

Exegetical Notes, Jeremiah 33:1-11

“The Lord Is Good!”

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

Jeremiah 33:1-11

Verse 1

While Jeremiah was still confined in the courtyard of the guard, the word of YHWH came to him a second time:

- From the cross-dating of the years of the kings given in Jeremiah 32:1, we know that these events took place in the year 587BC, that was the year when Jerusalem was besieged by the King of Babylon. These events happened just before the fall of Jerusalem.
- King Zedekiah of Judah had imprisoned Jeremiah, the prophet, because Jeremiah said things that the King did not like. Jeremiah had been prophesying that Judah would fall to the Babylonians.
- At the moment Jeremiah spoke these words, he was in jail in the tower of the courtyard at the King’s palace in Jerusalem.
- While in jail Jeremiah still heard God speak. This was the second message he received from God while in prison.

Verse 2

“This is what YHWH says, he who made the earth, YHWH who formed it and established it -- YHWH is his name:”

- Jeremiah clearly identifies who it is who has spoken to him. It is YHWH, the God of Israel who has spoken.
- Jeremiah clearly believes that YHWH has the right to speak because he is the God who has created the earth. By right of creation, he owns it. It is his. Therefore, he has the right to speak to it and to expect to be heard.

Verse 3

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”

- God invites the people of Judah to turn to him in prayer promising that, if they do, he will show them things that they do not know or understand. This is an open invitation to the people of God to come back to God.

Verse 4-5

“For this is what YHWH, the God of Israel, says about the houses in this city and the royal palaces of Judah that have been torn down to be used against the siege ramps and the sword in the fight with the Babylonians: ‘They will be filled with the dead bodies of the men I will slay in my anger and wrath. I will hide my face from this city because of all its wickedness.’”

- To repair the walls of the city that had been damaged by the Babylonian siege, the great stone houses of the city, including the king’s palace, had been torn down. The word from God is that all this was to no avail. The remains of the houses would be filled with dead bodies for the city would fall to its enemies.
- This is clearly God’s judgment on a people who had turned away from him. He was lifting his protective hands.

Verse 6-8

“Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security. I will bring Judah and Israel back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before. I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.”

- God says that despite the fall of the city and his judgment against Judah, he will restore and forgive them. He promises that, in his time, he will rebuild Jerusalem and restore his people.

Verse 9

“Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise, and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it.”

- God explains that the blessing of his forgiveness is not for Israel alone. He explains that his mercy on Israel will be a sign of the blessing that other nations can also enjoy, if they will trust him and

acknowledge him as God. Israel is just an example of what every nation will experience if they will trust God.

Verse 10-11

This is what YHWH says: “You say about this place, ‘It is a desolate waste, without men or animals.’ Yet in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are deserted, inhabited by neither men nor animals, there will be heard once more, the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, and the voices of those who bring thank offerings to the house of YHWH, saying, ‘Give thanks to YHWH almighty, for YHWH is good; his love endures forever.’ For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were before,” says YHWH.

- God promises to restore the land and the fortunes of his people and to bring them back to their homeland in peace and in joy.

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