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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Various information and topics that help the reader of the Bible understand the apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ's teachings.

Jeremiah 23.

(2010).

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Teach it, don't demand it.

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Jeremiah 23.

The following is an overview of the main topics.
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Woe to the Shepherds.

Jeremiah 23:1-2 ----- ¹"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD.
²Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD.

The religious leaders who should have been caring for the LORD'S people have led the entire nation of Judah astray and to destruction.

The Lesson for us Today.

Never think that just because a religious institution has been around for the long time, has opulent buildings and multitudes of followers it is proof that its leaders are on the right path. God would have been thrilled if some of the people of Israel had sided with Jeremiah and checked what the false prophets were saying against the recorded words of the LORD and the written Covenant they had entered into with God through Moses. We are all accountable for our own salvation and should never blindly accept (as Judah did) that what we are told is the truth.

PROMISE:- I will raise up for David a Righteous Branch.

Jeremiah 23:3-8 ----- ³Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD. ⁵"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.' ⁷"Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' ⁸but 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' Then they shall dwell in their own land."

"I will raise up for David a righteous Branch: (v5).

The following verses show the Lord Jesus Christ if the righteous Branch of David: -

The LORD is fulfilling His purpose in David through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:30-33 ----- ³⁰And the angel (Gabriel) said to her (Mary), "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Matthew 1:1-25 ----- ¹The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham ---- NOW GO TO VERSE ---- ²¹ Mary will bear a son, and call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

Note; this does not mean Jesus is God, but that God's favour and salvation is now with Israel and the world through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the Son of David (meaning his descendant).

Matthew 21:9 ----- ⁹And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Matthew 21:15 ----- ¹⁵But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant,

Matthew 22:42 ----- ⁴²Jesus said, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David."

John 3:16-17 ----- ¹⁶Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

For further information see the title: -

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Where I have driven them; (v3) these words of Jeremiah were fulfilled through Babylon. Babylon invaded the land of Judah, burnt their houses and slaughtered the people, multitudes fled to the surrounding nations to escape the cruel soldiers of Babylon. The armies of Babylon surrounded the walls of Jerusalem for 1½ years so no-one could go in or out to get food. The famine became so great within the city walls parents were eating their own children to survive. Babylon eventually entered Jerusalem and destroyed the city, pillaged the Temple of God and took the people of Judah into captivity for 70 years. During this 70 year period many of the captive Jews were also scattered amongst many foreign nations in the Middle East.

I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply (v3).

These words of Jeremiah were fulfilled through Cyrus King of Media Persia, God calls Cyrus (the secular king of Persia) His anointed shepherd and by name. Isaiah pictures the LORD holding Cyrus's right hand while he opens all doors that no man can shut while Cyrus subdues all nations (Isaiah 45:1-6, 28). Cyrus conquered the empire of Babylon and gave the people of Israel written permission to return to their beloved city and rebuild the Temple of God.

I will set shepherds over them who will care for them; (v4) these words were fulfilled through Zerubbabel, Nehemiah and Ezra and the prophets and priest who helped rebuild the Temple and restore Israel's faith, but the Kings that ruled over Israel were not called "the LORD is our righteousness."

The following prophetic words of Jeremiah: -

- The days are coming (v5).
- I will raise up for David a righteous Branch (v5).
- He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness (v5).
- Israel will dwell securely (v6).
- He will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness (v5).
- Israel will be brought out of all the countries where God had driven them (v8).

Echoes a future time and future King who the LORD also calls His anointed shepherd, but his name is not Cyrus, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to call not only the scattered and lost sheep of Israel to God, but also the Gentiles.

Christ is the prophetic righteous Branch the LORD promised to raise up for David. It is through faith in the name of Jesus that those who accept him are made righteous.

For further information see the title: -

- The Commonwealth of Israel (at the end of this Chapter).

But; the prophetic words of Jeremiah also carry with them an echo of the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns the second time as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS ruling and reigning from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his 1000 year millennial reign.

- He shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness (v5).
- Israel will dwell securely (v6).
- He will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness (v5).
- Israel will be brought out of all the countries where God has driven them (v8).

Steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, peace and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever, and will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth, or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the lion and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

For further information see the title: - New World Order Established on Earth.

- In, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Both Prophet and Priest are Ungodly.

Jeremiah 23:9-12 ----- ⁹Concerning the prophets: My heart is broken within me; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, like a man overcome by wine, because of the LORD and because of his holy words. ¹⁰For the land is full of adulterers; because of the curse the land mourns, and the pastures of the wilderness are dried up. Their course is evil, and their might is not right. ¹¹"Both prophet and priest are ungodly; even in my house I have found their evil, declares the LORD. ¹²Therefore their way shall be to them like slippery paths in the darkness, into which they shall be driven and fall, for I will bring disaster upon them in the year of their punishment, declares the LORD.

Because of the curse the land mourns and pastures of the wilderness are dried up.

Because of the curse; refers to The Covenant Israel entered into with the LORD through Moses at Sinai. The covenant stated if Israel faithfully followed the LORD and His ways God would cause their land and everything they did to prosper, but if Israel turned from the LORD and His ways God would withhold the rain and curse the land and everything they did and all they had achieved would come to ruin (Deut chapter 28).

Both Jeremiah's and the LORD'S hearts are broken because: -

- The prophets and priests use their authority and power for their own gain.
- The land is full of married people having affairs.
- The prophet's and the priests are ungodly.

False Prophets in Samaria and in Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 23:13-15 ----- ¹³In the prophets of Samaria I saw an unsavory thing: they prophesied by Baal and led my people Israel astray. ¹⁴But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies; they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that no one turns from his evil; all of them have become like Sodom to me, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah." ¹⁵Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets: "Behold, I will feed them with bitter food and give them poisoned water to drink, for from the prophets of Jerusalem ungodliness has gone out into all the land."

The prophets of Samaria; prophesied by Baal and led Israel astray.

Baal; means Lord, possessor, husband, since the Hebrew husband was regarded as the literal owner of his wife, Baal was the common term for husband. Most often however, the word refers to the Semitic deity or deities called Baal. Baal is not the name of one god, but the name of the presiding deity of any given locality, because the worship of Baal was much the same everywhere in Canaan, in time Baal came to represent the idea of one god. The Baalim were the gods of the land, owning and controlling it and the increases of crops, fruits, and cattle was under their control. The farmer was completely dependent upon the Baalim. Some Baals were greater than others. Some were in control of cities.

The struggle between Baalism and Judaism came to a head on Mount Carmel when the Prophet Elijah met the priests of Baal and slew 450 of them. The cult quickly recuperated, however, and prospered until crushed by Jehu, but Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, the wife of Jehoram, gave the worship of Baal a new impulse. In the worship of Baal, incense and burnt sacrifices were offered to him and on extraordinary occasions the victims were children offered by their parents. Lascivious rites accompanied the worship.

Sometimes priests, dancing around the altar in a state of frenzy, slashed themselves with knives. At first the name Baal was used by the Jews for their God without discrimination, but as the struggle between the two religions developed, the name Baal was given up in Judaism as a thing of sham.

The prophets of Jerusalem.

Committed adultery told lies and supported those that lied, perverted justice robbed the poor and cheated the less fortunate out of their homes and land so that no one turned from their wicked ways. Both the prophets of Judah and of Israel have become like Sodom and Gomorrah to the LORD.

The men of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Did not aid the poor or the less fortunate and were not ashamed of their sins, but proclaimed them in the open. They were liars and full of pride. The men committed adultery and violently indulged in sexual immorality. They supported evildoers, where prosperous, at ease and had an excess of luxurious living.

Prophets Prophecy Vain Hopes and Speak Visions of their Own Minds.

Jeremiah 23:16-17 ---- ¹⁶Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁷They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.' "

The prophets give: -

- The people false hope.
- Speak visions from their own imaginations.
- Tell the people everything will be OK even though disaster is looming.

It is interesting to notice that the false prophets are only successful because the people do not want to hear the word of repentance or doom that the LORD through Jeremiah is speaking. The people want to hear messages of success and prosperity so this is what the false prophets speak to them (v17).

The lesson for us Today.

There are teachers of the Bible today that proclaim to their followers that if they commit their life to Christ everything will go well for them in life, this is what we would all like to hear, but it gives a totally false view of New Testament Christianity and of God. God promises New Testament Christians who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, that He will forgive their sins and grant them righteousness, spiritual fellowship with Himself and His Son, eternal life and spiritual comfort in times of trouble.

Regarding New Testament Christianity the apostle Peter says: -

1 Peter 1:5-9 -----⁵those in Christ are being guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Sadly in some circles of Christianity today what should be the least materialistic faith has become the most materialistic robbing those that are seeking the Lord from the spiritual joys and comfort contained in the gospel of Christ and his message of grace, forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death to eternal life.

Neither the Prophets nor the People listen to the Word of the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:18 -----¹⁸For who among them (the prophets) has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his (God's) word and listened?

Neither the prophets nor the people have given any serious consideration to the words of the LORD.

The lesson for us Today.

Never just accept what you are told just because a man stands behind a pulpit or has a certificate of accreditation from a Bible college. Always ask questions and be open to listen to other views from people you respect and then make your own decisions, don't give your power of choice away.

The Storm of the LORD'S Wrath has gone Forth.

Jeremiah 23:19-22 ---¹⁹Behold, the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked. ²⁰The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly. ²¹"I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied. ²²But if they had stood in my (God's) council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.

The storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, refers to Babylon's armies being prepared to invade the land of Judah and Jerusalem.

In the latter days you will understand it clearly; means when the people of Judah see Babylon's armies enter Jerusalem and destroy the city, burn their houses, pillage the Temple of God and take them into captivity for 70 years they will reflect back and know without doubt that what the false prophets told them was lies and what Jeremiah spoke was the words of the LORD.

No-One can hide from the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:23-24 --- ²³"Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God afar off? ²⁴Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD.

It is impossible to hide from God because by His Spirit He is in our conscience and mind there is no escape from the Spirit of the LORD simply because were ever we go our conscience and mind goes with us and thus so does the omnipresent Spirit of the LORD.

The prophets prophecy lies and deceit of their own heart.

Jeremiah 23:25-27 -- ²⁵I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' ²⁶How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, ²⁷who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal?

Who Prophecy Lies, and the Deceit of their Own Heart.

There are two practical application of this in today's churches: -

1. Uncaring ministers and leaders of a church may speak lies and deception to attract people to their church so as to increase their power, fame and income; this was the heart of the prophets in Jeremiahs day and the heart of the religious leaders in Jesus day, i.e. the Pharisees, Chief Priest and Scribes.
2. Caring ministers or leaders of a church over time becomes aware of their congregations troubles and needs, this is a good thing because it enables them to help, but there is a danger that they are tempted to speak words to them in the name of the LORD that are really words of what their own heart would like to see happen for the person rather than what God has purposed.

The LORD is against Prophets who steal His words from Each Other.

Jeremiah 23:28-29 --- ²⁸Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD. ²⁹Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

Straw; refers to the words of the false prophets, because it has no life giving properties.

Wheat; refers to the word of God, because wheat will sustain life.

The LORD is against the Prophets.

Jeremiah 23:30-32 ---- ³⁰Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who steal my words from one another. ³¹Behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who use their tongues and declare, 'declares the LORD.'

³²Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, declares the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them or charge them. So they do not profit this people at all, declares the LORD.

The LORD is against those who Steal His Words from One Another.

The Practical Application of this Today.

God wants ministers and leaders of Churches to seek out their own message and not click on the internet and copy another man's sermon, simply because if they are in error that error will be multiplied by everyone who copies that man's message. God expects each full time religious leader to seek God themselves and discover their own message, after all this is what they are called to do. Even in the world system it is considered cheating to copy someone else's book.

Note; there is nothing wrong with reading other peoples work and being inspired by it, in fact this is a good thing, but when it is used as an easy way to escape seeking the LORD and studying His word for oneself, especially if one is teaching others then it becomes laziness and can easily multiply error.

The Prophets Pervert the Word of the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:33-40 -- ³³"When one of this people, or a prophet or a priest asks you, 'What is the burden of the LORD?' you shall say to them, 'You are the burden, and I will cast you off, declares the LORD.' ³⁴And as for the prophet, priest, or one of the people who says, 'The burden of the LORD,' I will punish that man and his household. ³⁵Thus shall you say, every one to his neighbor and every one to his brother, 'What has the LORD answered?' or 'What has the LORD spoken?' ³⁶But 'the burden of the LORD ' you shall mention no more, for the burden is every man's own word, and you pervert the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God. ³⁷Thus you shall say to the prophet, 'What has the LORD answered you?' or 'What has the LORD spoken?' ³⁸But if you say, 'The burden of the LORD,' thus says the LORD, 'Because you have said these words, "The burden of the LORD," when I sent to you, saying, "You shall not say, 'The burden of the LORD,' " ³⁹therefore, behold, I will surely lift you up and cast you away from my presence, you and the city that I gave to you and your fathers. ⁴⁰And I will bring upon you everlasting reproach and perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.' "

The entire nation of Judah is, the Burden of the LORD
Because of their choices (v33).

You shall not say the, “Burden of the LORD,” because; it is not the LORD that is the cause of Israel’s troubles but the choice the people have made themselves. The LORD is telling the people if they follow Him and do what is right and fair to others they will be blessed and prosper in everything they do, but if they choose to reject God and use and oppress others for their own gain then everything they do will come to ruin. It is the people themselves by their own choices that bring a burden on their nation or individual life.

Everyone was to simply ask, what has the LORD spoken or answered?

The Commonwealth of Israel.

It is important to understand that the promised ‘SEED’ of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ because God is now creating one “New Nation” in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).

Jews and Gentiles become One “New Nation” in Christ.

The Apostle Paul said: -

Ephes. 2:11-22 ----- ¹¹Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us (Jews and Gentiles) both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we

both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints (Jews) and members of the household of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, 'Commonwealth of Israel' and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this 'New Nation' and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The practical application of what this means to YOU: -

If you belong to Christ, all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to 'YOU.' The book of Revelation states, "When Christ returns everyone will see him (the Gentiles) and those who pierced him (the Jews). And tells us, Jesus the faithful witness and the ruler of kings on earth loves us (Jews and Gentiles), freed us from our sins by his blood and ransomed a people for God from every tribe (Jews) and language and people and nation (Gentiles) to be a kingdom and priests to God and they and will reign on the earth (Revelation 1:5-10).
