**Jeremiah 21 (Lesson 12a)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 21 – “Oh, Now You Want Help...” (<2 min. to read)**

A. Zedekiah’s Plea For God’s Help (vv. 1f; cf. 15:11; 37:3-10)

 1. This may have occurred at the onset of a Babylonian siege. *“For background of this period, one should read 2 Kgs. 25:1-10; Jer. 34; 37; and 38. A new Pharaoh (Hophra) has taken the throne of Egypt, and in his effort to re-establish Egypt as a world power, he had persuaded Zedekiah to rebel against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar immediately proceeded to end once and for all these uprisings by moving his armies against the cities of Judah till finally Jerusalem itself is besieged.”* (Harkrider, 59)

 2. Zedekiah sends two members of the royal court to plead with Jeremiah. Passhur, son of Malchijah (not the same as 20:1-6; 38:1), represents civil authority. Zephaniah, son of Maaseiah, represents priestly authority (cf. 29:25; 37:3; 52:24?).

3. Zedekiah may have desired a repeat of 2Kgs. 7; 19; Is. 37:1-7, 33-38.

4. Zedekiah was like a silly bird, unsettled and flying about looking for deliverance from whoever was offering it, whenever he desired it (cf. 27:12-15). *“There are no atheists in foxholes.”*

B. God Offers A Lesser Punishment For Submission (vv. 3-10)

 1. God refuses to deliver and He will rather fight against them.

 2. The choice of total or partial destruction was up to them (cf. Dt. 30:15, 19). If they chose correctly, they would have their lives as a reward (cf. 38:2; 39:18; 45:5). This message was viewed as treason (cf. 26:11; 37:11-15; 38:1-6).

 C. An Admonition For The House Of David & People Of Judah (vv. 11-14)

 1. If disaster is to be even partially averted, two things are requisite: 1) Compassion must be kindled (v. 12; cf. Is. 9:7; 32:1); and 2) Pride and their false sense of security must be checked (v. 13; cf. 1Kgs. 9:4f).

 2. *“In the ‘rock’ we think specially of Mount Zion, and in the ‘valley’ of the so- called lower city. The two designations are chosen to indicate the strong situation of Jerusalem.”* (Keil)

 3. *“Who will come down against us?”* (cf. 2Sam. 5:6f; Lam. 4:12; Obad. 3f)

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 21**

A. What two results can the *outstretched hand* of God result in for His people? (v. 5; cf. Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 26:8; et al.)

B. Will God always answer our prayers as we desire? What sorts of factors determine God’s answers?

C. What towers of false security do we erect today in our lives? (cf. v. 13)

**III. Applications For Chapter 21**

A. God should be our trust and refuge and security in good times and in evil times.

B. Our prayers & petitions must be at all times, rather than simply in times of distress.

C. Compassion should be an essential characteristic in the life of Christians. Pride, in contrast, should be considered anathema for disciples of Christ.

**Jeremiah 22 (Lesson 12b)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 22 – Jeremiah @ The King’s House (4 min. to read)**

A. Jeremiah’s Trip To The King’s House (vv. 1-10)

 1. vv. 1-4 – Justice and righteousness need to be exemplified (cf. 2Sam. 15:4). Punishment is upon them for not heeding the prophets (cf. 7:13f; 17:23; 22:17; 25:4; 26:20-24; 29:19; Is. 1:2f, 10, 19f).

 2. vv. 5f – Transformed from Gilead/Lebanon into a desert; God swears to destroy them (cf. Gen. 22:16; Is. 45:23; Heb. 6:13-18)

3. vv. 7-9 – Destruction promised b/c of insolence (Dt. 29:22-28; 1Kgs. 9:1-9)

4. v. 10 – long lamentations for Josiah (cf. 2Chron. 35:24f)

B. Prophecy Regarding Shallum (vv. 11f)

 1. Shallum was the given name; Jehoahaz the royal name (cf. 1Chron. 3:15).

 2. He was wicked & ruled for only 3 months. Pharaoh Necho deported him to Egypt, never to return (2Kgs. 23:30-34; 2Chr. 36:4; Ezek. 19:1-4).

 C. Principles Of Royal Righteousness & Prophecy Regarding Jehoiakim (vv. 13-23)

 1. Pharaoh Necho replaced Shallum with his brother Eliakim/Jehoiakim and imposed a tribute of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold (cf. 2Kgs. 23:34-34:6; 2Chron. 36:5-8).

 2. Jehoiakim was ruthless, greedy, proud, and stupid (cf. Ezek. 8:5-17; 2Kgs. 24:3). He rivaled Rehoboam & Manasseh in oppressing the people while he lived in luxury (2Kgs. 23:35). Antithesis of his father Josiah.

3. *“He’d be dumped unceremoniously on the garbage heap, just as dead donkeys were dragged outside the city gate and left to rot.”* (Harrison, 118)

 4. While her rulers were bad and deserved punishment (*“the wind shall shepherd their shepherds”*), Judah will also find destruction because they too are guilty (vv. 20-23).

 D. Prophecy Regarding Coniah (vv. 24-30) – succeeded by his uncle Zedekiah

 1. Royal name Jehoiachin/Jeconiah (cf. 24:1; 2Kgs. 24:8-16; 1Chron. 3:16).

 2. Although he is like a signet ring of God (cf. Hag. 2:23), he will be removed and Coniah will not have a descendant who will prosperously reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem (cf. 1Chron. 3:15-17). He will be a useless vessel (cf. Jer. 18; 19). He will be exiled to Babylon and eventually released from prison, but not return (cf. 52:31-34). Name has been found on ration tablets near Ishtar Gate dated to this period.

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 22**

A. What points should rulers and non-rulers take away from this chapter?

B. By what other names are *Shallum* (v. 11) and *Coniah* (v. 24) known?

C. What prophecies are given regarding the three leaders Shallum (vv. 11f), Jehoiakim (vv. 18-23), and Coniah (vv. 24-30)?

**III. Applications For Chapter 22**

A. *“Jer. 22:2-5: Rulers of any country have a grave responsibility before God to rule justly and righteously. Righteousness exalteth a nation, but iniquity is a reproach and will ultimately result in the demise of a nation (cf. Prov. 14:34; 16:12; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Tim. 2:1-2).”* (Harkrider, 61f)

B. Jesus is a descendant of Jehoiachin (cf. Matt. 1:11f). However, He does not and will not sit on the physical throne of David IN JERUSALEM. See: Zech. 6:12f; Jn. 18:36; Acts 2:30, 33, 36; Heb. 8:1, 4; Col. 1:13; Eph. 1:20-23.