



Jeremiah 6

Jeremiah CHAPTER 6

Shall we turn now to Jeremiah 6 as we continue our journey through Jeremiah as we are journeying through the Bible. The southern kingdom was comprised of two tribes: Judah and Benjamin. So the call in verse one is to the children of Benjamin.

O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Bethhaccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction (6:1).

God is about to judge the nation of Judah for turning their backs upon God and worshipping and turning themselves to worship idols. Tekoa is south of Bethlehem, sort of the border of the land from the Judean wilderness. Just where Bethhaccerem was is questionable. The word means the house of the vineyard in Hebrew. The blowing of the trumpet was always the sound of the alarm. At the approach of the enemy, at the beginning of the battle there would be the blowing of the trumpet.

Before we had the modern type of communication systems that we have today, the walkie talkies and all, when they were mustering the troops or calling them to battle they would use the bugle. It was an instrument used to call the people to attention, to assembly, to eat. Now, of course, they have the modern means of communication and they do not use that to any great degree anymore within the services. It was a very common thing before modern communication to use the trumpets, to signal an alarm. The trumpet blasts could be heard from a long distance.

The building of fires, signal fires, were used. It would take a person quite a while to travel twenty miles. You could easily see a signal fire twenty miles away. You would be alerted immediately to the danger. So they had the signal fires, so they are saying, there at the house of the vineyard, light the signal fires and blow in Tekoa the trumpet. Warn the people that the enemy is approaching and on the way. He appears out of the north and he is bringing great destruction.

I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman. The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place (6:2–3).

She is sort of being threatened by these shepherds that hem her in.

Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for shadows of the evening are stretched out (6:4).

So the danger is coming in the night. The shadows of the evening are stretched out. I like that. It is a very picturesque pattern of speech. You can see the lengthening shadows of the evening. Your shadow stretches out a long way. Darkness is coming.

Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces (6:5).

The day is far spent, the night of darkness is coming upon the nation. God likens Zion unto a woman who is being threatened. She fears for the night that is coming because she knows that there will come that assault in the night hours. So with Zion the LORD compares her with this beautiful woman who is very delicate who is about to be ravished by these coarse shepherds.

For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her (6:6).

So Jerusalem is to be besieged, the walls are to be destroyed. Cut down the trees to make these battering rams and to make these towers to assault the walls of Jerusalem.

As a fountain casteth out her waters, (another picture of speech) so she casteth out her wickedness: violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds (6:7).

The LORD in the midst of a people who are so degenerate, He encourages them to be instructed.

Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited (6:8).

The thing that amazes me is how that when the people have gone so far away from God, they are set and established in their ways of evil and yet God still extends to them a hand of mercy. All He asks is that they turn. Now these people were about as raunchy a people you would ever hope to come across. Yet God is still merciful. He is still offering to them His forgiveness and pardon. He will still fight against their enemies if they will turn to Him. As with the nation so it is with individuals.

Some of you tonight, the descriptions of Zion, the daughter of Zion, Jerusalem, apply to you. You have turned your back on God. Filth flows out of your life like out of a fountain. You have not walked in the ways of the Lord. Still the Lord has not given up on you. Still the Lord is pleading with you. Still the Lord is stretching out His hand of mercy toward you inviting you to come and be sheltered in His love, to be washed and cleansed that He might defend you that you might become His child.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets (6:9).

They are going to be plucked clean. Under the Law, when you owned a vineyard, you could only send your servants through the vineyard once to pick grapes. You had one picking. Those grapes that were not yet ripe when you picked the grapes would have to be left on the vine. After your servants had gone through and picked the grapes, your field would be an open field so that the poor people of the land could come in after that and they could pick the grapes that were left over as they would ripen. But the gleaners, these poor people of the land, would come in and they would strip the field bear. So the idea of the gleaners here. They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel.

Israel is going to be picked bear. There will be nothing left when the enemy is through. They will be stripped and nothing remain.

To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? (6:10).

The Lord is calling them to be instructed. The Lord is calling them to turn but they are not listening to God. They have closed their ear to the Lord. They refuse to hear. God is saying, "Who can I speak to warn this people that they may hear?"

behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and thy cannot hearken (6:10).

That is, they have no ear towards God. They have only a ear to the flesh, the things of the flesh. The whole idea of circumcision was the cutting off of the flesh and the life of the flesh to live the life of the Spirit. So as God uses this analogy of the ear, it is an ear that is only interested in the things of the flesh and has no spiritual tunement at all, no desire to hear God or the voice of God, the things of the Spirit.

they cannot hearken (6:10).

This is interesting. At this point it does not say that they will not hearken, but at this point it says that they cannot hearken. There is a law of physiology that if you deny an organ of your body to function in its God given manner that you will lose the power or capacity of that organ of your body. God has marvelously designed our bodies, we know that. The design of the eye, the ear and the olfactory senses and all. But deny any of these aspects of the body to function in their God given manner you would lose use of it. If you would strap your arm to your side, over a period of time of not using that arm at all, just leaving that arm tightly

strapped to your side; in time you would lose the power, atrophy would take place and you would be unable to use your arm.

So here they had closed their ears to God so long that now they come to the place where they could not hear. There is an interesting passage of Scripture in John 12:38 that talks about the Pharisees. It speaks of Isaiah the prophet, speaking of them, how that having eyes to see they saw not and ears to hear they heard not and it says therefore, they could not believe, not they would not but they could not. It is possible to close your ears to God so much and so completely that you cannot hear the voice of God anymore. You go over the line, so to speak, you cross that line where you cannot any longer hear the voice of God. That is where Judah had come. They had crossed the line, their ears were uncircumcised and therefore they cannot hear.

behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it (6:10).

They began to scoff at the word of God. They speak derisively of the word of God. That is always an extreme danger signal when you see a person who scoffs at the word of God. It is a sign of danger. People who have no delight at all in God's word.

Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in (6:11):

Jeremiah was seeing these people as a rebellious stubborn people against God and this righteous indignation raised within him and he said that he was weary of holding it in. All this penned up anger at the people who were so blasphemous, living suchretched lives.

I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together; for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD (6:11-12).

So God's word is like a fire burning in Jeremiah and he warns them it is going to be utter devastation. Your families are going to be torn apart. Your houses are going to be turned to others. Your wives are going to be taken by others. Your fields will be taken by others for God is going to stretch out His hand upon the people in the land.

For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness (6:13):

God says that covetousness is wrong. To be covetous of something that belongs to some one else, to begin to try to scheme and devise of getting from them for yourself, God says it is wrong. You should not try to rip people off, you should not try to take advantage of other people. There is so much covetousness in our land today. It is wrong and God sees it and God says that all was filled with covetousness. Every one was looking out for himself. No one was interested in the needs of others but all were just looking out for themselves.

and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely (6:13).

There was just a total corruption in the land.

They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace (6:14).

As long as your life is at war with God there is no peace and there can be no peace. Here was a nation that was not right with God, there cannot be peace. With the wickedness prevailing in the land there cannot be peace. Yet their prophets were saying to them, "O we are in an era of peace, we are entering into a new age, a new era of peace, peace and prosperity." I think that we are going to be hearing a lot of that in the days to come. I think that we are really being set up for that one world government, global economy, global cooperation, global peace, global strategies. We do not know what will happen tomorrow. Things have changed this past week. They have flip-flopped so fast that it is hard to keep up with them, it is hard to know just what the Lord is doing at the present time, how the Lord is going to work out His plan. But we know

that there is to be a peace movement lead by the Antichrist and they will be declaring, Peace, peace. But things can change over night, we found that out this past week.

Because things can change so rapidly on a global scale, it means that you should always just live right with the Lord. Don't take any chances. Don't say, "Well I am really planning to change, one of these days I am going to really settle down and get right with God." I would not take that chance. I want to live before the Lord each day as God would have me to live. I don't want to be playing around or playing games with God.

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? (6:15).

Abomination is always in the Bible the worship of a false God, the worshipping of idols. Idolatry and abomination are always tied together. Were they ashamed with their abominations, their worship of these idols? It is interesting that Professor Shiloh who did the excavations on the site of the city of David on Ophel in Jerusalem, when he did the excavations a year ago and they uncovered the houses that the people were living in at the time of Jeremiah. Jeremiah talked about how their houses will be turned to others. Those very houses have been found there. They have uncovered them under the rubble.

As they uncovered these houses, Professor Shiloh was telling me, I was at a lunch with him, and he was saying that they discovered hundreds upon hundreds of little idols in these houses. He said it just brought Jeremiah alive because Jeremiah was talking about their abominations and their idols and their worship. They found hundreds of these idols in the rubble of these houses that had been destroyed by the Babylonian army. You can see a layer of ashes four to six inches thick of the fire when Jerusalem was burned by Nebuchadnezzar. As we get further along and we are dealing with the Scribe, Shaphan, they actually found his little imprint that he would put the wax seal on and then imprint it, they have his name of the seal that the scribe used. It is a public accountant and they had their seals and they would make the documents then they would put the wax and put the print of their seal. They found it. He is spoken of here in Jeremiah and they have found in the rubble his little stamp and so the excavations just made the book of Jeremiah come alive.

It is exciting to see the Scriptures come alive because you read Jeremiah that talks about these houses and you just see the rubble of these house. You can see what they looked like in the times in Jeremiah.

Were they ashamed when they had all of these little idols in their house when they were worshipping these idols. "Nay, they were not at all ashamed neither could they blush:" They were so steeped in it that they were brazen. They had gone beyond the place of blushing and being ashamed. They were now brazen. The word is wanton. They had become wanton. That is open sin without embarrassment.

Therefore because they were doing these things and were not ashamed;

therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD (6:15).

So their destruction has been announced. The judgment has been announced. But even at that point God is still pleading.

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths (6:16),

Stop for a moment this mad dash to destruction. Consider for a moment what is happening. Look around and see what is going on. Open your eyes to what is happening in the world around you. The Lord said to ask for the old paths. They were those days when God was honored, the days when "In God We Trust" on the coins meant something; the days when they formed the allegiance, the pledge to the flag, one nation under God; ask for the old paths. The Lord said where is the good way and walk therein. Come back to that first love that you once had. Come back to that zeal that you had for the things for God; that hunger and desire that you had for the things of the LORD, the old path and walk in the old path.

where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls (6:16).

What peace, what contentment, what rest when you walk in fellowship with God. That life of commitment is so great. Right now there is a lot of turmoil over my Visa going to China. The Chinese council in Los Angeles, they are throwing a monkey wrench into the thing. They don't want to accept the letter of invitation that I have. There is just a lot of crazy stuff that is happening right now and today was the deadline for the Visa and I do not have it yet. So everybody is asking what we are going to do. I don't know what we are going to do, I don't care what we are going to do! If I don't go to China then I do not go to China. I will just go to Hawaii a few days early! That is the alternate plan. We are going over there for the Harvest Festival with Greg, a few extra days in Hawaii, why should I worry? I have really committed it to the Lord. I really don't have a great longing to go to China. If the Lord wants me to go then I will go. If He turns the wheels and opens the doors, fine I will go, if not I will not go. It is just great to leave it to the Lord and not be worried about it, not be concerned about it, not be upset about it. Let the other people be upset over it, I will just wait and see what God opens for me and so as Paul said, "Just that Christ might be glorified in my body." However, it does not really matter for me.

You will just find rest for your souls. That rest of just walking with God; a life of just commitment to God knowing that God is in control, wanting God to be in control, wanting to do just what God wants you to do not exactly knowing what it is but open to it whatever it may be. So you take one day at a time just as God guides and directs you step out and it is a great life of rest for your soul. Your mind is not filled with anxiety, it is not filled with turmoil or frustration. You just say, "Lord it is in your hands, whatever you want, work it out and I will be there."

God is saying to be reasonable. Take a look what is going on, take a look what is happening and come back to the old path. It is the good way, you know it is, walk in that path. The path of rest and peace.

But they said, We will not walk therein (6:16).

It is deliberate rebellion against God. We will not do it!

Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet (6:17).

The prophets were saying, "Listen, the trumpet is sounding, the enemy is invading, you are going down the tubes. Listen to the sound of warning."

But they said, We will not hearken (6:17).

That rebellion against God.

Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth (6:18-19):

God just has to talk to the earth. It is an interesting thing that when Jesus made His triumphant entry and the disciples were waving the palm branches and quoting Psalm 118, the Messianic psalm, saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD, Hosanna, Hosanna." The Pharisees recognizing that Messianic Psalm and realizing that the disciples were now openly proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah, they said to Jesus, "Stop them from saying that, that is blasphemous." And Jesus said, "Fellows, get something straight. I am going to tell you now that if they should at this moment hold their peace, to be quiet, these very stones around here should start crying out." That day that God had promised of the Messiah, the Deliverer and the earth would have begun to cry out had the disciple been quiet. Well, here the men would not listen anymore so God cries to the earth to hear.

Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts (6:19).

Be careful what you think about and what you put in your mind because you might reap the fruit of your mind. Whatever a man sows that shall he also reap. If you are sowing into your mind the things of the flesh and filth that is exactly what is going to come out of your life. The fruit of their thoughts.

because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it (6:19).

They would not listen to God, they would not heed His law, but they rejected the law of God. Let's jump ahead just for a moment. In chapter 7, here is what God is asking them to do and we will study this next Sunday night. This is what God was asking and they were rejecting it. I don't really see anything bad in what God is asking. He said, "Thoroughly execute judgment." That is, be completely fair. "Don't oppress the stranger or the orphan or the widow. Don't shed innocent blood and don't walk after other gods." That is all that God was saying. I don't find any fault with that. I don't think that God is asking too much. God is just saying to be fair. Don't take advantage of the poor, widow nor the helpless child. Don't shed innocent blood, don't walk after other gods. I see nothing wrong with what God is asking them to do and not to do. So here God said that they would not listen, they rejected My law.

At the time that they were doing this they were still going to the temple. The temple was filled on their Sabbath. They were still going there and offering their prayers and going through their righteous routine. They were still burning their incense before the Lord. They were still offering their burnt offerings and their sacrifices.

To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba [The area of Saudi Arabia is where they got their incense.] and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me (6:20).

God does not want you to just have religious observances. God wants you to come into a living relationship with Him and many people try to substitute religious observances for a living relationship and God is saying that your religious observances are not acceptable. He does not want you to just do your religious thing. He wants you to love Him from your heart, to serve Him from your heart. Not to serve God out of a sense of duty. But out of a heart of love overflowing with love God is seeking such to serve Him. So they were going through their righteous routine but their hearts were far from God.

Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish (6:21).

God always is saying, "Because of this, this is what is going to happen." Those "therefore's" always have the precedent activities of the people and as a result this is going to take place; the stumbling blocks are going to fall, the father and son, the friends and neighbors.

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the north country [Babylon], and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth. They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy (6:22-23);

Now God had all kinds of mercy, but you are going to be facing an enemy that has no mercy. If you turn your life over to Satan, he has no mercy. He is out to destroy and he has no mercy.

their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion (6:23).

The troops are coming and they are trained and powerful.

We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail. Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy and fear is on every side (6:24-25).

If you leave the protection of the walled city you are going to be destroyed by the enemy. If you go out into the fields or try to take the path to a neighboring village there is danger.

O daughter of my people, gird thee with sackcloth (6:26),

Even again here is God calling them to repentance. God is calling them to return, the warning of God. Turn again. God still is pleading with them.

wallow thyself in ashes (6:26):

That is the sign of contrition, of godly sorrow, of repentance, putting on this sackcloth and putting on ashes. God says, “Roll in the ashes, don’t put just a little ash on your forehead, but wallow in them.”

make thee mourning, as for an only son (6:26),

Begin to mourn as though you had lost your only child, the most bitter lamentation.

most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us. I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people [He is talking now to Jeremiah] that thou mayest know and try their way (6:26–27).

Jeremiah, I have set you there as a tower, as a fortress among my people that you might show them My ways.

They are all grievous revolters, walking with slanders: they are brass and iron; they are all corrupters (6:28).

What an indictment against the people of God. Filled with slander, revolting against God, hard as iron against the things of God. They are totally corrupt.

The bellows are burned, [they are talking of the blacksmith shop] the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away. Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them (6:29–30).

They have not passed the test of fire. The Bible tells us that one day all of our works will be tried by fire. A lot of the works that you have done are not going to pass. They will be consumed. The fire was to test your works to see what sort they are. Jesus tells us to be careful about your works, your righteous deeds, that you do not do them in such a way as to draw attention and praise from man. He said, “Take heed to yourselves and to your righteousness, that you do not do your righteous deeds before men to be seen of men. Don’t let that be your motive.” I want people to see me and know how good I am and how nice and generous. He said, “For you will have your reward.” Those kind of works that are done in a showy way, those kind of works that are done before men to draw the applause of men, those works will not endure the fire of testing that will come one day. They will be burnt up like wood, hay and stubble. Like the two little pigs’ houses. They will not last.

Those works that you have done for the Lord, out of a heart of love for

God, they will endure the fire and those are the works for which you will be rewarded. So here God says that they just did not pass the test of the fire. It turned out that it was lead and not silver and it was consumed by the fire. Thus they are reprobate silver of no value because the Lord has rejected them, the works: the burning of incense, the burnt offerings and so forth, God rejected it, didn’t pass.

What about your works? What is the motive in your heart? Why are you doing what you are doing for the Lord? The Bible says, “Let a man examine himself, for if we will judge ourselves we will not be judged of God.” May our works stem from a heart of love as Paul said, “For the love of Christ constrains me.” And let that be the constraining motivation for the things that we do for God. The Bible says, “In whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all for the glory of God.” Live for His glory, and then when the test comes it will be lasting and you will enter into the eternal rewards and glory of our Lord.

Father, we thank You tonight for the warnings over and over and over that You gave to the people. We thank You, Lord, that You are patient, that You are so long-suffering. Lord we can see that when man rejects Your law, when man turns a deaf ear to Your voice, when he becomes stubborn and aberrant in his sin that Your righteous judgment does ultimately come and they are destroyed. Lord, help us that our ears might be

ever open to hear Your voice, our hearts ever soft and pliable to You, Lord, and to the things of the Spirit that we might, Lord, not be as reprobate silver, but as gold that has been tried in the fire and comes forth pure. God, burn out from our lives that dross, those impurities that we might become pure even as You are pure. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.