

JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)
PROGRAM 26 (#912026)
WEEK 6 (912306)
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P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218
1-888-734-7707/ www.preceptsforlife.com

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SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)

TITLE: Program 26 – Rougher Times Ahead!

MONDAY

OPEN

Are you having trouble getting in the Word of God? Are you having trouble being consistent in your relationship with God? As a matter of fact, do you feel just absolutely worn out, weary, and ready to quit? Oh Beloved, don't. [If you can't run with the footmen in the land of peace, what are you going to do when it gets worse?] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) We'll talk about it today as we look at God's precepts for life.

PART ONE

In Jeremiah chapter 12, God speaks to Jeremiah and He says, [Listen, if you can't run with the footmen in a land of peace then how are you going to compete with horses in the thicket of the Jordan?] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) In other words, it's easy for you now. I know you're going through hard times, but "you ain't seen nothing yet." When Al Johnson came to the screen, he was the first actor in black and white movies, and one

of the things that Al Johnson was known for was saying, “Hey, you ain’t seen nothing yet.” We haven’t seen anything yet. I know that we want to hear that things are going to get better. And I know we’d love those that tell us it’s going to get better, but I can tell you this: that if the United States of America does not repent of our sins, if it does not repent of all the abortions that we have done, if it does not repent of all the immorality, of all the corruption, of all the greed, God is going to judge America even more severely than He is judging America now. And my concern is that in the days ahead that we can compete with the horses that we can hold up in the thicket of the Jordan where it is very difficult. Right now, so to speak, we are in a land of peace and yet, He says, [Hey, Jeremiah! You’ve become weary, weary right now. Worn out when you are running with footmen. How are you going to make it when things get worse?”] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) So all this week, we are going to look at what God is saying in Jeremiah chapter 12 and I’m going to go from that statement in Jeremiah 12 to Jeremiah 13, 14, and 15. Because at the end of Jeremiah chapter 15, God and Jeremiah have another talk because Jeremiah is so downcast, he is so depressed and God says to him, [“Jeremiah, if you want to be my spokesman then you better shape up. Jeremiah, if you want to be my spokesman then you better return to Me, because I cannot use you if you cannot compete with horses in the thicket of the Jordan.”] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) And what He’s going to show us is: He has trained him and he is able to do this, but he has to realize he is able. And in the whole process of all this week, what I want you to know, and what I want you to understand is: [Hey! It’s still, almost, a land of peace. And you better learn how to run with the footmen and you better not get weary. You better allow God to train you so that in the days ahead you can compete with horses in the thicket of the Jordan.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) That’s what we are going to look at. And it’s going to be very, very practical and I think, in a sense, it’s going to be like cold water on your face to wake you up. To wake

you up, and lift you up, and make you say, “I’m going to be the woman that God intends me to be! I’m going to be the man that God intends me to be! And I know that this is my hour for Him.” So this is where we are going and I just want you to understand that. And I also want you to know that I love you, that I appreciate you. And I am so glad that God either brought you to this program today for a divine appointment or that you have been studying along with me—or if you just been listening, but not studying along with us, then it is time for you to go deeper. It is time for you to learn how to run with the footmen and not grow weary. So let’s go to Jeremiah chapter 12. Now, we’ve looked at this in our last week, but I didn’t camp on it. And I didn’t camp on it because I wanted you to see the full picture because I want you to see what’s happening to Jeremiah in the midst of all this; not just the people of Israel. And then knowing what’s happening to Jeremiah in all of this, you can say, “Okay, this is Jeremiah, then this is me now. What can I learn? What can I do? So that when I see the Lord, I will hear, ‘Hey, well done.’” Okay, Jeremiah chapter 12 verse 5, I’m going to read it to you; I’ve quoted it—well, kind of quoted it. **“If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out....” (Jeremiah 12:5)** In other words, you’ve just kind of had it. He says, **“...Then how can you compete with horses...?” (Jeremiah 12:5)** And this is what He’s saying, “The horses are coming.” It’s the Babylonians that are coming, but they’re coming on their horses. The Babylonians are the evil from the north. Now, they don’t know this yet because they are not the problem. He is in a land of peace; Josiah, the king, is still ruling. Now what I want us to do is to see the book of Jeremiah covers the reigns of five different kings. They are the last five kings of the southern kingdom of Judah. We are told their names in Jeremiah chapter 1. And if you have a “New Inductive Study Bible,” then you’ve got all this information right there. You’ve got charts that show you the whole history and the times so that you can see: who the prophets were, who the kings were, who the foreign powers were, where the southern kingdom is. And the

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northern kingdom is gone into captivity in Assyria. So you need to get this down. Now, if you are going to grow more and study along with us, then you need to go to preceptsforlife.com; preceptsforlife.com. And then when you go there, you can download the free study guide. [I want you to be able to run with the footmen so that when the horses come, you in turn, can compete with those horses in the thicket of the Jordan, so to speak.]

(PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) All right, so the kings, let's look at them. First of all, the first king that was reigning when Jeremiah started his prophecy was Josiah. Josiah reigned from 640 B.C. to 609 B.C., all right? Now, Josiah in the 18th year of his reign, they find the Word of God that's gotten lost in the house of God. Jeremiah appears on the scene and begins his prophecy in the 13th year; five years before that, okay? So he begins 5 years before that prophesying, okay? So this is a time of peace. And I'll tell you why it's a time of peace; because the Word of God which had gotten lost in the house of God was found and brought to the king. The king had the Word of God read to him, when he heard the Words of God from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, he tore his clothes, he wept before the Lord, he humbled himself and he said, [Great is the wrath of God on us because our fathers have not obeyed the Word of the Lord.]

(PARAPHRASE, 2 Kings 22:13) Now, when God saw that repentance, when God saw that humbling of Josiah, what happened was then God says, [Hey! I'm still going to send the horses. I'm still going to deal with this kingdom because of the sins of Manasseh. But you know what? Because you've repented, because you've returned to me, because you've come to the fountains of living waters and you're going to drink of Me, I'm going to stay my hand of judgment and my judgment is not going to come until after you die.] (See 2 Kings 22:19-20) So in Jeremiah chapter 12 what we have is, we have Jeremiah in a land of peace giving forth the message and he is very weary from giving forth that message. Now, if you remember in chapter 11, verse 21 we find out, "Hey, he's being mistreated by the priests at

Anathoth.” In 11:21 it says, **“Therefore...says the LORD [of men] concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life....” (Jeremiah 11:21)** Jeremiah is from Anathoth. It’s a city where priests work. And they’re saying, **“Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD, so that you will not die....” (Jeremiah 11:21)** And so, here he has his own people coming against him; he’s weary, he’s tired, it hasn’t been easy. And you have seen other things about Jeremiah, if you’re studying with us, I mean, he’s getting it from his family. Listen to what it says in verse 6 of chapter 12. He says, **“For even your brothers and the household of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you, even they have cried aloud after you. Do not believe them, although [though] they...say nice things to you.” (Jeremiah 12:6)** They’re behind your back, they’re cutting you down. Has that ever happened to you from your own family? We’ll talk about it more in just a minute. Don’t miss this announcement.

PART TWO

Remember the question I asked you before the break? Have you ever had your family members come against you? Have you had them talking about you behind their back? I mean, you walk into the room and they’re sitting there and they’re conversing and all of a sudden the subject changes and then they are nice to you. “Oh, come here. Come and sit down with us.” And what is God saying? God’s saying “I know what you are going through. I know the pain. I know they’re dealing treacherously with you,” but He says [Don’t believe them even though they say nice things to you.”] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:6) It’s kind of like, Jeremiah is just, “I’ve had it. I am weary; I am worn out. This is hard.” And God says, “Yeah, I know. I know it’s hard.” You know, it reminds me of 2 Timothy, chapter 3. 2 Timothy is Paul’s final letter before he’s beheaded. Before his life is taken by the Roman empire, what happens is he sits down and he writes a final letter to his son, Timothy, in the Lord, and this is what he says, chapter 3

verse 10, he says, “**Now you...,**” Timothy, “**followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith,** [love, patience]...,” get this word, “**...perseverance....**” (2 Timothy 3:10) You saw me persevere. You saw me not grow weary with the footmen. You saw me in the thicket of the Jordan. You’ve seen me compete with horses. You’ve seen the persecutions. He says, “**...And sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!**” (2 Timothy 3:11) Now isn’t that what God promised Jeremiah? Do you remember Jeremiah chapter 1? He’s saying, [Listen, don’t you be dismayed by the faces of these men that come against you. They’re going to come against you. They’re going to contend against you, but I’m telling you. You are not going to lose your life. You’re going to persevere.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 1:19) I think I better read it to you just so that you have it in your mind and and so that we review it again because it’s so important this week. He says, “**“They will fight against you....”**” Jeremiah chapter 1 verse 19. “[‘They will fight against you], **but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you....”**” (Jeremiah 1:19) And this is what Paul is saying in 2 Timothy. You say, “But you told me he’s going to be beheaded.” Yeah, he’s going to be beheaded and it’s all right because he’s ready. [And he knows to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.] (PARAPHRASE, 2 Corinthians 5:6-8) But see, it isn’t his time when he’s talking about it right here. He’s reminding Timothy of how the Lord delivered him, how the Lord rescued him, and then he makes this statement, and this is the statement I turned to this passage for. The statement is this: “**Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.**” (2 Timothy 3:12) Yeah, it is not easy to [run with the footmen and it is harder to compete with horses.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 12:5) You are going to be persecuted, you are going to suffer. In Philippians chapter 1 it says, “[It’s it’s given unto us] **not only to believe on Him...,**” on Jesus, “**...but also to suffer for His [name]**

sake.” (Philippians 1:29, KJV) At the end of the upper room discourse, before Jesus prays His high priestly prayer in John chapter 17, Jesus turns to the 11—one has defected—Judas. He’s gone off to turn Jesus in to the scribes and Pharisees to get his 30 pieces of silver. One that’s traveled with him, that’s been with him for three years or three and a half years almost of ministry and He turns to them and He says, [I’m saying these things to you because I want you to understand that in this world you are going to have persecution, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.]

(PARAPHRASE, John 16:33) You’re going to have persecution, you’re going to run with the footmen and you’re going to get weary, but you know what? I’m training you with the footmen so that you can compete with horses. In other words, I have you in training and you are going to compete, you’re going to go for the gold and you’re going to get it if you will separate the worthless, the things of this life that are keeping you from what is precious. And that’s why this message all this week is so incredibly important for your life, because God wants to make you a gold medal winner. He wants you to have first place. Not first place above other Christians, but He wants you to go for the gold. He wants you to be able to say, as Paul said at the end of his life, [I have fought the good fight. Hey, I did compete with horses. I have kept the faith. I did not turn away from what I believed and I have finished my course. And there is a crown laid up for me and not for me only, but for all those who love His appearing.]

(PARAPHRASE, 2 Timothy 4:7-8) This is what God wants for you. And because He wants it for you, He has the message in my heart because it’s His message to me and it’s His message to you, Precious One. And so, this is what He says. He says in verse 7, **“I have forsaken My house....”** I’m back in Jeremiah chapter 12 verse 7, **“[I have forsaken My house], I have abandoned My inheritance; I have given the beloved of My soul into the hands of her enemies.”** (Jeremiah 12:7) So where are we moving? We are moving now from the time of Josiah into the next king. And this is what you

see when look at 2 Kings chapter 23 and I want to show you how the peace ends, and we'll pick it up in our next program. "[But] **in [the] days [of] Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt [he] went up to...Assyria to the River Euphrates....**" (2 Kings 23:29) He was going up there, he was going against Assyria, "**...And King Josiah went [out] to meet him, and when Pharaoh Neco saw him he killed him [right] at Megiddo.**" (2 Kings 23:29) At that wonderful, wonderful battlefield where I stand every year and where we teach the book of Revelation. The whole book; it's awesome, absolutely awesome. But there they are at Megiddo. The peace has ended, you know why? Because Josiah is dead. Now the enemy, Pharaoh Neco from Egypt is coming up against the nation of Judah, the tribe of Judah, and things aren't going to be pleasant from this time on. He has run with the footmen and he's feeling weary in the land of peace. Now the horses are coming and he's going to have to compete with the horses. Are you getting the point, Precious One? Think about these things: I want you to be able to compete with the horses.