**Jeremiah 29 (Lesson 16a)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 29 – Letters to the Exiles (5 min. to read)**

A. The First Letter From Jeremiah (29:1-23) – textual differences in LXX and MT

1. Jeremiah sends a letter by two men (Elasah and Gemariah) Zedekiah sends to Nebuchadnezzar urging peaceful submission from *“all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives”* (vv. 1-7; cf. 2Kgs. 24:14). How difficult must this have been?! How do you seek the welfare of those who killed your family and relatives?!

2. False prophets in captivity spoke the same message as Hananiah, that captivity would be short-lived (vv. 8-14). This shows us that Ezekiel’s ministry must have looked a lot like Jeremiah’s ministry. Oh, how stubborn we can be! Even when God forces us to our knees in order to acknowledge Him, we still so often refuse! Allow discipline to work!

3. Harkrider alludes to insights why it would’ve been even more difficult to settle in to their situation. He states: *“Archeological evidence shows the captives were settled along broken down canals which had deteriorated into swamp land, infested with mosquitoes and malaria. Humidity was high, and in summer the heat rose to about 120 degrees.”* (78)

4. The exiles should be thankful that they will not be forced to face what those who remain in the land will face—sword, famine, pestilence (vv. 15-19). They are the good figs; those who remain are rotten (Ch. 24).

5. Ahab and Zedekiah, false and immoral prophets, will be made an example of because of their wickedness (vv. 20-23; cf. Hananiah in ch. 28). Similar future example language is used positively in Gen. 48:20; Ruth 4:11 & negatively in Deut. 28:37; 1Kgs. 16:3; 21:22; 1Chr. 17:8. Puns in Hebrew here between *curse*, *Kolaiah*, and *roasted*.

B. Jeremiah’s Response To Shemaiah (29:24-32) – Zephaniah friendly (Jer. 37:3)

1. Shemaiah had circulated his reviling speech to everybody in the land! Keep in mind that months have passed from letter in vv. 1-23.

2. He is clearly trying to influence the leadership as well with the comparison to Jehoiada. *Prophet* in Heb. can mean *madman* and iron yoke would be ironic given Jeremiah’s earlier message. Shemaiah eliminated.

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 29**

A. What counsel is given to those who went into captivity? (29:4-7) Easy to believe the false prophets since king still on throne, temple & city still there…

B. What other passages mention that captivity will be for 70 years? (29:10; cf. 25:11; 2Chron. 36:21f; Dan. 9:2; Ezra 1:1)

C. How is 29:11 often taken out of context today?

D. Who else was roasted in the fire? (29:22; cf. Dan. 3) Note the differing outcomes!

**III. Applications For Chapter 29**

A. It is biblical to, even passionately, seek the welfare of the nation in which you live, even if your values are quite different from the overall country in which you live, as was the case of Israel in captivity. Prayer plays a pivotal role in this (29:4-7; cf. 1Tim. 2:1-6; 1Pet. 2:13-17).

B. *“If My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* (2Chron. 7:14; cf. Jer. 29:12f)

**Jeremiah 30 (Lesson 16b)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 30 – Glorious Future Ahead (3 min. to read)**

A. Assurances of Restoration (30:1-11)

1. Chapters 30-33 are commonly called the “Book of Consolation.” Brief notes of hope earlier (e.g. 3:11-4:2; 16:14f; 23:5-8; 24:4-7; 29:10-14, 32).

2. To the Jews, it may have begun to look like God was done with them. But what about the promised Messiah? What about the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants? (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18; 2Sam. 7:11-16)

3. The realization of this time of peace must be seen in a spiritual capacity b/c neither Israel nor God’s people has physical sort of peace here. *“The bringing back of His physical remnant looks unto the redemption of the spiritual remnant.”* (Harkrider, 82)

B. Healing of Incurable Wounds (30:12-17)

1. Their foreign alliances made as they acted as “lusty horses” (ch. 5; 22:20) would not avail them in their time of distress. Their only hope for healing is from God (cf. the hemorrhaging woman).

2. All who called Israel and “outcast” would be cast out from God. They would be devoured, spoiled, and given for a prey. Sickness would find them as Israel was healed of her incurable ailment (cf. 50:17-20).

C. The Restoration of Jerusalem (30:18-24; cf. Is. 35)

1. Verses 21f predicts Jesus (cf. Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:8; Mic. 5:2; Heb. 9:24-28). Lingo similar to priest-king prophecies (e.g. Ps. 110:4; Zech. 6:12f).

2. v. 22 not in LXX; v. 23 identical to 23:19

3. This city would exceed the splendor of David and Solomon’s Jerusalem.

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 30**

A. What on earth is the point of 30:6? *“This time of captivity and exile for Israel is filled with uncertainty and fear…Hyperbole is used here to great effect in presenting the image of a man giving birth to a child to describe the unusual troubles of the nation of Israel during the exile period.”* (Humphries, 322)

B. How might we see Jesus as the application of 30:21?

C. A key theme of the Bible is that *“You shall be My people And I will be your God”* (30:22). Give some examples where this phrase is elsewhere found.

D. When did Israel “understand this”? (30:24; Is. 2:2-4; Jo. 2:28; Dan. 2:28; Heb. 1:1f)

**III. Applications For Chapter 30**

A. 30:2 gives us a great definition of divine inspiration! It demonstrates verbal and plenary inspiration, two key aspects of inspiration that we should know and be equipped to defend (cf. Is. 30:8; 34:16; Jer. 1:4f; 25:13; 36:2; Ezek. 2:4-7; Dan. 9:2; Jonah 3:1f; Luke 1:1-4; 24:44-47; John 16:12f; Acts 2:4; Rom. 15:4; 1Cor. 10:11; 14:37; Eph. 3:3f; 2Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 2:3f; 2Pet. 1:12-15; 20f; 3:1f 1Jn. 1:3f; Rev. 22:18f). His Word will never perish! (Ps. 100:5; 102:12; 119:152; Is. 40:6-8; Matt. 24:35; 1Pet. 1:22-25).

B. God heals the incurable! (30:12-17; cf. 8:22; Joel 2:25; Ro. 5:6-8; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-7)

C. *“Jer. 30:9,21: Though Israel was cast off as a nation with an earthly king, out of its physical loins came the Christ through whom spiritual Israel now exists (cf. Rom. 9:7-8; Gal. 3:26-29). Those spiritually born again are now the ‘Israel of God’ (Gal. 6:16) who have Christ as their king (John 18:36; Luke 1:32-33; Rev. 17:14; Col. 1:13).”* (Harkrider, 86)