

Under The Fig Tree



WEEK 33

Day 1

Jeremiah Chapter 23. Here, again, we find the main focus of God's judgment on Judah. Prophet, Priest and King had all misled the people and stood accused. There were true Prophets, including Isaiah and Micah in Hezekiah's day, then, later, Jeremiah and Habakkuk. These and the other biblical Prophets were specially commissioned by God. Apart from these there were schools of prophets throughout the Land, and towns where the Priests took council together. Joshua established towns for the Levites during the early days of Judah. A large number of the Prophets and Priests no longer took counsel with the Lord. They misled the people and God's anger was directed towards them. Every person is responsible for his or her own sins, so both leaders and led would be exiled. Yet, it is the leaders who, like shepherds, direct a nation either in the ways of God or away from Him. They open the door for God's blessing or the evil of following false gods.

This causes us to consider the great responsibility on the shoulders of leaders today. The world around us has many leaders, most of whom have a busy life in a complex world. In the business of life most do not seek God any more than the leaders of Judah had done. We also have an abundance of false prophets. Some would not consider themselves as prophets. They would call themselves by such titles as scientists, economists, social workers, educationalists, businessmen, philosophers, film-makers, entertainers, song-writers and politicians. There are multitudes of such leaders in our day who do not seek the Lord but who influence our society through what they say and do. Mostly they deny or ignore the Lord of Creation and build our society on a form of humanism, which is also open to counterfeit spirituality. In Jeremiah's day and ours, God calls these false prophets and world leaders false shepherds. Like a shepherd who leads a flock astray, so do these leaders, together, lead our nations astray.

Again, Jeremiah brought words of hope to the loyal remnant of Judah. These words have continuing relevance for our day. Verses 5 to 8, speak of Yeshua HaMashiach, the Shepherd whom God appointed to restore God's people to Him. He is the Great Shepherd, the Lord our Righteousness. As with similar Prophecies, this promise from God was relevant in part for the return from exile in Babylon: it also speaks of the end times. The final restoration that God had in mind was not only a return to the Promised Land, but a full and final restoration of His people to

live with Him forever, a full recovery from the Fall of Adam and Eve. The return from exile was an initial experience of what God had in mind for the future. Verses 7 and 8 speak of the return in wider terms than from Babylon. A time was foreseen when Israel would again be scattered among all nations. Even the regathering of Israel today, when the nation was born again in 1947, is not the final purpose of God. It is a preliminary to the great move of God on the entire earth to gather all people who seek Him through faith in Yeshua, followed by a great revival among those whom God has prepared from the remnant of Israel. This will then be followed by the return of Yeshua HaMashiach, the Great Shepherd, to bring in the Kingdom of Heaven in all its fullness. God had all this in mind when He spoke through Jeremiah.

Chapter 24. The same Prophetic Word is heard in two different ways, depending on those who hear it. There are people who are encouraged by the Words of God and there are others who are discouraged. The same Prophetic Word brings both warning and comfort. This was the case when Yeshua spoke in parables. For example, when He spoke of the four kinds of soil on which seed falls (Matthew 13), there were people listening who were hard hearted, entangled by the world and deceived by satan, many of whom rejected Yeshua's Words. There were also those who were soft hearted and repentant, who heard the same Words as words of encouragement. This is the way the Word of God acts, dividing those who seek God from those who reject Him. Paul said this of the Gospel message: *To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.* (2 Corinthians 2:16) So it was in Jeremiah's day. There were those who accepted God's discipline and who sought to renew their fellowship with Him, and there were others who fell away even further when the nation was exiled. God likened these two groups to good figs and bad figs.

Chapter 25. Mostly, the Books of the Bible follow a timeline. Sometimes, however, they are thematic and deviate from the timeline. This, to some extent, happens in Jeremiah's Book. This Chapter reviews incidents at the time of Jehoiakim, whereas we have already reviewed, in Chapter 21, incidents from the reign of Zedekiah, who *followed* Jehoiakim. The exile to Babylon took place in two stages. The details are in 2 Kings 24 and 25, and in 2 Chronicles 36. Jehoiakim was the first to be taken captive to Babylon.

Verse 11 was remembered by Daniel towards the end of the exile. God said clearly that the exile would be 70 years long, measured from the time when the Land of Judah was made desolate by the invading Babylonians.

Jeremiah's Prophecy extended to all nations. It appears that God sent him to visit the leaders of all the major nations of the world to cause the leaders to drink the cup of the wrath of God. It is more likely that this was a spiritual activity, whereby Jeremiah, in the Spirit, spoke prophetically to the leaders of these nations. His words are recorded so that they are an ongoing reference to all world leaders concerning the judgments of God on the entire earth. Judah's exile to Babylon was a prophetic sign to all nations. They, too, will come under the wrath of God in the end times.

Recall that Yeshua said that He was to drink from a cup (Matthew 26:39). If we have faith in Him, He has drunk the cup of God's wrath in our place. If we do not have faith in Him, we drink from that same cup, remaining under God's judgment of the world. When we share the bread and wine of Communion, remembering the Passover when He gave His life for us, we remember His death. He drank the cup of God's wrath so that we might drink of the New Wine of the Covenant He has made with us. This is why this simple act of sharing bread and wine in memory of Him is so important for believers, and must be accomplished with due reverence.

Chapter 26. Here is another account of Jeremiah prophesying openly in the Temple courts, so that all could hear what God was saying. The reaction was as expected, and he found himself in danger of his life from the elders of the City. This was such a fearful time that another Prophet fled to Egypt. He was Urijah, who had prophesied in the same manner as Jeremiah. Urijah was brought back from Egypt and murdered. God had promised that he would protect Jeremiah, and so his life was preserved. Ahikam spoke up for him and others referred to the time of Hezekiah when Micah had brought warning which had been heeded by the King. This reminds us of the time when Yeshua spoke prophetically in the Temple courts at the Passover just before He was crucified. It also reminds us of the time when Yeshua's disciples began to preach the Gospel openly. They were brought before the Sanhedrin and told not to speak, at the risk of their lives. At that time Gamalial spoke up and they were released (Acts 5:22-42). Jeremiah was a forerunner of those who preach the Gospel which, as we have said, divides people into two groups: *to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.*

Day 2

Chapter 27. Jeconiah had already been taken to Babylon. This was preliminary to the full exile. Nebuchadnezzar also carried away some of the main treasures for the Temple. Now it was time for a confirmation of the coming exile. Nebuchadnezzar would soon invade Judah and all the surrounding countries. The Babylonian Empire was at its height and most feared. Jeremiah sent a warning to Judah and the surrounding nations in the form of a sign. Just as the messengers carried bonds and yokes on their necks, so the nations would be in bondage to Babylon. God made it clear that it was He who was causing this to happen and that the Babylonians must not be resisted. This was to be God's discipline and the people were to accept this discipline. If they did not, their suffering would be increased. They were also warned not to heed the words of false prophets.

Chapter 28. How important it is that we hear the true Prophetic Word of God. It is also important that men and women do not prophesy from their own mind. Everything must be tested and false prophecy rejected. It will always be so, and Yeshua warned us that there will be days of deception as the end times come upon the world (Matthew 24:4-5). As it was for Jeremiah, so it will continue to be. People, who prophesy from their own imagination, base their ideas on human logic and false hope. They do not know the ways of God. It is like it was in the Garden of Eden, where the serpent asked, *did God really say...?* (Genesis 3:1). So it was that a false prophet. Hananiah could not believe that God would allow the Babylonians to defeat the people of Judah. He thought that Jeconiah would soon return from captivity and all would be well in Judah. Jeremiah stood his ground and also prophesied the death of Hananiah which, of course, came to pass as he said it would.

Chapter 29. It is remarkable that Jeremiah's letter to the exiles is available to us after all these years. Once again, Jeremiah implored the people to accept the exile, settle down in Babylon for 70 years, and not listen to false prophecy, which would only cause them trouble and confusion. After 70 years of discipline God knew that a remnant would be ready to return and be reestablished in the Land of Judah. Verse 11 to 13 are full of God's love and assurance of His faithfulness: *I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.* Daniel would read this letter: it would be his inspiration to pray the great prayer of confession in Daniel 9. The promise in the letter also has ongoing significance for the Children of Israel: it was in mind when Yeshua said, *ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.* Yeshua is the way to the Father, fulfilling the type and shadow of the return from exile. The letter that Jeremiah wrote to the exiles is still relevant today, especially when read in light of Messiah.

Chapter 30. Once more, Jeremiah was told to write a record of what God had spoken. Read these words carefully. Here was a confirmation of the promised return from exile (Verses 1 to 3). Jeremiah goes on to speak of the end times, just as Isaiah did when he spoke of men in prayer, looking as if suffering the pains of child-birth (Verse 6). This is what we see at the Western Wall in the City of Jerusalem today, where there is much prayer for the coming of Messiah. Those of us, who understand that Yeshua is the Messiah, realize that some of those who pray are expecting the Messiah to come for the first time: we know that it will be the *return* of Yeshua that will satisfy the longing in their hearts. We also know that this prayer will intensify in the coming days, which Jeremiah calls the *time of Jacob's trouble* (Verse7). David the King is mentioned in Verse 9. This King of David's line is Yeshua HaMashiach. Judah knew their need of God's help while exiled in Babylon. The entire world will be stirred up so that the greater need is made known, not just to Judah, but to all people. The return from exile is a shadow of salvation through faith in Yeshua. God is calling to salvation people from every nation, including all the dispersed exiles of Israel and Judah. Jeremiah 30 will be fulfilled completely as the time draws near for Yeshua's return.

Day 3

Chapter 31. Here are the great promises of God that stand over all generations. A remnant will survive and they will hear the call of God across the entire earth. In this Chapter, is the statement of the New Covenant (Verses 31-34), and a confirmation that Israel and Judah will not be forgotten. Note the details carefully. This New Covenant replaces the Covenant at Sinai. It does not replace the Torah of God, but enables it. That which was taught through Moses as external regulations is to be written on the heart. The New Covenant enables the Covenant, that God made with Abraham, to be fulfilled. This is the great plan that God had for Israel and Judah, progressively revealed through Jeremiah. The New Covenant was brought in through the sacrifice of Yeshua and enabled by the gift of the Holy Spirit to transform sinful hearts that resisted God laws. All of the travail of Israel and Judah was to reveal this need, so that God could fulfill His purposes for them and add those from Gentile nations who seek Him through faith.

The lessons learned through the exile of Judah are immense. The consequences of breaking the Covenant made at Sinai caused all this suffering. The Covenant fulfilled in Yeshua is the end purpose God had in mind. It is the Good News to all mankind. Yet, with the great promises of God comes a prophetic warning just as in Jeremiah's day. There is no other way to be reconciled with the Father than through faith in Yeshua: a person remains under God's judgment, an eternal judgment far more severe than the exile, if they refuse the free gift of God through Yeshua. This was confirmed by the Writer to the Hebrews (Chapter 12).

Hebrews 12, especially Verses 18 to 29. Read what the Writer to the Hebrews said about the importance of faith in God through the New Covenant. We have reached a climax in the Book of Jeremiah where all the layers of understanding point to faith in Yeshua and God's ultimate purpose for His people. We will pause at this point today, so that we may spend time reflecting on these great truths. We must ensure that we understand the way God worked His purposes out through the fall of Judah and the exile, so that we, too, might approach Him with due reverence and thankfulness.

Day 4

Jeremiah Chapter 32. Jeconiah had been taken captive to Babylon and his uncle, Mattaniah, made King of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar. Mattaniah was given the name Zedekiah and was subject to Nebuchadnezzar. Already, Jerusalem was considered subject to Babylon. Zedekiah displeased Nebuchadnezzar, however, thinking that God would not let Judah fall completely into the hands of the Babylonians. Imagine the situation, therefore. It was eleven years into the reign of Zedekiah and, once more, the most powerful nation on earth invaded the Land. The massed army of the ruthless Babylonians, with chariots, swords and spears came down from the north, just as Jeremiah had prophesied. 127 years previously, the Assyrians besieged Jerusalem. Hezekiah humbly sought God and the enemy was turned back. In his pride, Zedekiah thought God would do the same against the Babylonians, but it was not the same as in Hezekiah's day. Israel's sin was so great that God had told the leaders of Judah for more than 40 years they would be exiled. Zedekiah was soon to see the invaders face to face.

Meanwhile, Jeremiah had been imprisoned for telling the King what he did not want to hear. Up to this time Jeremiah had pronounced doom to Judah. Now, at the very time that this doom was imminent he spoke words of hope! Furthermore, as an act of faith, he bought a field from a member of his family according to the law and custom of Israel. It would be there, in 70 years time, when the nation returned from exile. This was like the statement of faith that Joseph made when he died in Egypt and commanded that his bones be preserved and taken back to the Land of Canaan when, hundreds of years later, Israel was released from bondage in Egypt. In the midst of this tense time, God spoke words to Jeremiah so that all who heard might be encouraged: *Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for me? (Verse 27)*

Chapter 33. Again, the word of hope was spoken, just as it had been before. Jerusalem would soon become desolate, but God would restore it. More than that, Jeremiah was reminded that God had a long-term plan. The Covenant that He made with David was secure. A King would arise from the line of David and sit on his throne forever. The exiled Jews only need look up into the sky and see that the sun moon and stars were in their place day after day, night after night. If God kept His Covenant with the created universe, would He not also keep His Covenant with His chosen people? One day, Judah was to be restored and there would be rejoicing once more. First the people must suffer discipline. If Jeremiah's words had been heeded, Zedekiah would not have resisted the Babylonians, and allowed the invading nation to take the people peacefully to exile. As it was, through pride, he resisted the words of God and caused a great slaughter of his people.

Chapter 34. A covenant was made. As was the custom, which reminds us of the Covenant God made with Abraham, a calf was cut in two and the people walked between the parts. Just as the blood of the calf had been shed when the covenant was cut, so would be the penalty of those who broke the covenant. For a moment Zedekiah, and those who had male and female slaves,

showed signs of repentance, releasing the slaves according to the Law of Moses. Then they changed their mind, and this confirmed God's judgment upon them.

Chapter 35. By contrast to the leaders of Judah, the small clan of the Rechabites showed their integrity. They were descendants of the Kenites, a Canaanite clan, and had become integrated into Judah. They had made a vow not to drink wine. This went back to the days of their forefather, Jonadab, at the time of King Ahab (2 Kings 10:15). They had kept their vow and this had pleased God. As a consequence, the line of Rechab would be preserved. God used this as an example to the disobedient people of Judah on whom judgment would definitely fall, due to their betrayal of the Covenant. God used these humble Rechabites as an example to His proud people. Even their King (Coniah, who was now in exile) would be judged and counted as if he had no children (Jeremiah 22:30). As Mary said when the birth of Yeshua was announced, *He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly.* (Matthew 1:52). Those who humble themselves before God can take encouragement from this. This would be remembered while Judah was in exile. It is also remembered throughout all generations. The Rechabites are like Gentiles who come to God in faith and whom God joins with the faithful remnant of Israel: part of the one Covenant Family for all eternity.

Day 5

Chapter 36. This Chapter begins a review of Jeremiah's Prophecies to the Kings of Judah. 2 Chronicles 36 is a useful reference to the timeline of the Kings. After good King Josiah, his son Jehoahaz reigned for just three months before being deposed by King Necho of Egypt. Necho made Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim King of Judah and gave him the name Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim reigned for 11 years before being taken captive to Babylon. Jeremiah recalled that, in the fourth year of his reign, he sent a scroll to the King, transcribed by the scribe Baruch. Jehoiakim burned the scroll and Jeremiah provided another copy with even more warnings added (Verse 32). Jehoiakim's rejection of God's warnings through Jeremiah brought severe judgment upon him. He, too, was carried off to Babylon. Later Kings of Judah should have heeded the fact that Jeremiah had prophesied accurately, but they did not. God could not have done more to warn Judah of the exile.

Chapter 37. Jehoiakin was only eight years old when he became King and, even at such a young age, he did evil, lasting only 3 months and 10 days before being summoned to Babylon (2 Chronicles 36:9). Jehoiakin was also called Jeconiah (1 Chronicles 3:16), which was shortened to Coniah. His uncle Zedekiah was appointed in his place by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. In Chapter 37, we review the way Zedekiah rejected the warnings of God through Jeremiah. At this time the armies of Egypt and Babylon were invading other countries and both came against Judah. Finally the Babylonians, also known as the Chaldeans, besieged Jerusalem. Far from heeding his warnings, the leaders of Judah imprisoned Jeremiah. Before this, Jeremiah went to his town in the land of Benjamin, to take possession of the property he owned, confirming his faith through his actions. There were signs that Zedekiah was reconsidering Jeremiah's Prophecies, but he was too stubborn to humble himself before God.

Chapter 38. Jeremiah is a type of Messiah. If his warnings had been heeded Judah would have been delivered. He was empowered by God's Spirit for His ministry. The Spirit of God was fully manifest in Yeshua: this was the same Spirit who ministered through Jeremiah. It is not, therefore, surprising that Jeremiah was a type of Yeshua. Nor is it surprising that Jeremiah suffered similar rejection to Yeshua. Visitors to Jerusalem in our day can visit places that archaeologists have identified as biblical sites. Among them is Caiaphas's house, in the region of ancient Jerusalem. Caiaphas was High Priest in Yeshua's day. This is where Yeshua was imprisoned before His trial and crucifixion (Luke 22:54-62). The prison in Caiaphas's house has been discovered and it reminds us of Jeremiah's imprisonment, as well as Yeshua's. Like Jeremiah, Yeshua would have been lowered to an underground cell, through a hole in the ground. This we can see today. Jeremiah was, in a sense, privileged to not only be called as a Prophet, but to suffer as Yeshua suffered. It may seem a doubtful privilege, and it was certainly a painful experience, but to be honoured by God for obedience is better than all the suffering that the world can inflict on a person. The Writer to the Hebrews said of Yeshua: *for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross.* (Hebrews 12:2). James wrote to those who stand firm in

faith: *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials.* (James 1:2) Jeremiah was lowered into the mud and mire of an underground dungeon, but God brought him out through the help of Ebed-Melech.

Zedekiah was now desperate and sought Jeremiah's counsel once more. If he had heeded the counsel he could have been helped by God. The King feared man rather than obeyed God (Verse 19), which was his downfall, according to all that Jeremiah said.

Chapter 39. Finally, and sadly, Jerusalem fell. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the City for 18 months before it fell (Verse 1 and 2), but fall it did - in the most terrible way. There was no escape route for Zedekiah, try as he might. He witnessed the death of his sons before being blinded and taken in chains to Babylon. He had been appointed by Nebuchadnezzar and made himself an enemy of the mighty conqueror. On the one hand he feared the Jews and on the other hand he feared the Babylonians. Because he did not heed the Words of God through Jeremiah, he was trapped on all sides and his fate was sealed along with the great City of Jerusalem and the sinful people of Judah. If we recall the time of David the King, of Solomon his son, when the City was first established and the Temple and Palace built, and when God protected His people, how sad was this day when the nation was taken to exile. Jeremiah witnessed the fall from the court of the prison and lamented over the fall, revealing how God Himself lamented.

In 70 AD there was another fall of the City of Jerusalem after the time that Yeshua prophesied in the same manner as Jeremiah. This time the City fell to the Romans. It is recorded by the historian Josephus, who was an eye-witness at the time. Such pain that the Jews have suffered through sin and also for rejection of God's Word, is finally and fully manifest in Yeshua's suffering on the Cross. Yet, also, God's promises stand. 2000 years on from the second exile of Judah we are in the early stages of the return to the Land as a preparation for a return to God through faith in Messiah. There are still hard days ahead, but God has declared that He will gather His people together at the end time. God took care of the poor people in the days of Jeremiah, and they were allowed to stay in the Land whilst the rest were sent to Babylon. He was faithful to Jeremiah too, as He had promised. Ebed-Melech was also saved from the disaster because he had trusted God and interceded for Jeremiah. We find reassurance in this; whatever befalls the world, if we remain faithful to God we will find Him faithful to us. As Paul said:

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37-39)

Romans 8. The Fall of Jerusalem was such a momentous event that we must all learn from it. It is central to God's teaching. It points to Yeshua's sacrifice for us, taking away the punishment that is due to us for sin, and to awaken us to the New Covenant revealed in Jeremiah 31. Through Jeremiah, we learn that God was not vindictive but suffered for His people, and this prepares us for understanding the suffering of Yeshua. It also prepares us for our part in the ongoing purposes of God, expressed in the teaching of Paul. Jeremiah did not prophesy doom to Judah

like a vindictive judge: he earnestly appealed to his people with the loving heart of God, as a father who himself suffers as he brings necessary discipline. Recall John 3:16-18, which is very relevant: *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe in Him is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* Likewise we, who know God through faith in Yeshua, are given the Gospel message to take to a sad world loved by God, even though many people reject Him. We stand with Jeremiah and, more fully, with Yeshua, to fulfill what Paul said of himself: *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church.* (Colossians 1:24) Such teaching is throughout the New Testament, that if we suffer with Yeshua we will also share His glory. We are prompted to these truths through the ministry of Jeremiah. Read Romans 8 as an encouragement in this. At one and the same time we are reading the history of Israel and Judah and learning lessons that are fulfilled through Yeshua today.

Day 6

Jeremiah Chapter 40. These are the details of how the Babylonians began the government of Judah during the exile. Just as Jeremiah had said, and also as it was revealed to Nebuzaradan the Babylonian, this was judgment from God. If the exiles and those left to tend the land were willing to serve the Babylonians then they would live in peace. Jeremiah was allowed to go free, just as God promised. The new governor, Gedaliah, sought to rule Judah at peace with the poor people who were left to tend the land.

Chapter 41. Still, there was more trouble. The Word of God could not have been made clearer over the forty years of Jeremiah's ministry, yet still a foolish man named Ishmael thought that he could restore the fortunes of Judah, or possibly gain power for himself. He murdered Gedaliah. This caused Johanan, who had previously warned Gedaliah about Ishmael, to search for Ishmael. Ishmael had taken captive some of the people from Mizpah. Johanan had become an official in the Babylonian army that had been left in Judah. The people returned to Johanan, but Ishmael escaped, planning to go down to Egypt.

Chapter 42. When Israel came out of Egypt God told them that they must never return there. Now, Johanan feared retribution from the Babylonians on account of Gedaliah. It was wise for them to ask Jeremiah to seek God on their behalf, but did they really want to listen? God did indeed speak through Jeremiah, but not what the people wanted to hear. Again, Jeremiah warned these people what would come upon them if they went to Egypt and that they would live in peace if they remained in Judah. God also said that he had seen into their hypocritical hearts.

Chapter 43. Once more, Jeremiah was accused of being a false prophet. Over all history this has been the fate of God's Prophets. It is hard to believe, but it is true. Yeshua spoke strongly about this (Matthew 29:36), and warned us that we should expect the same rejection from those whose hearts are hardened against God and prefer to prophesy from their own mind (Matthew 10:22-26). Jeremiah warned that Egypt would soon fall to the Babylonians, so there was no refuge for the people there. They must remain in Judah and trust in God. They did not listen to the warning.

Day 7

A Day for Rest and Further Reflection

Chapter 44. We must take the Word of God seriously. We must read our Bibles and carefully search out what God has done in the past and what He has declared for the future. We are in a day when humanism is rising very strongly, so that the Bible is being sidelined. People would prefer the logic of philosophers, sociologists, scientists, historians, politicians, artists, poets, writers and the like who claim to have an understanding of the situation of mankind quite different from the message of the Bible. The roots of many of the powerful influences of our day go back to ancient Greece and Rome. A yearning after the heritage of Greece and Rome is called humanism, where man puts himself in the place of God, claiming the power of human reasoning. The so-called period of *Enlightenment* was a time when there was a resurgence of humanism, especially in a period when it was led by French philosophers of the Eighteenth Century. We are in such a period today. Some Christian theologies have even been influenced by humanism. We are in days when the Prophetic Word of God will be resisted and there will also be false prophets who misinterpret what the Bible says. In Chapter 44, Jeremiah once more warned the Jews who fled to Egypt and told them to return to Judah. God knew that there would be a small remnant (Verse 28) who would return, but most would be lost when Babylon invaded Egypt, which indeed came to pass.

From this circumstance of Jeremiah's day pause to reflect on the importance of understanding God's Prophetic Word for today. Matthew 24 contains a clear account of what to expect in this world prior to the Lord's return. Just as in Jeremiah's day, every detail will be fulfilled: *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away*, said the Lord (Luke 21:33). Where, then, is hope? It all seems, from one perspective, rather dark. Yet, it is just as it was in Jeremiah's day, God spoke hope to dispel the darkness for those who would heed His words. God will look after His people if we put our trust in Him. We need not fear anything that the world brings upon us if we put our trust in God. The Kingdom of Yeshua will prevail and the Kingdoms of the world will fall.
