



Jeremiah 44-45

Tape #7303
Jeremiah 44-45
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Jeremiah, chapter forty four. As Jeremiah is in Egypt, and is probably giving the last prophecy of his career, as far as chronologically. Beginning with chapter forty five, these are just a collection of Jeremiah's prophecies that he gave earlier in his career. But he is now in Egypt, and he has been prophesying for some forty years of the fact that Babylon was going to come and conquer the people, and they were going to be destroyed if they sought to resist the Babylonian army. The people did not listen to him.

He is now gone with a remnant of people that did escape from the Babylonian occupational forces, and they have gone down to Egypt, contrary to the warnings of God. So, Jeremiah gives them one final warning. I can understand why Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet, not only because many times he speaks of tears, and he wrote this book of Lamentation. The book of Lamentation was written before his prophecy here in Egypt, but for forty years he had been preaching to the people, the word of God, and nobody paid attention. Even after the forty years, after seeing the prophecies of Jeremiah fulfilled, the people still in Egypt, do not listen, and will not listen to him. He warned them not to go down to Egypt. They went down, though they promised to obey everything God said, yet they disobeyed and went to Egypt.

So, this is perhaps, the final word of the Lord through Jeremiah, to the disobedient people, who had sought refuge in Egypt.

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell in the various cities of Egypt, Migdol, Tahpanhes, Noph, and the country of Pathros, saying, Thus saith Yaw of hosts, the God of Israel; You have seen all of the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwells therein (44:1-2),

Calling to their attention, that they have seen the fulfillment of God's word. As God promised that He would destroy the city of Jerusalem, bring it to desolation, they saw the city. Before they left, they saw the rubble of the city, the ashes. They saw the walls of the city that were broken down, the houses that were destroyed, rifled and destroyed. "You've seen it." And the reason why this happened, verse three.

Because of their wickedness which they committed to provoke me to anger, [They would not obey God, they followed after the false gods, they worshiped their idols. So they provoke me to anger] in that they burnt their incense to these strange gods, and served other gods, whom they knew not. Howbeit I sent unto you all of my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing which I hate (44:3-4).

God is pleading with the people. He sent the prophets to plead with the people. "Don't do these things. Don't worship these gods." Now, what are the gods that they were worshiping? The gods of pleasure. What is one of the most popular gods, being worshiped in the United States today? The god of pleasure. They were worshiping gods of sexual excitement. Pornography was wide spread.

I was looking at some of the little idols that were taken from the ruins of the houses there in on the side of Ophel, the city of David. The houses that were destroyed by the Babylonians when they conquered Jerusalem. Just brought the walls and the roofs down and collapsed them and burned them. These little clay idols that remained and that have been uncovered recently. Hundreds of them! I was pointing out to my son-in-law some of these little idols that were discovered by professor Shiloh and that archeological team that has just recently been, well in the last ten years, been working at that site. Professor Shiloh has since died of cancer. But, pointing these things out of the pornographic little idols. It was referred to in the scripture as the groves or Ashtoreth.

God is pleading with them not to worship sex, not to worship pleasure, not to worship power, the god mammon. God is pleading with them on these things. "Oh", God said, "Don't do these things. These abominable things that I hate." An abomination is, in the scripture, always the elevating of false gods in a

person's life. God looks upon that and the word that He uses is abomination. That is the worship of any idol or false god. The first commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

God wants to be first in your life. God wants you to put Him above every other desire, and every other thing. He desires that first place in your devotion, in your heart, and in your life. He demands it. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Yet these people began to live for other purposes, living for pleasure, living for power. These things began to dominate their life, and God sent His prophets warning them, "Don't do these things. The things that I hate." Now when God says He hates something, it's important that we pay attention.

When Jesus was writing to the churches, those letters in Revelation, He spoke about certain things that He hated. The deeds of the Nicolaitans, "Which things", He said, "I hate", and if the Lord hates them, then we better develop a hatred towards those things also.

But they hearkened not, [God said] nor did they incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to cease burning their incense unto their other gods (44:5).

God sent, He warned them, He pleaded with them, "Don't do this!", and yet they wouldn't listen to God. Therefore because they would not listen. Because they persisted in their evil,

God's fury and anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah, in the streets of Jerusalem; and as the result they are wasted, they are desolate, even to this day (44:6).

Had they gone from Egypt back to Jerusalem, they would've seen the place uninhabited, leveled, desolate.

Therefore now thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Why do you commit this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave none remaining (44:7);

In other words, God is saying, "Why didn't you learn your lesson? Why do you continue to do those things that brought the destruction? To continue to do them in Egypt is only going to bring further judgement of God upon you, even while you're here in Egypt." Thus the question, "Why do you do these things that brought destruction? Why do you do these things that destroy?"

Now I would like to suggest to you that sin is destructive, in any form. If you will look at sin, you will see how it destroys a person. It destroys a person physically, it can destroy a person emotionally, and of course, it does destroy a person spiritually. But look at the physical consequences of many sins, people have indulged themselves, or over indulged themselves, and are suffering physical consequences as a result. Look at how many people are suffering emotional consequences as a result of their sin. The guilt complex that has made them neurotics, because they have this sense of guilt of their sin, and they go around with this neurosis, and they're emotional basket cases because of sin. It destroys. Sin destroys your relationship with your family, with others. The destructive aspects of sin. So God is actually saying, "Why do you do these things that destroy you?" That's wise to consider. Why do something that is only destructive?

I used to say when I was growing up as a teenager, "If it can't do you any good, but it can do you harm, then don't do it." They would want me to go with them someplace to get into some activity, I said, "Well, what good is it going to do?" If it can't do you any good, but it can do you harm, if it can get you in trouble or whatever, then won't do it. But if it can't do you any harm, but it can do you good, then let's go for it! I was always ready to do something that could do you good, and couldn't do you harm. I'm ready for that! But if it can't do you any good, and can possibly do you harm, then, wise to stay away from it.

So God is saying, "Why continue until you've cut off man, and woman, and child, and the nursing child out of Judah, leaving none to remain."

In that you provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, as you burn incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, [You're persisting in this evil here in Egypt, where you've gone to dwell.] that you might cut yourselves off, that you might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth (44:8)?

You're only hurting yourself. You're going to be cut off. You're going to become a curse and a reproach, and your gonna just destroy yourself. And God then says,

Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of Judah, [Haven't you learned from history? Can't you see what sin and wickedness has done to other people, and to other civilizations?

Can't you see how it has destroyed civilizations? Can't you see what it has done to your fathers? Look at the history of your people and look what sin has done! Look what worshiping of these false gods has done! Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings,] *the wickedness of their wives, and of your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem (44:9)?*

These things that they were doing that brought the judgement of God upon their land.

The Lord said, They are not humbled even to this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor walked in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers (44:10).

"Though you've seen the destruction that was prophesied, though you've seen the judgement of God that came upon the nation, yet it did not change you. You were not humbled. You did not stand in fear, of the law of God."

Therefore [You see the whole thing is moving in a logical kind of a progression. Because of this wherefore, therefore, wherefore, He's moving right down the line as they have not learned from their history. They are doing things that destroy. They can persist in their evil, "Therefore"] thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, to cut off all of Judah (44:11).

Therefore you haven't experienced yet the full extent of the judgement of God, because of your wicked doings. "You will suffer even more." Now they had suffered tremendously. They had suffered defeat at the hands of the Babylonians. They had suffered the loss of their families, of their children. They watched many of their members of their family carried as slaves to Babylon. They had seen many of the members of their family starving to death. Killed by the swords of the Babylonian army. They had suffered the ravages of the wilderness in moving back to Egypt. There they were cursed and they were unwanted, but they persisted in their evil, and therefore they haven't yet experienced the full extent of God's judgement.

Now in the law, God said, "If you will obey my commandments, this is what I will do for you, and I will do this, I will bring you to the land, you'll dwell there, and I will prosper you, and your crops will produce abundantly." God told all of the blessings of keeping the law. "But if you will not walk in my statutes, and you do not keep my commandments..." Then the Lord begins to tell them the things that would happen. That He would close up heaven. It would not rain. "And if after that you still wouldn't listen, then I'll do this, and if you don't listen then, I'll do this." It's a progressive kind of a thing.

The judgements of God are to turn us back to the ways of the Lord. But if you don't pay attention, if you don't hearken, if you don't turn back to God, then He puts the screws on a little tighter. The problems become even worse. So here they are. You'd think that by this point they would've learned their lesson, and would've turned to God and turned away from their evil. But they had not. "Therefore", God said, "I'm going to set my face against you and I'm going to cut you off."

And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, [And these were the remnant. They survived all of these other things, now they fled to Egypt, because, "I'm gonna take the remnant that have fled to Egypt"] and they shall all be consumed and fall in the land of Egypt, and they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine: and they shall die, from the least even to the greatest, by the sword and the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach (44:12).

Life's not going to be easy friend! You disobey God in going down to Egypt, God said that these things were gonna happen. They went to Egypt because they feared that the Babylonians would return and that they would face the sword again. That they would face again the siege of Babylon, and the hunger and all, and they said, "Let's go down to Egypt where we won't be hungry. Let's go down to Egypt where we'll be protected from the Babylonians. Let's go down to Egypt for safety." And God said, "You're not going to find safety there. You're only place of safety is by trusting in me. If you just trust in me, and dwell here, then you will dwell safely, and I'll take care of you." Yet the people did not believe, and so they persisted in going down to Egypt. But the very things they were seeking to avoid, are the very things that are going to happen to them there in Egypt. Egypt will not be a shield to them from the sword. It will not keep them from famine.

And I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, and

by the famine, and by the pestilence: [the diseases] So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to dwell there, shall escape or remain, that they should return to the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape (44:13-14).

There will only be a very few that will come back. Those that escape. Listen to God and come back, but for the most part, they're gonna be annihilated there in Egypt. Now, this is God's message to the people. How do they respond? True to form.

Then all of the men which knew that their wives had burned incense to these other gods, and all of the women stood by, a great multitude, even all of the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, and they answered Jeremiah, [Now, they'd come to Pathros, no doubt, all of the people had gathered there for some kind of a religious festival. And probably a religious festival of the false gods, that they were worshiping, and here Jeremiah speaks God's word to them. Gives them God's warning, and we find that their hearts are still in rebellion against God. So they said] As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Jehovah, we will not listen to you (44:15-16).

Nothing new. They had not listened to Jeremiah for forty years and so they're going to continue in their stubborn abhorrent ways of not listening to God.

But we will certainly do whatsoever thing comes forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, to pour out our drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then we had plenty of victuals, and we were well and we saw no evil (44:17).

So, they said, "We're gonna continue in this worship of Ashtoreth, this female goddess that was known as the queen of heaven. They're not gonna cease worshiping her. Burning their incense, pouring out their libations to her.

Now it shows just how blind sin can make a person. The blinding effects of sin. Many times I want to take hold of a person and just shake them and say, "Can't you see what you are doing to yourself? Can't you see what you are doing to your life, or what you're doing to your children?" I just want to shake them! "Can't you see?" Because as you are standing back objectively, you can see so clearly how their destroying themselves and destroying their families. You can see it so clearly! But they seem to be blind to the whole thing! But that's because sin has, as a part of its characteristic, that dulling of the senses.

That's why leprosy is used in the Bible as a type of sin. Because the insidious thing about leprosy is that when it eats away your body, it eats away first of all the nerves. So leprosy is painless. So you don't realize that you're just rotting away. Well they say that you really don't rot away, because you don't feel pain the nerves are the first thing destroyed. You see the people without their feet and all, they say it's because the rats have eaten them. But they didn't feel it. In the night, you know, the rats come and chew on their foot, but they don't feel it at all. So they say that actually we've developed an idea that with leprosy, you begin to just dissolve or something. They said that isn't really the case. But you've lost the sense of feeling.

That sense of pain is an important thing. That sense of feeling is important. God created it, so that when you put your hand down on a hot stove, you feel that heat and you move your hand quickly. Otherwise then you smell something that smells weird. "Ooh! Oh look! Smoke! I'm burning." So, God created pain as a alarm system for us, in helping to preserve us. But sin has a very blinding effect. A dulling of a person's senses. A person begins to totally misinterpret history.

Now these people are saying, "We're not going to stop burning the incense to Ashtoreth, pouring out the drink offerings to her. Because, when we were doing that, we were in good shape. We had plenty. But, when we stopped doing it, that's when we got into trouble.

Since we stopped burning incense [verse eighteen] to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted now all things, and have been consumed by the sword and the famine (44:18).

So, they began to blame God and their, for the calamities that came upon them. This is so typical of man! So typical! You haven't served God, you haven't really been living for the Lord. But any calamity that comes in your life, you get angry with God, and you want to blame God for it. "Why would God allow this?

Why would God do that to me? Why would God allow this to happen to me?" And you want to blame God.

Years ago when I was first in my early pastoring years, I don't even like to think of how many years ago it was but, I was in Tucson, just a young pastor. We had quite a few people that were attending the church who were stationed at Davis Motham Air Force Base. An officer and his wife came and were gloriously converted to Jesus Christ. They began to bring other officers, officer's wives from the base, and we had exciting fellowship there. This one woman came, and at that time the church was very small, and I sort of made a habit on calling on the newcomers to the church.

So this one officer's wife came, and so the following week I went over to call at the house. Her husband met me at the door, I introduced myself, and he immediately became extremely antagonistic. He said, "Well you're not welcome here, you're not welcome in this house. You can just leave now!" I was sort of aghast at the fellow's response and reaction to me. But he went on to say that his father was a Presbyterian minister, and that he just brought his little daughter home from a visit to the doctor, and she was diagnosed as having polio. He had another little girl who was a little older, about eight years old, who had braces on as a result of polio in her earlier years. He said, "You can't tell me that He is a God of justice, of a God of love! To allow my second little daughter to have polio!" He was just so angry with God, and as God's representative, he was taking his anger out on me. But he was really angry with God! So I said, "Well tell me, have you been serving God?" And he let out a few oafs and said, "No." He said, "I would never serve a God like that!"

He was just so angry, and I said, "Wait a minute. If you're not serving God, if you're not a child of God, then why do you feel that God has some obligation to watch over your family? Why do you blame God then for the calamity that has taken place in your family?" But that's so endemic of people, they don't worship God, they don't serve God, but oh they want to blame God! Let something go wrong, and they shake their fist at God, and speak of their anger and hatred towards Him. Here were these people blaming God for the calamity that befell them, when in reality it was just the opposite. It was because they had forsaken God, that the calamity came. Because they wouldn't listen to God, because they wouldn't obey God. That's why the calamity, they brought it on themselves by their own disobedience, and yet they want to turn around and blame God when it finally comes.

[Verse nineteen, they said] *When we burned our incense to the queen of heaven, we poured out our drink offerings to her,* [The women are saying this, because he was getting after the guys for their wives doing these things. And they said,] *did we do these things without the knowledge or consent of our husbands, of our men? Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him this answer, and he said, The incense that you burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, you, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them, and came it not into his mind (44:19-21)?*

"I mean He knew these things, He remembered these things."

So that the Lord could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which you have committed: therefore [The therefore again! Because of this,] *your land is desolate, an astonishment, a curse, it's without inhabitant, at this present day. Because you have burned the incense, and because you have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil has happened unto you, as it is at this day (44:22-23).*

Let's get the record straight, Jeremiah's saying. "It isn't God's fault. It's your fault for not obeying the Lord and following the Lord, and listening to the Lord because if you had done that, then you would still be in the land today. God would've delivered you from your enemies." So Jeremiah is making the record straight.

Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to the women, Hear the word of the Lord, all of Judah that are in the land of Egypt: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; You and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, you've fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our bows that we have vowed, to burn the incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out the drink offerings to her: you will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. Therefore hear the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith Jehovah, that

my name shall nor more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, Jehovah God liveth (44:24-26).

It's over. Their relationship with God is over. God has put the finish to it. He said, "That's it! You persist in your evil after all of this? That's it. It's over."

And behold, I am going to watch over you for evil, and not good: and all of the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt will be consumed by the sword and with famine, until there comes to the end of all of them. Yet [God always has that small number] a small number that escape the sword, [There will be this remnant who will] shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all of the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs (44:27-28).

"We'll see. We'll see whose word comes to pass." Whether it be the word of the Lord, or their word, as they were gonna continue in these things, you know, "Because we prospered when we did these things". He's saying, "You're not gonna prosper, God's gonna watch over you for evil, you're gonna experience the sword and the famine, and you're gonna be wiped out! Now we'll just wait and see whose word comes to pass".

And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the Lord, that I will punish you in this place, that you might know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil: Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will give Pharaohhophra [Who was the Pharaoh at that time.] king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, [He will actually fall to the Babylonians, and that did take place a few years later.] I will give his life into the hand of those that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah the king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, his enemy, that sought his life (44:29-30).

So this is what God said. "We'll just wait and see". The word of God was fulfilled, and we have the story of history. As I said, from a chronological, this is God's last word. It's over.

It's a sad day when God quits speaking to man. When God says, "Okay, that's it. Not gonna talk to you anymore. The name of Jehovah will not be mentioned again." You know, that's it. The last word. The final word of God. There comes, and it's a rather frightening thing to realize, that in every life, every life, there comes that final call of God, to turn from your wickedness to a life in Christ. For every man who rejects that call of God, one day, God continues to call, and call, and call. But one day, God will no longer call. People, many people, thousands, millions of people, have heard God's final call. It's all over, once God's made that final call.

When will the final call be? We don't know! You don't know but what that tugging in your heart tonight, by the Holy Spirit, is God's final plea, God's final call to you. You don't know! We don't know when God is making His final appeal. When He says, "Okay, this is it. This is the last time I'm gonna speak, the last time I'm gonna draw you, the last time I'm going to deal with you concerning the evil in your life." If you reject God's final call, there remains only that certain fearful for looking for the judgement, and fire indignation, for which He will devour His adversaries. God made His final call. It's over. The dye has been cast. Now, all that remains is waiting to watch and to see the word of God being fulfilled, as history tells us that it was.

What happened to Jeremiah? We don't really know for sure. There are stories that Jeremiah died in Egypt, along with the rest of the captives. He stayed there, though he had no more message for the people. There are other stories that Jeremiah escaped, and went to Babylon, where he ultimately died in Babylon. We don't know if that is true or not. Possibly.

There is a story that I do not put any credence to at all. I think it's pure fabrication. That is, that Jeremiah took one of the princes, one of the descendants of David, and he actually fled to England. That prince, that descendant of David became king in England and the present monarchy in England, actually are descendants from David. Now, it's known as British Israelism, and it's a story that they have concocted to sort of bolster their beliefs that the Anglo Saxon nations are actually the ten lost tribes of Israel. But, as I say, I put no credence in that particular theory at all. But, so be it. However it is, this is the final message of Jeremiah. His prophecy is over. His period and time of prophesying is through and tragic as far as results, it was a failure. Yet he was obedient and faithful to God in warning the people. That's all that God required.

I think that we make a great mistake in thinking that we've got to win people to Jesus Christ, and we put so much emphasis upon getting the contract signed. No commission until you get the signature on the contract, you know. That's not so. You're not paid commission. You're paid a salary, and the Lord says that you are to witness, that you are His witnesses. What comes of the witness is His territory. All you are required and responsible to do, is to bear witness to people of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. What the Lord has done in your life. Having witnessed, that's all that you're required to do. You're not required to argue people into a faith, or into a belief of Jesus Christ. You're not responsible actually, to force them to believe. You can't! You are rewarded for witnessing, no matter if they reject it or accept it.

Thus Jeremiah had as great a reward as any other prophet who may have turned the nation around and brought them back to God. Because he was faithful in warning and witnessing the message that God gave him, to the people. So don't be weary and don't be discouraged, if you don't have a lot of people that you can point to and say, "Well I led him to Jesus Christ, and I led her, and I led them." If you can't do that, don't be discouraged or disappointed. If you can look around and say, "Well I've witnessed to them, and I've witnessed to them, and that heathen over there, I witnessed to him." Great! That's what God requires, is that you bear witness of His truth, and the results have nothing to do with your reward. You need to be faithful in your witness. That's all.

Chapter 45

Now, chapter forty five is a very short chapter. This was earlier in the prophesies of Jeremiah, in fact it goes back to the fourth year of Jehoiakim. So it takes you quite a ways back, now, almost to the beginning of Jeremiah's time of prophecy. He was still in his, probably late twenties by this time.

The word of the Lord that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, [Baruch was his scribe.] when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah (45:1),

So, Jeremiah speaks now to his scribe. Baruch wrote the prophecy of Jeremiah, and Jeremiah is talking to him now as a father to a son, or as a friend to friend.

Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto you, O Baruch (45:2);

You know, don't you wish that God would speak to you sometime like that? You know, it's just, "Here's what God has to say to you Baruch", that, you know that would be an exciting thing! From a prophet of God, "And here's what God is saying to you", and what God says to one, He often says to many. Thus the message of God to Baruch is an important message for us today. God's saying the same thing to you. I might say, "This is the message of God for you."

You said, Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest (45:3).

That was Baruch's complaint, "Oh man, I have no rest. Woe is me. I am just, I'm overwhelmed, I'm fainting in my sorrow, I find no rest."

But thus shall you say unto him, Thus the Lord says; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land (45:4).

Baruch was astounded at the prophecies, that which God was gonna do. He fainted! He thought, "Oh no! How could this be?" God said, "Look, I built it. I've built the nation, I've made it strong, and now I'm gonna tear it down. I planted the nation, and now I'm gonna pluck it up." I wonder if God isn't saying something similar to that concerning the United States. "I've planted it, and now I'm going to pluck it up. I've built it and made it strong, and now I'm going to tear it down." But then, here's the message to Baruch, the personal message, and it's one to each of us tonight.

The Lord said, And you seek great things for yourself? don't seek them: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places wherever you go (45:5).

"I'll watch over you and I'll keep you wherever you are, but don't seek great things for yourself. I'll take care of you wherever you go, but don't seek great things for yourself."

We should seek great things for God. We should be living for God's glory. We shouldn't be looking for

glory for ourselves, or great things for ourselves, that our name might become popular, we might become well known. And God says, "No, no. Don't seek that. Don't seek great things for yourself. Just trust in me, I'll take care of you wherever you go. I'll be there to take care of you. Just keep your eyes on me. Live for my glory."

So may God help us, to commit ourselves to Him in such a way that Christ might be magnified in my body, whether it is by life or by death, for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Just commit your ways to the Lord. Don't worry about taking care of yourself. Don't seek great things for yourself, just seek to do and to be, do what God would have you to do, and be what God would have you to be. That's sufficient. If we do that, our lives will be successful. If we fail to do that, no matter how much success we achieve, as far as the world's standards, our lives will be a failure. If when I come to the end of the road. If when they pull the plug on the respirator or whatever, and I've taken my last breath, if I have fulfilled the purposes of God for my life, even though as Jeremiah, there was nothing to show for it. My life has been successful, because I've done what God has called me to do.

If you are a Rockefeller, or some other wealthy person, and you've unmasked the fortunes of the world, when you take that last breath, if you've lived for yourself, and have sought great things for yourself, and have omitted God from your life; your life will be a dismal failure. Commit your ways to the Lord. Trust always in Him, that He might bring to pass His will and His purpose in your life. Shall we pray.

Father, we thank You for Your Word. May we not be like those in Egypt, who hardened their hearts, who would not listen, who experienced that horrible calamity where You no longer spoke to them. Where the voice of God became silent. When they no longer felt the tugging upon their hearts, of your Spirit. But You left them to their own devices, to their own evil until they were destroyed by their evil. Thank You Father that Your Spirit does strive with man, but help us to realize Lord, that there comes a day when Your Spirit will no longer strive with man. We realize that that day is rapidly coming to this world. As we see things coming to a climax, and we realize Lord, that as Noah went into the ark, and the door was shut, and the judgement began. So soon You will gather Your church into the ark of safety. The door of opportunity for salvation will be shut, and the judgement of God will begin, as You speak only in judgement and in wrath. Oh God, may we hear Your voice of love and mercy and grace this night, and may we respond. In Jesus' name, Amen.