

A Trek Through Jeremiah 22 - 13:1-27

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Today:

Four warnings and a plea 13:1-27

- Four warnings about the upcoming destruction and why.
- One plea; still time to repent but the light is fading fast.

Five truths about the danger of persisting in sin.

The spoiled waistcloth 13:1-11

The object lesson 13:1-7

Jeremiah 13:1-7 (LSB)

1Thus Yahweh said to me, “Go and buy yourself a linen belt and put it around your loins, but do not put it in water.”

2So I bought the belt in accordance with the word of Yahweh and put it around my loins.

3Then the word of Yahweh came to me a second time, saying,

4“Take the belt that you have bought, which is around your loins, and arise, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a crevice of the rock.”

5So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as Yahweh had commanded me.

6Now it happened that after many days Yahweh said to me, “Arise, go to the Euphrates and take from there the belt which I commanded you to hide there.”

7Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the belt from the place where I had hidden it; and behold, the belt was ruined; it was totally worthless.

- Jeremiah told to buy a linen belt and wear it but not to put it in water. Later he was told to take it to the Euphrates River and hide it in the rocks. After that he was told to go back and retrieve the belt; it was ruined.
 - Belt. Typical undergarment which went around the waist and down to mid-thigh.
 - Ruined. Lit “whole not successful/prosperous”
 - Much discussion among the commentators.
 - Main issue: 500 miles from Jerusalem to the Euphrates River.
 - Literal or a vision? Belt an undergarment or sash worn externally? Travel to Euphrates River or nearby village of Perath (Bethlehem)?
 - My view: Literal. Jeremiah traveled to the upper Euphrates River (likely near Carchemish).
- Symbolism
 - Belt: Yahweh's people.
 - Clean belt worn next to the skin and kept dry: Their early purity, separation from false religion, intimate relationship with Him.
 - Ruined belt: Judah made worthless by going after false gods
 - Linen: Judah's priestly calling. Linen worn by priests.
 - Water: pagan influence. Water softens linen and makes it pliable. River water covered the belt with mud and ruined it.
 - Euphrates River: Babylon. Long journeys recall Judah's repeated diplomatic missions to make alliance.

The explanation 13:8-11

Jeremiah 13:8–11 (LSB)

8Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

9“Thus says Yahweh, ‘Just so will I ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.

10‘This evil people, who refuse to listen to My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their hearts and have walked after other gods to serve them and to worship them, let them be just like this belt which is totally worthless.

11‘For as the belt clings to the loins of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘that they might be for Me a people, for a name, for praise, and for beauty; but they did not listen.’

- V9 What Yahweh will do

- Just so. Explaining the illustration.
- Ruin. Bring down
- Pride.
 - Nation and culture that Judah had built with their inheritance.
 - Pride of their hearts.
- Great pride. Ranked first.
- Continual OT theme: men together, exalted without God. Tower of Babel (Gen 11), world city (Is 13, 24), temple destroyed (Mt 24:2), Babylon the great fallen (Rev 18)

- V10 Why

- Evil people. Morally bad.
- What they do
 - Refuse to listen to My words. Act of the will. Hear and obey. In the covenant and the prophets.
 - Walk in the stubbornness of their hearts. In their way of life. Unwilling to obey or be corrected. Heart attitude.
 - Have walked after other gods to serve them and worship them. To serve them and to worship them.
- let them be just like this belt which is totally worthless.
 - Not successful. To be discarded.

- V11 What might have been
 - For as the belt clings to the loins of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me.
 - Made to be Yahweh's people in intimate relationship.
 - Cling. As a man cleaves to his wife (Gen 2:24). As Ruth clung to Naomi (Ruth 1:14)
 - that they might be for Me a people, for a name, for praise, and for beauty
 - Yahweh's chosen people
 - To make Him known to the nations (4:16)
 - To make His name (character) known
 - To bring Him praise for His worthiness.
 - To show His beauty.
 - but they did not listen
 - Hear and obey.
 - Jn 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

Truth: Separation: Our Lord intends for us to have an intimate relationship with Him. But when we sin, our sin separates us from Him.

The wine jars 13:12-14

Jeremiah 13:12–14 (LSB)

12“Therefore you are to say this word to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, “Every jug is to be filled with wine.” ’ And they will say to you, ‘Do we not very well know that every jug is to be filled with wine?’

13Then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Behold, I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—the kings that sit for David on his throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness!

14“I will shatter them against each other, both the fathers and the sons together,” declares Yahweh. “I will not spare nor show pity nor have compassion so as not to ruin them.” ’ ”

- V12 Revelry

- Every jug is to be filled with wine.
 - Jug. Largest pottery container for wine (up to 10 gallons).
 - Likely a popular saying in revelry: “Plenty of wine; let’s party!”
 - Wine brought joy. Contrast Jn 2:1-11 Jesus at the wedding in Cana: They have no wine.

- V13-14 Calamity

- All the inhabitants. Civil leader, religious leaders, people. Highest to the lowest.
- Fill...with drunkenness. Not for joy; unable to think or act. Canaanite religion characterized by drunkenness.
- Shatter them against each other.
 - As Jehoshaphat’s victory over Moab and Ammon. Enemy destroyed each other. (2 Ch 20:22-23). Now Yahweh will do this to Judah.
 - All joy lost.
- Fathers and sons together. Everyone.
- No sparing or pity or compassion will keep them from ruin.

Truth: Ruin. We may celebrate what we do outside of Christ but sooner or later He will bring it to ruin.

Fading light 13:15-17

Jeremiah 13:15–17 (LSB)

15Listen and give ear, do not be haughty, For Yahweh has spoken.

16Give glory to Yahweh your God, Before He brings darkness And before your feet stumble On the dusky mountains; And while you are hoping for light, He makes it into the shadow of death And turns it into dense gloom.

17But if you will not listen to it, My soul will cry in secret for such pride; And my eyes will bitterly weep And flow down with tears Because the flock of Yahweh has been taken captive.

- V15-16a Plea

- Listen and give ear, do not be haughty, For Yahweh has spoken.
 - Still time to repent. Synonyms for emphasis.
 - haughty. As v9 great pride. Pr 16:18 Pride goes before destruction.
 - For Yahweh has spoken. No excuse for disobedience.
- Give glory to Yahweh. OT idiom: confess your sin. Josh 7:19 Joshua examining Achan.

- V16b Illustration

- Traveler or shepherd (v17) going through rough country at dusk trying to reach safety. Still light but getting dark fast.
- And before your feet stumble. Repent before you fall and don't get up.
- And while you are hoping for light. No repentance.
- He makes it. By Yahweh.
- shadow of death. Calamity leading to death.
- Dense gloom. Thick clouds and fog. Unable to see.

- V17 Mourning

- But if you will not listen to it. Appeal
- My soul will cry in secret...And my eyes will bitterly weep And flow down with tears
 - Intense grief by Jeremiah and by Yahweh
 - Internally as they do what must be done.
- for such pride.
 - V9 great pride. V10 stubbornness of their hearts.
 - Kept them from the blessings of the covenant.
- Because the flock of Yahweh has been taken captive.
 - Illustration: rustling sheep.
 - Fulfilled in the exile.

- Lk 19:41-42 And as He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He cried over it, saying, "If you knew in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.
 - Jesus cried over Jerusalem
 - For them the light was gone and the dense gloom had come.
 - They could not see the things which make for peace.
 - Calamity would come in 70 AD.

Truth: Darkness. If one persists in rejecting the light of truth then there will come a time when he will have no light.

A royal dirge 13:18-19

Jeremiah 13:18–19 (LSB)

18 Say to the king and the queen mother, "Take a lowly seat, For your beautiful crown Has come down from your head."

19 The cities of the Negev have been closed up, And there is no one to open them; All Judah has been taken away into exile, Wholly taken away into exile.

- Say to the king and the queen mother.
 - Either Jehoiachin and his mother Nehushta at Judah's first exile or Zedekiah and his mother Hamutal when Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed.
 - Queen mother had much influence in Judah.
- "Take a lowly seat, For your beautiful crown Has come down from your head."
 - Loss of sovereignty
- The cities of the Negev have been closed up, And there is no one to open them; All Judah has been taken away into exile, Wholly taken away into exile.
 - Even the cities in the far south are conquered.
 - The nation gone into exile

Truth: Humbled. We may think we are on top but the Lord can bring us down to the bottom.

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Disgrace for Jerusalem 13:20-27

Jeremiah 13:20–27 (LSB)

20“Lift up your eyes and see Those coming from the north. Where is the flock that was given you, Your beautiful sheep?

21“What will you say when He appoints over you— And you yourself had taught them— Former companions to be head over you? Will not pangs seize you Like a woman in childbirth?

22“If you say in your heart, ‘Why have these things happened to me?’ Because of the magnitude of your iniquity Your skirts have been uncovered And your heels have suffered violence.

23“Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil.

24“Therefore I will scatter them like chaff passing away Into the wilderness wind.

25“This is your lot, the portion measured to you From Me,” declares Yahweh, “Because you have forgotten Me And trusted in lies.

26“So I Myself have also stripped your skirts off over your face, That your disgrace may be seen.

27“As for your adulteries and your lustful neighings, The lewdness of your prostitution On the hills in the field, I have seen your detestable things. Woe to you, O Jerusalem! How long will you not cleanse yourself?”

- To Jerusalem personified
- V20 Called to account
 - The destroyer in view.
 - A shepherdess called to account for her flock which is lost.
- V21 Shame
 - What will you say when He appoints over you— And you yourself had taught them— Former companions to be head over you?
 - Judah had made multiple attempts to ally themselves with Babylon.
 - Now Babylon will rule over her.
 - Yahweh will do this.
 - Will not pangs seize you Like a woman in childbirth?
 - Pangs of shame.
 - Painful as a woman in childbirth.
- V22 Why?
 - If you say in your heart, ‘Why have these things happened to me?’
 - Jerusalem, not repentant, cannot understand why calamity is upon her. Jer 5:31 The prophets prophesy with lying, And the priests have dominion by their own hand; And My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it?
 - Because of the magnitude of your iniquity
 - Breaking the covenant; rejecting Yahweh; going after false gods.
 - Your skirts have been uncovered And your heels have suffered violence.
 - Also in v26. Public shaming as a prostitute.

- V23 Proverbial wickedness
 - Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots?
 - Popular proverb depicting one who cannot change.
 - Then you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil.
 - Evil is their way of life.
 - Habit and established culture keep them from changing.
 - Jer 4:31 For thus says Yahweh to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem, "Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns.
 - Thorns came in established fields
 - The people needed to break completely new ground.
- V24 Scattered
 - Illustration from winnowing.
 - Judah does not change their way so Yahweh blows it away.
- V25-26 Their lot
 - This is your lot, the portion measured to you From Me," declares Yahweh
 - What their great pride has earned (v9)
 - Because you have forgotten Me And trusted in lies.
 - Because they broke the covenant: rejected Yahweh, went after false gods.
 - So I Myself have also stripped your skirts off over your face, That your disgrace may be seen.
 - Shamed as a prostitute before the nations. (4:16)
- V27 No hiding
 - Judah's idolatry is clearly seen by Yahweh
 - How long will you not cleanse yourself?
 - Plea for true repentance: put away the detested things and return to Yahweh (4:1-2)

Truth: Shame. We may think our sins are hidden but the Lord can expose them and shame us before all.

Application: Watchful correction

Jer 13:17 But if you will not listen to it, My soul will cry in secret for such pride; And my eyes will bitterly weep And flow down with tears Because the flock of Yahweh has been taken captive.

Gal 6:1 Brothers, even if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, each of you looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

- When confronting sin in another
 - Be spiritual ourselves
 - Correct in a spirit of gentleness.
 - Beware of being tempted to sin ourselves..

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