course you would. This was our complaint in 9-11. Where was our intelligence? Why didn't they tell us? Because what we implied was if we had known we would of done something differently. The purpose of today's program is to prepare you for what's ahead.

PART ONE

The key to returning to God is to understand that if you return to Him you have to mean business. You have to be willing. And this is our next point in this line of eight precepts that you need to know about returning to God. And this is number five, you must put away the detested things. You must be willing to say no. You cannot take them with you. You have to abhor them

even as God abhors them. Listen to Jeremiah chapter 4, **“If you will return, O Israel,’ declares the LORD, ‘Then you should return to Me. [Come to Me.] And if you will put away your detested things from My presence, and will not waver, and you will swear, “As the LORD lives,” in truth, in justice and in righteousness; then the nations will bless themselves in Him, And in Him...will [the] glory.’” (Jeremiah 4:1-2)** Do you realize what He’s saying? Do you realize what He’s saying? He’s saying to Israel, “If you will return to Me, if you will put away your idols, if you will stop going after the works of your own hands. Then I want you to know, not only will I heal you, but I will heal the nations.” Precious One, this is what God is all about. You get to Jeremiah chapter 17, and He says, **“Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; save me, [O God] and I will be saved....” (Jeremiah 17:14)** So when God sounds trumpet, He’s warning you that judgment is on the way. He’s warning you that the enemy is coming. And in that warning, He’s telling us what we are to do. We are to return to Him. We are not to get out our guns and start battling. We’re to return to Him. If you remember 9-11, what happened was the churches were full right after 9-11. But it didn’t stick, it didn’t last. There was no repentance in the United States of America. There was no turning away from evil, there was no putting away our evil things, as a matter of fact, you look at Madoff, and others, and all the corruption that went on from that time on. No one really feared God. And you and I can expect to have defeat if we will not trust the Lord and do what He says. In verse 2 He says, **“[If] you will swear, “As the LORD lives,” in truth, in justice and in righteousness....” (Jeremiah 4:2)** Which is my sixth point; if you want to return to Him, if you want your faithlessness to be healed, you come to Him the way you are. But you come to Him in truth. You acknowledge everything. You come to Him in justice. You’re going to act fair. And you come to Him in righteousness. You’re going to be righteous. Not that you can make yourself righteous, but you appropriate the righteousness that God has given you in Christ Jesus, and you live accordingly. Never forget this,

there is a right, there is a wrong. And God has to judge the wrong. And so it says, verse 3, **“For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem, ‘Break up your fallow ground...do not sow among thorns [break up your fallow ground, do not sow among thorns]....” (Jeremiah 4:3)** So if you’re going to return to Him you have to be willing to take that spade, so to speak, and deal with that fallow, fallow ground that is lying there. You need to make sure that you don’t seed among thorns. Now when He’s saying that, what is He doing? He’s taking us to Mark chapter 4. In Mark chapter 4 Jesus is telling the parable, the parable of the seed. And He’s talking about when the seed is sown, where should it be sown? And He’s talking about the different kinds of soil. And one of the kinds of soil is that among thorns. And this is what He says in verse 18, and it says, **“And...the ones on whom the seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones...,”** now listen, **“...who have heard the word....”** They’ve heard the trumpet, **“...but the worries of the world...the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things...choke out the word, and it becomes unfruitful.” (Mark 4:18-19)** So if you’re going to return to Him and He is going to heal your faithlessness, then you have to break up the fallow ground. And you need to sow your seed apart from the worries of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things. Think about what’s kept us from holiness, and righteousness, and the Word of God. It is the desire for other things. It’s the deceitfulness of riches. We think we have to have more, and more, and more, and more. It is the desire for other things. O Precious One, listen to the Word of the Lord. Well, then we come in chapter 4, to verse 4, which brings us to the eighth thing that I believe we need to do if we are going to return to Him and have Him heal our faithlessness. He says in verse 4, **“Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart....” (Jeremiah 4:4)** You say, “That sounds a little bit crude. It’s like circumcision of a man.” Yes, it is. Alright? Circumcision was to show that you were part of the covenant that God made with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, a covenant that would make

you His people. And in it that symbol, that cut in covenant was made closest to the site of paternity, where the seed would come forth, so that another child would be conceived within a woman. And you would have a generation that goes on and on and on. Well, just as He uses that illustration, He's saying, "Look, you have a deceitful and desperately wicked heart." He's going to talk about that later in Jeremiah. And that deceitful and desperately wicked heart needs to be dealt with. There needs to be a cutting, there needs to be a removing of that callousness outside. You need a new heart. And Jeremiah is going to tell us about that in the most glorious, glorious chapter in Jeremiah 31. But we ain't there yet, all right. So He's saying, "[If you don't] **circumcise yourselves to the LORD [if you don't] remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, [do it,] or else...**" listen, "**...My wrath will go forth like fire [it will] burn with none to quench...**" It will be like a forest fire that we have had in the United States of America that we can't put out. "[There will none to quench] **it, because of the evil of [their] deeds.**" (**Jeremiah 4:4**) Now what am I doing? I'm not blowing a literal trumpet, but I am sounding forth with the Word of God that is a warning. And it was not just a warning to the Southern Kingdom, but it is a warning to you and me. "[Because God] **is the same yesterday...today and forever.**" (**Hebrews 13:8**) Now watch what He says, "**Declare in Judah...proclaim in Jerusalem and say, 'Blow the trumpet in the land....'**" (**Jeremiah 4:5**) Now to blow the trumpet there was a certain sound that the trumpet would give forth, that would let them know if this was a trumpet of warning. A trumpet signifying that the enemy was coming. And so He says, "**...Blow the trumpet...cry [out loud] 'Assemble yourselves, and let us go [let us go] into the fortified cities.'**" Let's get there. He says, "**Lift up a standard towards Zion...!**" A standard was like a flag, a pole so that they would know where to go. "**...Seek refuge, do not stand still, for I am bringing evil from the north....'**" (**Jeremiah 4:5-6**) Now remember that map again. Remember that Babylon is going to come. He hasn't called them Babylon yet, but we're

going to see He's talking about Babylon. Well, Precious One, as He talks about Babylon, Babylon doesn't go away in Scripture. Babylon becomes an enemy, and Babylon is modern day Iraq. It becomes prosperous, the luxuriant city of all the world that is supplying all the needs to the world. And yet it is a city where devastation happens to those that are followers of God. He says, **"...I am bringing evil from the north, and [a] great destruction. A lion has gone up from [its] thicket...a destroyer of nations has set out; he has gone...from his place to make your land a waste...."** Babylon is to the east. There is a desert between Israel and Babylon. So they go to the north, and then they come down from the north straight on them. He says, **"...Your cities will be ruins without inhabitant."** (Jeremiah 4:6-7) Now as I read that to you. I just want you to, again in your mind, picture 9-11. Picture the Twin Towers, and the smoke, and the flames, and the people running and screaming. It says, **"For this put on sackcloth, lament...wail; for the fierce anger of the LORD has not turned back from us."** (Jeremiah 4:8) Now so many times what we think, Beloved, is "Oh, God would never do that. God's a God of love." Listen, God is a God of truth. God is a God of righteousness. God's a God of justice, of judgment. And if we don't listen to the warning, if we don't repent, if we don't return to Him, then God has to deal with us. He has to chasten us. We could stop His chastening if we would just listen. Are you listening? We'll be back in just a minute.

PART TWO

As I'm teaching you all this are you saying, "Nah, judgment is not going to come." That's what Israel thought. And they thought that because they were listening to the false prophets, because the priests were corrupt, because the rulers were corrupt. He said, **"It shall come about in that day...that the heart of the king and the heart of the princes will fail; and the priest will be appalled and the prophets will be [astonished]."** (Jeremiah) Why?

They've been preaching [peace, peace when there was no peace.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 8:11) **"Then I said, 'Ah, Lord... [Ah alas, O Lord God] ...You have...deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'You will have peace'; whereas the sword touches the throat.'"** (Jeremiah 4:9-10) God, this is what they've thought because of these false prophets. You didn't take them out. No, God doesn't take them out. But God will always have a true prophet. God always has a witness, Precious One. And it's the Word of God. It says, **"In that time it will be said to [the] people and to Jerusalem, 'A scorching wind from the bare heights in the wilderness in the direction of the daughter of My people—not to winnow and...to cleanse, a wind too strong for this—will come at My command; now I will pronounce [My] judgments against them. Behold, he goes up like clouds...his chariots like the whirlwind; his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are ruined!' Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem...."** This is God's message to you. Cleanse yourself. Purify yourself. Circumcise your heart. Break up your fallow ground. He says, **"...that you may be saved. How long will...wicked thoughts lodge within you?"** (Jeremiah 4:11-14) Put away that pornography, put away those thoughts of evil that are against God, **"For a voice declares from Dan, and proclaims wickedness from Mount Ephraim. 'Report it to the nations, now! Proclaim [it in] ...Jerusalem, 'Besiegers come from a far country, and lift their voices against the cities of Judah. Like [the] watchmen of [the] field they are against her round about, because she has rebelled against Me....'"** (Jeremiah 15-17) God wants you to know over, and over, and over again that this is happening because you have rebelled against Him. **"Your ways and your deeds have brought these things to you. This is your evil [your evil]...."** (Jeremiah 4:18) The reason that you've ended up in this horrible, horrible destroyed state, Beloved, is because you did not listen to God, because you did not walk according to His Word and according to His precepts. I'm not talking about persecution; I'm talking about the effects of sin. **"My soul, my**

soul...,” and Jeremiah is speaking, “...I am in anguish! Oh, my heart! My heart is pounding [within] me; I cannot be silent, because you have heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Disaster [upon] disaster is proclaimed, for the whole land is devastated; suddenly my tents are devastated, my curtains in an instant. How long must I see the standard and hear the sound of the trumpet? ‘For My people are foolish...they are stupid children. [They know Me not. They] ...have no understanding. They are shrewd to do evil, but to do good they do not know.’” He says, “[I looked] I looked...and behold [the earth] it was formless and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, and...the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all [of] its cities were pulled down before the LORD, before His fierce anger.” (Jeremiah 4:19-26) You saw the devastation of different wars. You saw everything in shambles. You saw the bleakness. You saw the animals gone because there was no life there. This is what he’s saying. “...thus says the LORD, ‘The whole land [will] be a desolation, yet I will not execute...,’” listen to this, “...a complete destruction.” (Jeremiah 4:27) I may judge you, but I will not destroy you. My justice, My righteousness, My holiness demands judgment, but it does not demand destruction. “‘Return, O faithless [one and] I will heal your faithlessness....’” (Jeremiah 3:22) This is what He’s saying. He’s saying in verse 28, “‘For this the earth shall mourn...the heavens above [shall] be dark, because I have spoken....’” God’s speaking, “‘...I have purposed, and I will not change My mind [I will not] turn from it.’ At the sound of the horseman and [the] bowman every city flees; they go into the thickets and climb among the rocks; every city is forsaken...no man dwells in them.” (Jeremiah 4:28-29) They’re running, they’re running, they’re hiding because of the destruction. And He says, “And you, O desolate one, what will you do...?” (Jeremiah 4:30) I’ve dressed in

scarlet. I'll paint my eyelids. I'll adorn myself and surely the enemy will be enticed by me and not destroyed by me. He says, "Oh no, oh no." Listen carefully, he says, **"...Although you dress in scarlet, although you decorate yourself with ornaments of gold, although you enlarge your eyes with paint, in vain you make yourself beautiful. Your lovers despise you...."** Oh they've kissed up to you, but inwardly they despise you. **"...they seek your life." (Jeremiah 4:30)** "You cannot stop the enemy," God's saying. "When I have sent him .You can't stop the enemy because you are in sin. And you are trying to handle it your own way, it doesn't work." He says, **"...I heard [the] cry...of a woman [as] in labor, the anguish...of one [is] giving birth to her first child, the cry of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath, stretching out her hands, saying, 'Ah, woe is me, for I faint [I faint, I faint] before murderers.'" (Jeremiah 4:31)** If you don't listen to the trumpet of God's Word. Or if you and I don't give forth truth, if we don't give a trumpet sound that is not uncertain, if we don't warn people of the enemy that is to come, Precious One, if we don't stop people and say, "Wait a minute there is a God in heaven, and He knows what's going on, on earth. And He will not tolerate that sin." **"...Be [ye] sure your sins will find you out." (Numbers 32:23)** [If we don't warn them, their blood, Ezekiel says, will be on our hands. But if we sound the trumpet, if we warn them, if we tell them what the Word of God says, then if they don't listen their blood will only be on their heads.] (PARAPHRASE, Ezekiel 3:17-19) You see Jeremiah has a message. And God kept it in the Word of God for you and for me. It's a timeless message, and that is it shows the heart of God. He's a Redeemer not a destroyer. And He says, **"Return, O faithless sons, [and] I will heal your faithlessness...."** (Jeremiah 3:22) We sound the trumpet. I'm sounding the trumpet to you, and I'm saying to you, Precious One, "Return to God."