

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

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THE SAD CONDITION OF AN ANCIENT NATION

As today, in the Old Testament economy, God’s people were supposed to be a holy people (Dt. 7:1-6; 1 Pet. 1:13-17). They were not to fall victim to vain religion (Dt. 12:29-32). However, they blew it. The nation of Israel paid the price for their error by being smashed by the rod of God’s anger (Isa. 10:5-6), Assyria (2 Kg. 17:5-18). Judah should have learned her lesson, but did not (Jer. 3:8). They placed little value on God’s Word (2 Kg. 22:8-9). They forsook God and engaged in idolatry (Jer. 2:11-13). Even the godly reforms of good kings were not enough to right the destructive course the stubborn nation had embarked upon (2 Kg. 22:14-20). Yes, sin truly had infected the nation of Judah. The book of Jeremiah is one section of God’s Word that vividly depicts just how bad Judah’s condition was in the long ago. Below are a few excerpts from said book:

- “...according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah” (Jer. 2:28).
- “...they received no correction: your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion” (Jer. 2:30).
- “...my people have forgotten me days without number” (Jer. 2:32).
- “...thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness” (Jer. 3:2).
- “...they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Jer. 4:22).
- “And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely” (Jer. 5:2).
- “...thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots’ houses” (Jer. 5:7).
- “...this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone” (Jer. 5:23).
- “...the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it” (Jer. 6:10).
- “...from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely” (Jer. 6:13).
- “...truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth” (Jer. 7:28).

What a sad portrait! Those rebellious folks did not receive clemency for their actions. God eventually punished Judah via the kingdom of Babylon. Jeremiah gives us insight into just how severe the punishment was. Note the words below:

“Thus saith the LORD, Go and get a potter’s earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests; And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee, And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter. And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them” (Jer. 19:1-9).

“And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts” (Jer. 8:3).

Understanding 1 Cor. 10:1-11, I wonder why so many (who claim to be God’s people) refuse, still today, to walk in fear before Him (1 Pet. 1:17)? I hope the infected ones repent. So does God (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).