

**JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)**  
**PROGRAM 14 (#912014)**  
**WEEK 3 (912303)**  
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**SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)**

**TITLE: Program 14 – The Everlasting Nation**

**THURSDAY**

**OPEN**

Do you ever watch Israel in the news? Or should I say, how can you miss Israel in the news? Do you realize that are many people, even in evangelical circles, that believe that God is through with Israel? That they have rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and it's over. That's it. O Precious One, when you study the Word of God you see something different. Yes, God judges. Yes, God brings destruction, but not a complete one. We'll talk about it today.

**PART ONE**

Somehow man gets it in his head this is going to continue forever. God is not going to intervene. God's up there. We're down here. God has His rule up there. We have our rule down here, and we can rule the way we want to rule. We can behave the way we want to behave. We can do what we want to do because we are men. And somehow we think that God will never step into history and intervene. As we look at Jeremiah chapter 5 and chapter 6

this week, [we have looked at God's eyes searching for truth, searching for faithfulness. Saying, if I could find it I would not destroy Jerusalem. I would not destroy Judah. But the implication is that is such a rarity that God is going to have to judge.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 5:1-3) So let's return to Jeremiah chapter 5, and it says, **"Therefore, thus says the LORD...of hosts, 'Because you have spoken this word....,'"** the word that God's not going to judge us. God wouldn't do this. He says, **"...behold, I am making My words....,"** God's speaking, **"...in your mouth....,"** Jeremiah, **"...fire and this people....,"** Judah, Jerusalem, **"....wood, and it will consume them."** He says, **"Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel...."** (Jeremiah 5:14-15) Now remember, he's talking about evil coming from the north. He's talking about judgment coming from the north. He starts this in Jeremiah chapter 1. We're now on Jeremiah chapter 5. We know that he is prophesying in the days of Josiah this is the Word of the Lord. And he has told them already that they are going to go into captivity. He says that at the end of chapter 2, in verse 37. (See Jeremiah 2:37) Now He's going to explain more about this people that He is bringing against them. They're His rod of judgment. So as you read this text, and as you look at this nation, He's defining it as a nation, not nations which He's used before. But this is a specific nation. What you want to do is, you want to mark it in a distinctive way and you want to observe what He says about this "nation" because He's giving them clues as to who it is. He says, **"Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel.... It is an enduring nation, it is an ancient nation...."** (Jeremiah 5:15) Oh, that's interesting, isn't it? This is not a nation that has just come on the horizon, but you know what? If you go back to Genesis and we're not going to do it now. But if you went back to Genesis, and you went back to the flood, and you went back to the nations that were formed after the flood, you find Babel. (See Genesis 10:10) You find an ancient nation. You find an enduring nation. And then He describes it, **"[It's]...a nation**

**whose language you do not know....”** Now He talked about this in Isaiah. (See Isaiah 33:19) And He says, “You’re not going to understand their words.” He says, **“...nor can you understand...,”** and He says it here, **“...what they say.” (Jeremiah 5:15)** That’s terrible! I mean, they’re telling you to get up, to sit down, to roll-over, to do whatever, and they’re pointing their swords at you, or they’re cutting off your heads, and you don’t even know what they’re saying. It’s like babble. He says, **“Their quiver is like an open grave, all of them are mighty men. They will devour your harvest...your food; they will devour your sons...your daughters; they will devour your flocks and your herds; they will devour your vines and your fig trees; they will demolish with the sword your fortified cities....”** They are going to ruin everything. They’re going to take everything that you have. It says, **“... [And they will demolish with a sword]...,”** now listen, **“... [your fortified cities] in which you trust.” (Jeremiah 5:16-17)** You think that the walls of Jerusalem can protect you? Oh, no. Not when God is bringing another nation against you. He says, **“Yet even in those days...,”** now listen carefully, **“...I will not make you a complete destruction....” (Jeremiah 5:18)** As Babylon is an enduring nation, and you see it pop up in history. And it’s popped up in the history of the world; now in the history of the United States of America. And America went to war twice with two Bush’s in the presidency. And as you look at modern day Iraq, that’s Babylon just in case you didn’t know, and so it’s going to come on the scene later. And we’re going to look at it for a few minutes, but not right now. It’s going to come on the scene later, but Israel is an enduring nation, and because God made a covenant with, an unconditional covenant, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to make of them a great nation, to give them a land as a possession forever, God cannot bring a complete destruction on Israel. (See Genesis 15:18; 26:3-5; 28:13-14) God cannot wipe out Israel. God is not through with Israel, and you have to know that. And that’s why we have all the conflict in the Middle East, because

God cares about Israel, because God is not through with them, because all of this is part of the judgment of God. All of this is part of Israel's disobedience to God, but He will not bring a complete destruction. **"It shall come about when they say, 'Why has the LORD...done all these things to us...?'"** Why has God done this to us? He says, **"... 'As you have forsaken Me....'"** (Jeremiah 5:19) Now remember, **"... 'My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters [and they have hewed out] cisterns, broken cisterns that [cannot] hold...water.'"** (Jeremiah 2:13) He says, **"... 'As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land...,'"** now watch, **"... 'so you will serve strangers in a land that is not [theirs]'"** (Jeremiah 5:19) I'm going to take you into captivity. And as you serve foreign gods, they're your going to serve strangers in a country that is not yours. And He's saying it again; He wants them to get the point. They are not listening. He says, **"Declare this in the house of Jacob...proclaim it in Judah, saying, 'Now hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but do not see; who have ears, but do not hear.'"** (Jeremiah 5:20-21) And remember, one of the things I told you at the beginning of this week is, [God's eyes are searching for truth, for faithfulness.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 5:3) The second thing I want you to see is, I want you to see the role that the heart plays in all of this. Why are they in this trouble? It's a heart issue. And so when He says in verse 21, He is saying, **"... 'Now hear this, O foolish and senseless people....'"** (Jeremiah 5:21) It's really people without heart. The word literally is you don't have a heart. **"... 'Who [you] have eyes, but [you don't] see...[you] have ears but [you] do not hear....'"** Now listen to what He says, **"... 'Do you not fear Me [hey, don't you fear Me]' declares the LORD. 'Do you not tremble in My presence...?'"** I mean, after all, I'm dealing with you. Fear Me, respect Me, trust Me, honor Me for who I am. Tremble in My presence. I'm God. You're man. And I am dealing with you. Fear Me. And He says, **"... 'For I have placed....,'"** this is awesome,

““... [I have placed] **the sand as a boundary for the sea....**”” It’s been the same no country has disappeared by the ocean, since the flood. He put the sand there as a boundary for the sea. Fear Me; tremble at Me. I’m the one that puts that sand, tiny, tiny grains of sand, ““... [As a boundary for the sea,] **an eternal decree, so [that] it cannot cross over...Though the waves toss, [that] they cannot prevail....**”” (Jeremiah 5:21-22) And if you’ve ever watched the ocean from the sand of the beach you see them come crashing. You see their power. You hear their thunder. You feel the the the backlashes, the undercurrent, as they go back out to sea. But they don’t cross over the water. Oh, they may have a low-tide, they may have a high-tide, and sometimes there may be a tide that sweeps over a city. But it always go back to the sea because God has placed a boundary. So He says, ““...**Though the waves toss...they cannot prevail; though they roar they cannot cross over...But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and departed.**”” (Jeremiah 5:22-23) Listen, I’m telling you, the sand stops the waves of the sea, but you, with your rebellious heart, have not stopped your sin. You have not set a boundary. Awesome, the power of God, and yet God, listen, God gives man a heart, a will, the ability to choose, the ability to believe, the ability to disbelieve. He gives men a choice. Man is not a puppet on the strings of Almighty God as He sits in the heavens and plays with men down below on the earth. Uh-uh, uh-uh. Man has a choice. He has just said that they have a senseless people that they are without heart. He has just said that they have a stubborn and rebellious heart. And now it says, ““**They do not say in their heart, ‘Let us now fear...our God’....**”” Do you see that? Do you not fear Me? Let us fear God. They’re not saying it. ““...**‘Let us...fear...God who gives rain in its season, both the autumn rain and the spring rain, who keeps for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.’**”” (Jeremiah 5:24) It happens the same time every year. This is the God that rules from Heaven on

earth. Let's fear Him. But they are not saying that. Why? We'll talk about it in just a minute.

## **PART TWO**

As we saw in the first segment, creation must do God's bidding, but man can choose to say no. But man cannot choose the consequences of his sin. Man cannot choose the consequences of turning his back on God. Man cannot choose what happens when he does not fear God, respect God, trust God. When you and I look at nature, when you and I consider the wonder of it all, when you and I remember that this is what God created, He spoke and by His word He brought it into existence, it ought to cause us to go right down, on our knees before God and honor Him as God, and fear Him as God, and tremble in His presence. Not for fear that He's going to hurt us, but simply tremble in His presence that He would intervene in our lives, that He would care about us, that He would be One that we could come to and cry to, that we could drink of Him freely as the fountain of living water, (See Jeremiah 2:13) that we could know that deep inner satisfaction. That's what it ought to do. So as I told you, we're looking at the heart of those who fear God versus the heart of those who do not fear God. And so this is what He says, **“““They do not...in their heart...,”””** verse 24, **“““...‘Let us now fear the LORD our God, who gives rain in its season, [who] both the autumn rain and the spring rain, who keeps for us the appointed weeks of harvest.’ ‘Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have withheld good from you.’””** (Jeremiah 5:24-25) Did you hear that? “Your sins have withheld good from you.” God wants to give you good. God is good. And God delights to bless His people, but He cannot bless a sin. And as you have seen, He is no respecter of persons. It doesn't matter if you're small or if you're great, if you're the pastor of a congregation of fifty or you are a pastor of a congregation of twenty-some thousand, it does not matter. **““...Be [ye] sure your sin will find you out.””** (Numbers 32:23) God does

not protect you because He needs to protect His reputation. His reputation is that He is always God, El Olam, “the everlasting God,” the God who is the Rock, whose ways are just and perfect and righteous in all of His doings. He says, **““For the wicked men are found among My people....””** Now remember that, “the wicked men are found among My people” because the very last verses of Jeremiah chapter 6 go with that statement. And we’ll get to them, I promise. And it says, **““...they watch like fowlers...in [waiting, the wicked] they set a trap, they catch men. Like a cage full of birds, so their houses are full of deceit; therefore they have become great and rich. They are fat, they are sleek, they...excel in deeds of wickedness....””** (Jeremiah 5:26-28) You say, “But they’re wicked, how could they be fat? How could they be sleek?” Well, sometime read Psalm 73. When the Psalmist says, [My feet almost slipped because I was having a hard time and I looked at these wicked people and I thought they’re fat, they’re sleek, their eyes bulge because of all that they have. Where is God? And then he said, “I stopped and I considered their end. I looked beyond the immediate to the end.] (PARAPHRASE, Psalm 73:1-7, 17) And so many times because God does not execute His judgment immediately, we think we get away with it. And this is what He says, **““... [These] excel in deeds of wickedness....””** (Jeremiah 5:28) Or the word “excel” could mean that they overlooked deeds of wickedness. **““...They do not plead the cause of the orphan, that they may prosper...they do not defend the rights of the poor.””** They just step on men instead of help men. He says, **““Shall I not punish these people?” declares the LORD, “On a nation such as this...,””** listen America, **““...shall I not avenge Myself?” An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land.”** And this is what He’s saying has happened in the land, and this is what He’s saying has happened in the land. He says, **““The prophets [are prophesying] falsely...,”** He says, **““...the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it...!”** (Jeremiah 5:28-31) They love it so, they love the false prophets. They love

their ruling on authority because they think that it's better, because the prophets are prophesying falsely. What are they prophesying? ["Peace," prophesying "peace, peace" when there is no peace.] (PARAPHRASE, Ezekiel 13:16) They are saying, "No, judgment's not going to come. Misfortune's not going to come. No, God wouldn't let that happen. No, Jerusalem's not going to be torn down. God would not let another nation come. We are God's elect. We are God's chosen people." They think that they can go without the judgment of God. And He says, **"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule on their own authority; and My people love it so!"** And then, He asks this very important question, **"...what will you do at the end of it?" (Jeremiah 5:31)** You've loved it while it was going on. You thought you were going to get away with it. But what will you do at the end of it? Now listen to what He says, **"Flee for safety, O sons of Benjamin..."** Flee for safety. He says, **"...from the midst of Jerusalem! Now blow a trumpet in Tekoa...raise a signal on Beth-haccerem; for evil looks down from the north, and a great destruction."** (Jeremiah 6:1) Blow a trumpet from Tekoa. Where is Tekoa? It is a city just right on the edge of the wilderness. The trumpets were the way they got the news around that an enemy was coming. They raised a signal on Beth-haccerem. Where is that? Well, some people believe that it's Rackel, Ramat-Rachel. Where there is a kibbutz today. Where we take people. We go to Israel every year. Don't come with us unless you want Bible study, Bible study, Bible study. Of course, we have fun, and we laugh, and we ah share and all of that, but it is Bible study. And if that's what you want then, hey, we've got it! But often we go to Ramat-Rachel, and you can look down on Bethlehem. You can look at the shepherd's fields. And He's saying, "Raise a signal there." Now why are they raising a signal? Why are they blowing a trumpet? **"...For evil looks down from the north, and a great destruction. The comely and [the] dainty one, the daughter of Zion, I will cut off. Shepherds and their flocks will come to her...."**

Now when He's talking about shepherds, He's talking about rulers. "... [And their flocks will come to her,] **they will pitch their tents around...they will pasture each in his place.**" (Jeremiah 6:1-3) That's what they did. They came, and they begin. And it took several years for them to besiege Jerusalem. It says, "**Prepare war against her...**" that's what they were doing. " **...arise...let us attack at noon. Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening lengthen! Arise...let us attack by night and destroy her palaces!**" Why? "For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Cut down her trees...cast up a siege against Jerusalem. This is the city to be punished, in whose midst there is only oppression.'" And then how does He describe that city? "...[Like] a well keeps [her] waters fresh, so [this city] keeps...her wickedness [fresh]...." (Jeremiah 6:4-7) You can't live in wickedness, Beloved, and not be judged by God.