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SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 2 (God's Certain Judgment)

TITLE: Program 5 – What People Want To Hear

FRIDAY

OPEN

When life is hard, when things are tough, when the economy is tanking or shaky, when we're wondering who is going to take care of us, so often we don't want the truth. We just want to hear, "Peace, peace. Everything is going to be all right." But, Beloved, what if it's not going to be all right? What if God has written "Ichabod" over our nation? "The glory of the Lord has departed." (See 1 Samuel 4:21) Do you want to know it so you can do something about it? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Oh! We're human beings we love to hear words of peace. We love to hear words of encouragement. We want to hear, "Hey, it's going to be all right." And you know what? When you come to Jeremiah chapter 26, as Jeremiah delivers his message, I want you to hear what he says. And it's not going to be all right, but he gives them a way of escape. Jeremiah chapter 26: **"In the**

beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD...‘Thus says the LORD, “Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak to all the cities of Judah....””

(Jeremiah 26:1-2) “I want you to go to the Lord's house. When you get to the Lord's house what I want you to do is I want you to stand there, and I want you to speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship in the Lord's house.” In all probability it is time of one of the appointed feasts because three time a year all the adult males would come to Jerusalem to celebrate one of those three feasts. And he says this: **“...[All the words, speak to them] all the words that I have commanded you to speak....”**

(Jeremiah 26:2) So many times we want to give comforting words, so many times what we want to do is, we want to say, “Oh, it's all right,” “Oh, no you are not going to suffer,” “Oh, no it is not going to be judgment,” “Oh, no God would never do that,” but we've got to speak truth. We've got to speak what God says. He says, **“...Do not omit a word!” (Jeremiah 26:2)** I have that underlined in my Bible. **“Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I...,”** God is speaking, **“...may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them...says the LORD....”**

(Jeremiah 26:3-4) “Perhaps this time they will listen. Perhaps they'll hear the word and they'll say, ‘I was wrong!’ and they will turn from their evil way and they will do what is right.” And he says, **“And you will say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, “If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, to listen to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I have been sending to you again and again, but you have not listened.””” (Jeremiah 26:4-5)** Now that is what we did in our last program. We looked at the words of those prophets. We heard them from all directions. God was speaking. And over the years God was speaking, but they wouldn't listen. And He says, “Then if you do not listen to the words of My prophets,” He says, **“Then I will make this house [this house]....”**

(Jeremiah 26:6) Now where is he standing? Well, he's standing at the

temple. And as he is stands at the temple, he's pointing to the house of the Lord. He says, "...[I will make this house] **like Shiloh....**" (**Jeremiah 26:6**) Huh! Huh? Shiloh? Shiloh? This is going to be like Shiloh? What does he mean? Well, they knew their history. They were taught the Word of God. They knew the story of 1 Samuel chapter 4 when the children of Israel were in trouble and the Philistines were winning the battles, and how they took the ark of the covenant into battle with them. (See 1 Samuel 4:3) How Eli, the old priest, was sitting, waiting to hear the outcome of the battle. A huge fat man because he had been disobeying God, and he had been eating the fat of the sacrifices that belonged to God. He had sons that were sleeping with the women that ministered in the tabernacle that was pitched there at Shiloh. I've been there. I've been in that area. I've been at that ruins. I know what happens. I've taught it. We've demonstrated it. And he was waiting. His sons had gone to battle and God had told him, [I am going to take your sons because you did not discipline them.] (PARAPHRASE, 1 Samuel 3:13) And so he is old, and he's blind, and he's fat. And he's sitting there waiting, and the news comes, and they tell him that your sons have been killed, and the ark of the covenant has been taken by the Philistines! And Eli falls over backwards, breaks his neck and dies. (See 1 Samuel 4:15-18) His daughter-in-law goes into labor with her child. She is dying in child birth. She has heard that her husband has died. She has heard that Eli has died. But what really distresses her is, the fact that the ark of God has been taken away from the tabernacle and been taken captive by the Philistines. They are saying, "Don't worry, your baby is a boy." In other words, your name will live on. And she calls him, she names him, Ichabod. She says, "Name him Ichabod because the glory of the Lord has departed from Israel." Nothing could be worse. (See 1 Samuel 4:19-22) The glory of the Lord above the ark of the covenant was the pillar of God, it was the presence of God. It was called the Shekinah Glory. It signified that God was there, it was the cloud that led them through the wilderness. And now God is gone. What is going to

become of them? And so he goes on to say in verse 7, **“The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these [things] in the house of the LORD. [And] when Jeremiah finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak to...the people....” (Jeremiah 26:7-8)** Which was not good news, which they didn't want to hear, which was not a comfort. **“...The priests and the prophets and all the people seized him....” (Jeremiah 26:8)** They got a hold of Jeremiah and they said, **“...‘You must die! Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD saying, “This house [right here shall] be like Shiloh and [the] city will be desolate, without inhabitant”?’ And all the people gathered [around] Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.” (Jeremiah 26:8-9)** He was speaking truth and it was not what they wanted to hear. He was telling them what God was going to do. How the glory of the Lord was going to depart from Jerusalem. From this house they could see the Shekinah Glory. You know, after Shiloh the ark of the covenant never went back to the tabernacle. It ended up under the care of Obed-edom and then David comes to get it and move it. (See 2 Samuel 6:12) And he builds a little tent for it outside of Jerusalem until Solomon brings it into the Temple. And there is the glory of the Lord, and the promise that if they are in trouble and they will turn and look to this place, that God will hear from heaven and He will forgive their sin and He will heal their land. It's 2 Chronicles 7:14, that we love to read, that we love to hear, that we love to cling to, and we are looking for revival. There was a revival in Isaiah in the days of Hezekiah, but it didn't last. There was a revival in the days of Josiah and it did not last. Why? Because for a revival to have a long-lasting effect the people need to live by every word that comes out of the mouth of God. And these people didn't listen. They didn't want to hear the Word of God and what about you, Beloved? Are you so busy that you don't have time for in-depth Bible study? One of the things that breaks my heart is when I hear people say, "Oh, I would love to do Precept. Those people really know the Word of God, but it's hard." Listen, it

is not hard. It takes time, but if it is the Word of God. What does it matter if it's hard, if it's difficult, if it takes time? Do you want your ears tickled or do you want to know truth for yourself? (See 2 Timothy 4:3) Don't tell me it's hard; it's worth it to get to know God and to understand His Word. And this is what is so essential. Well, they did not want to hear these words. They wanted to hear that the glory of the Lord would not depart. That they could look up at the temple, that they could see the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night and know that God is with them. But Ezekiel the prophet would come along. And in chapter 9 and 10, and we're going to look at it, we find out what happens to the glory of the Lord. To the fact that God's glory is going to depart from there, from Jerusalem, and from the house of the Lord. **"When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and [they] sat [at] the entrance of the New Gate at the LORD'S house. Then the priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people, saying, 'A death sentence for this man! For he has prophesied against this city as you have heard in your hearing.'" (Jeremiah 26:10-11)** And Jeremiah speaks to the officials and he says, **"...The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words [that] you have heard. Now therefore amend your ways...,**" listen to God, **"...your deeds...obey the voice of the LORD...and the LORD will change His mind about the misfortune which He has pronounced against you. But as for me...I am in your hands; do with me [what] is good...in your sight."** (Jeremiah 26:12-14) I can't help but speak truth. And Beloved, I can't help but speak truth. I believe that America, morally, has gone so far away from God that God has written "Ichabod" over our nation. We'll talk about it more in just a minute.

PART TWO

Thank you for coming back, Beloved. We don't like bad news, and yet

sometimes we need to hear the bad news so that we can take action, so that we can be prepared for what is to come, or so that we can turn around. And this is what Jeremiah is trying to get the people to do. He's telling them: you've got to turn around. He is saying look at this house. Now remember, he's at the Temple. And he's saying, "This house is going to be like Shiloh, the glory of the Lord is going to depart." Now, not only is Jeremiah saying it, but Ezekiel who has been taken captive in the second deportation in 597 B.C., he is telling about going to Jerusalem and seeing what God does in Jerusalem. I want to take you to Ezekiel chapter 9. He talks about the executioners coming in to destroy the city, to destroy every man that has not got the mark of the "taw" on his forehead, every man, every woman, every child (young and old), that has not sighed and groaned over all the abominations being committed in it's midst. (See Ezekiel 9:4) And then he shows them a vision in verse 4: **"Then the glory of the LORD..."** that's the Shekinah glory, **"...went up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the LORD."** (Ezekiel 10:4) In verse 18: **"Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim."** (Ezekiel 10:18) And then you come to verse 19 and it says, **"[And] when the cherubim departed, they lifted [up] their wings and rose...from...the earth in my sight with the wheels beside them...."** In other words, this glory comes with those cherubim and they are leaving the temple. **"...And the glory of the [Lord]...hovered over them."** (Ezekiel 10:19) And you come to chapter 11. And it says in verse 22: **"Then the cherubim lifted up the wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the [Lord of] God of Israel hovered over them. [And] the glory of [God] went...from the midst of the city...."** (Ezekiel 11:22-23) His glory departed and he left them to the fruit of their ways. No wonder these people wanted to kill Jeremiah. No wonder they wanted to get rid of him. They wanted to get rid of him because they didn't want to hear this

news. They didn't want to know the truth. And so Jeremiah says, “Okay, you want to kill me? “**“...I am in your hands; do with me [what] is good and right in your sight. Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves, and on this city and on its inhabitants....”** (Jeremiah 26:14-15) And we know from Leviticus and in Numbers, that blood pollutes the land. **“...For truly the LORD has sent me to speak all these words in your hearing.”** (Jeremiah 26:15) “They’re not what you like, but God has sent me and I have to speak them.” **“Then the officials and...the people said to the priests and...the prophets, ‘No death sentence for this man...!’”** (Jeremiah 26:16) “Don't kill him for he has spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God.” So now you've gotten division. You've got some that want to kill him; some that don't. **“Then some of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying, ‘Micah...,’”** as the prophet Micah, **“...of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah [the] king of Judah...he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘...The LORD of hosts has said, “Zion will be plowed [like] a field...Jerusalem will become ruins, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.””** (Jeremiah 26:17-18) Micah said the same thing. **“Did Hezekiah [and the] king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and the LORD changed His mind about the misfortune which He had pronounced against them? But we...,”** if we put him to death, **“...we are committing a great evil against ourselves.”** (Jeremiah 26:19) **“Indeed, there was also a man...,”** they’re trying to recall all these things. **“...[There was also a man] who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against [the] land words [that are] similar to...Jeremiah.”** (Jeremiah 26:20) God had His spokesman speaking. **“[And] when [the] King Jehoiakim and all [of] his mighty men and...the officials heard his words...the king sought to put him to**

death; but Uriah heard it, and he was afraid and [he] fled...to Egypt. [And] King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor and *certain* men [went] with him...[to] Egypt. And they brought Uriah from Egypt and [they] led him to [the] King [of] Jehoiakim, who slew him with [the] sword and cast his dead body into the burial place of the common people.” (Jeremiah 26:21-23) Now what had God told Jeremiah when he commissioned him? He said they are going to rise up against you, but don't be afraid of them. Listen to what He says in Jeremiah chapter 1 because Jeremiah is doing exactly what God tells him to do. He says in verse 17, **“Now, gird up your loins and arise, and speak to them all [that] I command you. Do not be dismayed before them, or I will dismay you before them.”** (Jeremiah 1:17) This is one of my verses. It sits in my bedroom where I can see it. **“Now behold, I have made you today as a fortified city...as a pillar of iron [and bronze]...walls of bronze against the whole land, to the kings of Judah, to its princes, to its priests...to the people of the land. They will fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you,’ declares the LORD.”** (Jeremiah 1:18-19) Jeremiah held his ground. Jeremiah believed God, and God brought deliverance. Listen to the last verse of Jeremiah 26: **“But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was [on] Jeremiah....”** You meet him in 2 Kings 22, in the days when Josiah finds the Word of God lost in the house of God. **“...So that he was not given into the hands of the people to put him to death.”** (Jeremiah 26:24) What is God's word to you and to me, Beloved? It is to speak all that God commands us. They may want to hear the words that the false prophets gave them, "Peace, peace, peace," but it did not cause them to repent. (See Jeremiah 6:14) And in the book of Lamentations when it's all over and they are mourning, it talks about how the false prophets did not turn them from their evil so as to spare their lives. (See Lamentations 2:14) Beloved, don't consider your life as being of any value. Don't do that. Instead say: **“I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless**

I live; [but] not I...Christ...in me.” (Galatians 2:20, KJV) Be His spokesman, tell the truth. Minister to people; give them the Word of God. And if God has written “Ichabod” over our country, “the glory of the Lord is departed.” (See 1 Samuel 4:22) Because we now despise our Christian roots, we try to hide them, we cover them up and we just want to accept anyone and anything. And God says, “No.” **“I am the LORD, and there is no other.” (Isaiah 45:6)** **“But you, be sober in all things....”** And he commands them, **“...Endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5)** God has you here for that purpose. Be His spokesman. Preach the word in season and out of season.