

**JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)**  
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**SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)**

**TITLE: Program 43 – As The Lord Lives, Who...**

**WEDNESDAY**

**OPEN**

Have you ever wondered where America is in prophecy? Where is America mentioned in the end times? Precious One, it is not mentioned in the end times, not unless you distort the Scriptures. And if you distort the Scriptures it's to your own destruction. What do we see? We see the importance of godly leadership. We'll talk about it today.

**PART ONE**

Let's look at what the Scriptures have to say. Now as a tease, I used the fact that America was not mentioned in the end times. It's not mentioned in prophecy. What happens to America? Well I believe, because of ungodly leadership in America, that God is just going to let America reap the consequences of their sin. I believe very much that it is your responsibility and my responsibility as children of God to have knowledge of the Word of God, to have understanding of God's ways and to stand and live righteously

**“...in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation....” (Philippians 2:15)** I believe that we’re coming to the days when we are going to see our Christianity tried and tested. And I believe more and more you’re going to see our culture wanting to shut our mouths. They already want to do it, but they don’t want any part of us. They’re going to despise us, and they’re going to disdain us. And the question is: Will you stand when all that happens? The other question is: Will the prophets stand? Will those that are speaking for God, will those that are opening the Word of God, stand true to the Word of God? I want you to know as long as I have breath, as long as I’m in my right mind, and I pray, even if I lose my mind, I will still stand for the Lord. Let’s look at Jeremiah. We’re looking at shepherds, and I want us to look at Jeremiah chapter 10. In Jeremiah chapter 10, this is what He says in verse 19. **“Woe is me, because of my injury! My wound is incurable. But I said, ‘Truly this is a sickness, and I must bear it.’ My tent is destroyed, and all my ropes are broken....” (Jeremiah 10:19-20)** Everything is collapsing around me. **“...My sons [are] gone from me and are no more....”** I’ve lost my children. **“...There is no one to stretch out my tent again....”** There’s no child to help me get this tent up. **“...Or to set up my curtains.” (Jeremiah 10:20)** Why this horrible situation in Judah? He says, **“For the shepherds have become stupid and have not sought the LORD....” (Jeremiah 10:21)** When we have rulers in our country that do not seek the Lord, that do not hold to the Word of God because it is popular just to embrace every belief, it may be popular with the culture but it sure isn’t popular with God. Then he says, **“...Therefore they have not prospered and all their flock is scattered.” (Jeremiah 10:21)** They haven’t prospered. And could this be why America, and this is talking to Israel. I’m just applying. Could it be that the same principles and standards of justice and righteousness and the fear of God tell us that this is why America is in trouble? In chapter 12, verse 10 he talks about shepherds again. He says, **“Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard, they have**

**trampled down My field; they have made My pleasant field a desolate wilderness.” (Jeremiah 12:10)** The shepherds remember, are the rulers. They are the ones, they are the political figures. They are the ones that set the standard for a nation. This is what’s happened in Israel. In Jeremiah chapter 22, now we’re leading right up to 23. In Jeremiah chapter 22, in verse 22, He says, **“The wind will sweep away...your shepherds....”** He says, **“...Your lovers will go into captivity; [and there] you will...be ashamed and humiliated because of all your wickedness.” (Jeremiah 22:22)** So He has brought us right up to Jeremiah chapter 23. And this is what He’s saying. **“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture...!” (Jeremiah 23:1)** He says in the end of verse 2, because I’ve read this to you before, **“...I am about to attend to you for [all] the evil of your deeds,’ declares the LORD.” (Jeremiah 23:2)** Shepherds are held accountable. He says, **“Then I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock....” (Jeremiah 23:3)** See the shepherds have scattered God’s flock. And He says, “I Myself,” and remember He’s **“...the great Shepherd....” (Hebrews 13:20)** Jesus is called the great Shepherd. He’s called **“...the Chief Shepherd....” (1 Peter 5:4)** He’s called **“...the Good Shepherd....” (John 10:11)** The true ruler. And whether you and I have godly rulers or not, there is One that we are to obey and not disobey under any circumstances and that is God Almighty, even if it costs us our life. So God is saying, **“...I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them....” (Jeremiah 23:3)** And when you go back to our time chart, and you look at Zedekiah up here this is the final scattering under Jehoiachin they are taken into the captivity in 597 B.C. In 586 B.C. you have the ultimate destruction of Jerusalem. All right, and they are scattered. They come back to the land. They live in the land, and we see them in the days of Christ, and we see them worshiping in the second temple that is built under Ezra, that is refurbished under Herod. And so we see them worshiping, and

we see Jesus going up to the temple. But Jesus, in His public ministry, says the temple is going to be destroyed. (See Luke 21:5-6) Daniel prophesies about it. (See Daniel 9:26) And then they're going to be scattered. And now they have been gathered back to the land. We're living, I believe, in the last of the last days. But watch what He says. “[When I] **bring them**

**back....they will be fruitful and [they will] multiply. I will...raise up shepherds over them and they [the shepherds] will tend them....”**

**(Jeremiah 23:3-4)** It says they, the shepherds will be shepherding them.

These are good shepherds. And He says, “**...and they will not be afraid any longer, nor...terrified, nor will any be missing....”** **(Jeremiah 23:4)**

Not one of the sheep will be missing. He says, “**Behold, the days are coming....”** I love this. “**...[The days are coming,] declares the LORD, ‘When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch....’** **(Jeremiah 23:5)**

Now remember God promised David, who was the shepherd of Israel that he would have someone that would sit on his throne forever. And it was pointing to the Messiah. And so He says, “**...I will raise up for David a righteous Branch...He will reign as king and act wisely [He will] do justice and righteousness in the land.**” **(Jeremiah 23:5)** What is he talking about? He's talking about the second coming of Jesus Christ when He returns in judgment and a [sword comes out of His mouth with which He smites the nations and then all Israel will be gathered to Him.]

**(PARAPHRASE, Revelation 19:15)** You can read about it in Matthew 24 and 25. And then He will rule on the face of this earth for a thousand years. He will gather all the nations before Him. He will separate them as the sheep are separated from the goats. And when He does that He will judge them for the way they treated His people Israel. (See Matthew 25:31-46) So here is a prophecy of Jesus. Now listen, “**In His days....**” **(Jeremiah 23:6)** in the days of Jesus Christ when He comes back to rule as King of kings, “**...Judah will be saved...Israel will dwell securely; and this is [the] name by which He will be called....**” **(Jeremiah 23:6)** I love this. This is

the name of the Shepherd of shepherds, “Jehovah-Tsidkenu” “...“**The LORD our righteousness.**”” (Jeremiah 23:6) God expects us to be righteous even as He is righteous, to be righteous even as Jesus Christ is righteous. (See 1 Peter 1:16) What is righteous? Righteous is doing what God says is right. So any congressman, any senator, any president that is not following the Word of God, but inventing His own right and wrong is going against the righteousness of God. And there is a day of reckoning coming. This is what we need to understand. Now I want to show you something. The other day I was just sitting and I was reading 1 Peter chapter 1. And I want you to go to 1 Peter chapter 1 because I want to show you something about prophecy. In verse 10, it says this. It’s talking about the salvation that Jesus brings. And it says, “**As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ [first coming] and the glories [that would] follow [second coming.] It was revealed to them...**” (1 Peter 1:10-12) to these Old Testament prophets, to Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and Joel and Amos and Obadiah. “**It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things in which angels long to look.**” (1 Peter 1:10-12) We’ll look at it with the angels in just a minute.

## **PART TWO**

Can you imagine those Old Testament prophets, and they’re writing these things? Jeremiah is writing this about this righteous Branch that is going to be raised up and how He’s going to judge righteously and he’s wanting to know when, what is the time and everything. (See Jeremiah 23:5) And God is saying to him, “Look, it’s not for you to know now. It’s just for you to

speak for Me.” We’re going to move in this segment of the program from righteous shepherds to prophets who are supposed to speak truth and the “woes” that come upon those that do not speak truth. Let’s go to Jeremiah chapter 23. He tells us that God is going to raise up a righteous Branch. He’s talking about Messiah. And then in verse 7 it says, **“Therefore behold, the days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when they will no longer say “As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons...from the land of Egypt...,”” (Jeremiah 23:7)** He was known as hey, hey this is the God that **““...brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt.”” (Jeremiah 23:7)** This is the One that parted the Red Sea. This is the One that drowned Pharaoh and his army in that Red Sea. (See Exodus 14:21, 28) And he says this, **“But [they will say] “As the LORD lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the house...of Israel from the north....”” (Jeremiah 23:8)** Now remember, you go north and you go east to Babylon. And then it says, **““...And led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them....””** And then He makes this statement that takes us still to the future. **“...Then they will live on their own soil.” (Jeremiah 23:8)** Now God is going to bring them back after the days of Zedekiah. We’re going to study this when we look at Jeremiah chapter 25. We’re gonna look at how long they’re going to be in captivity. And He is going to bring them back to the land, but then they are going to be dispersed in 70 A.D. So, they’re going to be scattered all around the world. But you and I are living in a time of the fulfillment of portions of Ezekiel when they’re being brought back to the land. And eventually Israel will live on its own soil and that’s where it is now. But they will never be driven out again. Now, verse 9, **“As for the prophets: My heart is broken within me....” (Jeremiah 23:9)** Jeremiah’s saying, “Let’s talk about the prophets now. We’ve talked about the shepherds. Let me talk about the prophets.” **“...My heart is broken within me, all my bones tremble....” (Jeremiah 23:9)** Now that word

“tremble” is used for the first time in Genesis chapter 1, verse 2, when it talks about the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters. (See Genesis 1:2) It’s trembling. And it used again in Deuteronomy 32, verse 11. (See Deuteronomy 32:11) But he says, “**...I [am] like a drunken man, [I’m reeling] even like a man overcome with wine, because of the LORD and because of His holy words.**” (Jeremiah 23:9) Here is Jeremiah who has a fear of God, a reverence of God, the trust of God and knowing that God, as He said to Jeremiah in chapter 1, “**...I [watch] over My word to perform it.**” (Jeremiah 1:12) If I say it’s going to happen it’s going to happen. If I say it’s wrong, it’s wrong. If I say it’s right, it’s right. If I say don’t you shouldn’t, if I say do you better, that’s what He’s saying. And He says I am trembling “**...because of the LORD and because of His holy words.**” (Jeremiah 23:9) Why? Because the prophets are doing something wrong. It says “**For the land is full of adulterers...the land mourns because of the curse....**” (Jeremiah 23:10) And He’s talking about the end of Deuteronomy when He talks about what He’s going to do when gets into the land and He talks about the curses and He talks about the blessings, and He’s talking to Israel, the curses that come upon them because of disobedience, the blessings that come upon them if they obey. (See Deuteronomy 30:1-20) And He says this, “**...The pastures of the wilderness have dried up. Their course...is evil and their might is not right.**” (Jeremiah 23:10) And see if you look at somebody’s might and it is not being used according to the Word of God it’s not right. You look at Hamas, you look at the P.L.O., you look at Iran saying that they want to destroy Israel. They have might; but it is not right. You say, “But what about Israel?” Israel is commanded by God to live on that land and not give that land away. So you look at the Scriptures. Don’t be swayed by the politicians; be swayed by the Word of God. But also watch what He says. Don’t be swayed by false prophets. He says “**“For both prophet and priest are polluted; even in My house...,”** in My temple, “**...I have found their wickedness,’ declares the LORD.**”

**‘Therefore their way will be like [a] slippery paths to them....’**

**(Jeremiah 23:11-12)** Their feet will slide right out from underneath them, and they’re gonna come down hard on their bottom. He says, **“...they will be driven...into the gloom and [they will] fall down in it; for I....”** God is speaking. **“...Will bring calamity upon them, the year of their punishment....”** **(Jeremiah 23:12)** Now why is God going to judge Judah? Because the prophets prophesy falsely, the priests rule by their own way. The scribes don’t handle the law correctly and the rulers have transgressed against God. In other words, the whole leadership of the country is sick to the core because they do not fear God. And so God is saying, “I’m going to bring calamity.” Now remember this America, Amos 3:8. [Does a calamity occur in a city but what the LORD has not done it?] (PARAPHRASE Amos 3:6) You see we forget that God is just. We forget that God is righteous. And so this is what He says, **“Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria [the Northern Kingdom] I saw an offensive thing; they prophesied by Baal and led My people...astray.”** **(Jeremiah 23:13)** He says, **“Also among the prophets of Jerusalem...,”** Northern Kingdom, Southern Kingdom **“...I have seen a horrible thing: the committing of adultery....”** **(Jeremiah 23:14)** Here are spiritual leaders that are speaking for God and they’re committing adultery. **“[They’re] walking in falsehood...they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one has turned back from his wickedness....”** **(Jeremiah 23:14)** O Beloved, how we need people that are going to warn others that God is a righteous God, that God is a just God, and that they need to fear Him. They need to bow the knee to God, and they need to acknowledge, “You are God, and You are righteous and holy and that’s what You expect of me.” He says, “I cannot let wickedness go unjudged.” (See Proverbs 11:21) O Beloved, how we need voices that will call a sin sin and draw us to righteousness.