

Jeremiah 4:19-27 – Learn to Cry for God’s People

Trapp, Delitzsch, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Poole, Geneva, Barnes, JFB, INT, Gaebelein, Henry, Armstrong, Calvin, Barnes, Eclectic, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Parents often talk about how hard it is to **watch their children make big mistakes**...like **wasting their lives** and not getting a proper job, like **marrying a non-believer**, or like **taking unnecessary risk** and injuring themselves or others. **Often, parents cry!** And they worry. “How could my child **be so lazy?**” “How could my child know it is wrong to **marry a non-believer** and still do it?” “How could my child **know it is wrong to drink and drive and still do it?**” Parents cry and hope their children change! **That was what Jeremiah felt like as he saw the God’s bride foolishly leave him.** The bride dug a hole and fell into it, but she wasn’t calling on God help her get out. So Jeremiah lamented – he lamented bitterly. This is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

Dejection at the bride’s sin

Description of the bride’s sin

Destruction of the bride for sin

Our Goals are: **That you will be broken as you see the spiritual state of God’s church and cry out to her to repent and be restored to God.**

Dejection at the bride’s sin

19 O my soul, my soul! I **am pained in my very heart!** My **heart makes a noise in me;** I **cannot hold my peace,** Because you have heard, O my soul, The **sound of the trumpet, The alarm of war.** 20 **Destruction upon destruction** is cried, For the whole land is plundered. **Suddenly my tents are plundered,** And my curtains in a moment.

1. You can see, hear, and feel Jeremiah’s agony as he saw the shameful and dangerous position God’s bride was in.

He felt pain, **like a woman in childbirth**...in his soul...literally, his belly!

He felt **uncomfortable.** The “walls” of his **heart were quaking...palpitating.**

He felt **restless; he had no peace.**

Jeremiah 9:1 Oh, that **my head were waters,** and my **eyes a fountain of tears,** That **I might weep day and night for the slain** of the daughter of my people!

2. You can understand the reasons Jeremiah felt this agony.

Jeremiah could hear the trumpet sound, that distinct blowing that marked the beginning of war.

Jeremiah knew destruction was coming (wound upon wound) and it was crying out aloud.

Right after King Josiah died, the floodgates of destruction opened. The next king, Shallum, died within days, and was replaced by Jehoiakim in 609BC. Right after he began to rule, Nebuchadnezzar laid siege of Jerusalem and overran it in 605BC.

Jeremiah could see the land being plundered by the savage Babylonians. All the **magnificent homes** and the **grand temple** would be plundered. **Commerce would disappear.**

Ezekiel 7:26 **Disaster will come upon disaster,** and rumor will be upon rumor. Then they will seek a vision from a prophet; But **the law will perish from the priest,** And **counsel from the elders.**

21 How long will I see the standard, And hear the sound of the trumpet?

3. Jeremiah believed the standard (the flag raised to cause the people to assemble) and the trumpet sound preparing for war, would soon disappear.

There would be no hope for reconciliation with God, so there was no hope for mercy.

4. Lessons:

a. There is nothing sadder than for your elders to see you sin and not repent. Know the agony we feel – even we who are sinful. Now imagine how much that hurts your holy Heavenly Father and your pure Savior.

b. Now let’s turn it around. Do you feel agony when you see sin in the culture, when you see such contempt for the church, when people are so confused, they don’t know if they are men or women or if they are black or white? Don’t you feel pain seeing some in church who **can’t even discern what the Bible says about raising children?** Don’t you feel the pain when you see so many **broken homes and children being raised without parents?** Do you agonize when others are **self-destructing – addicted to drugs and alcohol?** Do you cry? Do you cry out to God for them?

c. It should hurt even more when religious and political leaders are the ones who are sinning, knowing they should know and do better, but they choose to shame the Good Shepherd and be corrupt.

Description of the bride’s sin

22 "For **My people are foolish,** They have **not known Me.** They are **silly children,** And they have **no understanding.** They **are wise to do evil,** But to **do “good” they have no knowledge.**"

1. Jeremiah then explained what the bride had become, explaining why he cried so bitterly.

The bride was foolish, which has the idea of atheism – a denial of God.

The bride did not love (know) God...even though she *knew about him*.

The bride lacked wisdom to do good. She only had “wisdom” to lust - lust to do evil.

The bride was ignorant of what God expected, even though she had his Word. She only learned how to do evil!

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

God was hoping his bride would come to her senses and repent. But she chose to fight the Babylonians (or run to Egypt) instead of surrendering, and that caused more Jews to die. **They “didn’t know how to fish in troubled waters.”**

23 I beheld the **earth, and indeed it was without form, and void**; And the **heavens, they had no light**.

2. Then Jeremiah saw a picture of hopelessness, giving further reasons why he cried so bitterly.

a. Judah (not the whole earth) was like the chaos before creation (Genesis 1:2. Tohu and Bohu – form and void!). Men could not find their way. In other words, **the natural order was overturned by Judah and God had to remake things!**

Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

There was no light above. This lacking of light was always an example of God’s dissatisfaction. So Jeremiah meant all their **leaders (sun, moon, stars, etc.) would be gone.** And as with no light (shepherds) the sheep would be scattered. **And so again!**

Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

24 I beheld the **mountains, and indeed they trembled**, And all the hills moved back and forth.

b. The mountains (and the hills) were shaking, showing the instability of Judah. This **was apocalyptic language.**

Psalms 18:7 Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry.

Mountains and hills were used to point to the established institutions – like the temple on Mt. Zion. And since the Jews were **using these mountains and hills to worship their idols**, God would **shake those mountains** and make their gods fall.

25 I beheld, and indeed **there was no man**, And all the **birds of the heavens had fled**.

c. The land was without man below or birds above. The birds that were given for food, sacrifices, and companionship (singing in the trees) were gone. Many Jews fled to Egypt and starvation came when Nebuchadnezzar attacked them there.

So no priest was there and the sacrifices of the common man were gone!

26 I beheld, and indeed the **fruitful land was a wilderness**, And all its **cities were broken down** At the presence of the LORD, By His fierce anger.

d. The land became barren and fruitless as a desert. (Carmel – the Garden Land – would be desolate! **The cities were broken down – destroyed – or decayed, as they were left uninhabited for almost 70 years.** When there was a repeat of Israel sins, God brought the final destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 when Titus, the Roman general destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. **The temple was never rebuilt again.**

3. Note this was apocalyptic hyperbolic language of God’s judgment over all areas of life: geographical, terrestrial, celestial, human, ornithological (birds), horticultural, and demographical.

God left absolutely nothing untouched.

4. Lessons:

a. Because God has revealed himself to you, and because you now have a complete revelation, you have no excuse! If you disobey him from ignorance, you have yourself to blame.

b. What happens when you ignore God’s Word and remain ignorant and do whatever you want? You are treating God as if he did not exist! That is a most egregious sin.

Psalms 38:3 There is no soundness in my flesh Because of Your anger, Nor any health in my bones Because of my sin. 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. 5 My wounds are foul and festering **Because of my foolishness.**

So make the time to know God’s Word. Get good books to help. Ask your elders for help. Take the time to teach your children. Get books that will help you teach them.

c. Cry when you see the state of the church! Cry and call them to repentance or prepare for what is coming next. It doesn’t look good right now. The church is weak and God is angry.

Destruction of the bride for sin

27 For thus says the LORD: "The **whole land shall be desolate**; Yet **I will not make a full end**.

1. God would keep the land desolate for almost 70 years before he let the Jews return to Jerusalem.

The old people had to die – and sadly die **in a foreign land – a tragedy for a Jew.**

The land had to **have rest for almost 70 years**– as they did not allow the land to rest on the 7th day.

All the **businesses had to be destroyed** – as **the Jews trusted in the businesses** and not the Lord.

2. And if you see what follows in the next few verses, you will see the extent of this destruction.

The **land would mourn**. The **heavens would be black**. The **people would flee**. They would **hide in thickets and rocks**. The “die was cast.” **Nothing could stop any of this from happening.**

3. This language would have been most helpful for the Jews to reflect on during captivity.

The people would know they were experiencing judgment **just as God said**, but **he would bring them out just like he said.**

While God’s people were in thickets, you will see the **Lord Jesus would be with them there...even as they would be brought out from Babylonian captivity.** Zechariah 1:8-9.

4. Lessons:

a. God will never totally destroy his bride, and you can have confidence in that, but he will surely punish her for her complacency. Further, he may destroy **part of his church – denominations** – or **congregations** – or **elders** – or **pastors!** He may have to destroy the **civil authorities** to get us to come to our senses. **He may have to take away your gods so you would repent!**

b. What does God have to take away from you personally before you fully return to him? Your job, your loved one, your looks, your church, your car, or your health? God loves you, so he may have to take away what you treasure so you would turn back to him! He will only allow you to have one God!

c. Pray that those who are enamored with the things created and ignore their Creator and Re-Creator might repent. Cry for forgiveness.

Conclusion:

Jeremiah was beside himself in pain as he **saw God’s bride treating God with contempt**. It was extremely hard to watch because he knew what was coming. This bride had become idolatrous, a fool, and a “know-it-all.” This led to chaos in the land! So God pronounced destruction on her...though the destruction was not total.

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

1. God’s people are valuable to him and you must learn to cry for them – cry that God would grant them the desire to repent. Things are getting bad – really bad – in the church. The funny thing is there have never been so many “Christian” books published in history! But there are too many pretenders and people are kept in ignorance. Much of what is written is like that of the false prophets of Jeremiah’s day who told the Jews not to worry about the Babylonians...that they wouldn’t affect them. Lies, all likes! Much talk but with little truth.

2. In order for you to cry to God for his people, learn how precious Jesus’ bride is to him! He died for her! He left heaven for her. He loves her. He was humiliated for her. She must now live for his glory. She isn’t.

3. Cry against those who are lying to God’s people and make them think all is well! Pray God might remove them from their positions so his people will be safe.

Finally: Don’t be ignorant of what God expects. He has revealed that to you in his Word. Learn who you are. Learn who God is. Learn of the great gulf between you and God. Learn what Jesus did so the rift can be healed and you can become God’s child.