

Navigating Uncertainty

Lesson 8

Jeremiah 23:5-8, 24:1-25:38

November 1, 2020

The God of the Second Chance

Introduction

It's often said our God is a "God of second chances." The truth is that He is also a God of third, fourth, and fifth chances, and so on. Because His love is never-ending, so too are His grace and forgiveness.

God brought Israel out of Egypt, then built them into a strong kingdom. Outside influences caused Israel to ignore God's love and His law eventually. The nation fractured into two nations and continued to go awry and away from the will of the Lord until they were thoroughly rebellious.

Jeremiah delivered the continued message to Judah that God was angry with their disobedience and warned that His punishment would eventually come. Time went on, and Judah never did repent, until, as God had promised, they were finally conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and exiled to Babylon for three generations.

The story does not end there, though. God's plan wasn't one only of punishment. It was also a plan of redemption. After 70 years, God brought the nation of Judah out of Babylon, returned them to Jerusalem, and promised them a Savior.

Fast forward 600 years, and Jesus came to redeem not only Israel but the entire world. And like His Heavenly Father, Jesus is a Lord of grace and forgiveness and loves to give second, third, and fourth chances.

Memory verse: "The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.'"—Jeremiah 23:5

Pray and read Jeremiah 23:5-8, 24:1-25:38. What questions or observations do you have about these passages?

What do the passages say?

1. What did God promise to deliver? (Jeremiah 23:5)
2. What did God say would happen for Judah and Israel because of this King? (Jeremiah 23:6)
3. What did Jeremiah see in his vision? (Jeremiah 24:2-5)
4. What did the bad figs and the good figs represent in Jeremiah's vision? (Jeremiah 24:5, 8)
5. How many years had Jeremiah warned Judah of God's coming punishment? (Jeremiah 25:3)

What does the passage mean?

1. How did Jesus fulfill the promises of a Savior made in Jeremiah 23:5-8? (John 12:12-15, Acts 2:29-36)

2. The book of Jeremiah is filled with warnings and rebukes from the Lord to Judah and Israel about their disobedience and worship of false gods. Still, the Lord also promises deliverance and a glorious Savior. What did the Lord say that this Savior would do for the undeserving nations of Israel and Judah? (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

3. Where do we see God's grace in the way that he deals with Israel? (Jeremiah 24:6-7)

4. What does it say about God's character that He gave Judah so many warnings for so long? (Jeremiah 25:2-7)

5. What did the Lord mean that Judah had made Him angry with what they had made with their hands? (Jeremiah 25:7)

6. God divided Judah into two groups: the “good figs” and the “bad figs.” From these readings, we see that He had plans to get rid of the “bad figs” like Zedekiah king of Judah, but He also had plans to keep the “good figs” of Judah after 70 years of banishment in Babylon. Why did God need to exile the “good figs” to Babylon, rather than just letting them stay in Israel?

Applying the passages

1. The “good figs” of Judah were taken to Babylon against their wishes, but God had a specific redemption plan in store for them. God sometimes guides us to places where we would not necessarily want to go, but we need to trust His plan for us. Think back to a time that your life path took you to a place or circumstance that was unpleasant. How did God work out His plan for you during that experience? (Jeremiah 24:5-7)

2. To worship is to show an immense amount of adoration and reverence to something or someone. Jeremiah warned Judah that they angered God by worshipping idols made with their hands. This warning was probably about physical idols, but our culture also has made idols that we worship. What are some things that our 21st-century American society prioritizes over God? (Jeremiah 25:7)

3. Justice is an integral part of God's character, as are grace and forgiveness. We grieve Jesus with our sin and the idols we choose to worship. We also know that there is nothing that we can do that will separate us from His love. Think for a few moments and pray about the choices that you've made over the last few weeks. Pray for a few minutes to thank Jesus that He is forgiving and that He loves to give second chances. Write down some of that prayer below. (Daniel 9:9-10, Luke 5:17-25)