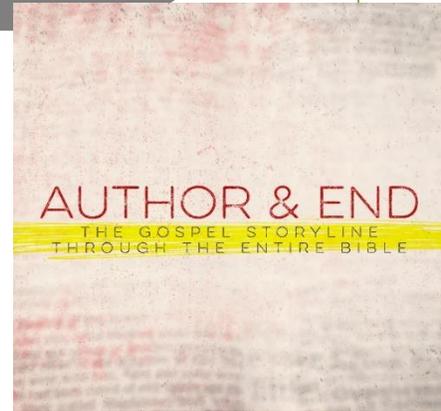


JUDGMENT DOES NOT COMPROMISE GOD'S PLAN

Lesson 21 - God Keeps All of His Promises; Israel Falls

In Jonah, we saw that God faithfully pursues the repentance of people. In His long-suffering nature, the Lord patiently extends mercy. God's final words in the book of Jonah show that He deeply cares and longs to save. However, God is also righteous and holy. Sin is a treasonous act against His lordship, and He promises that sin will be judged. Through His Law and His prophets, God continually warned His people of the consequences of abandoning their relationship with Him for sin. Sin brings judgment for all people. In the Old Testament, God displayed His judgment over sin in a limited way. **This judgment on Israel was only a shadow of the eternal judgment to come. We can rejoice, however, that Jesus Christ bore the wrath of God's eternal judgment for all who will repent and believe.**



THE BACKGROUND

Israel seemed to suffer from "nation-wide amnesia" in regard to God's words and promises. God constantly called His people to remember, but they consistently refused His warnings.

1. Exodus 20:4-5 - Within the Ten Commandments, God warns about turning to idols because He is a jealous God. He will not share His glory, and a graven image would turn Israel their minds and hearts away from the one, true God.
2. Deuteronomy 6:12 - Moses warned, "Then beware lest thou _____ the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."
3. Joshua 4:1-7 - God instructs a Joshua to place stones in the middle of the Jordan River and on the shore so future generations would remember what God did for His people there.
4. 1 Samuel 12 - In his farewell address, Samuel, the final judge, warned of the consequences of "forgetting" God. He warned that the people and their king would meet destruction.
5. Psalm 77:11-12 - "I will _____ the works of the Lord: surely I will _____ thy wonders of old. I will _____ also of all thy work, and _____ of thy doings."

FAITHLESS: THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL - 2 KINGS 17:6-41

Judgment came first to the northern tribes of Israel (722 B.C.). As you can see from the illustration, none of their kings followed the Lord, and the people didn't do any better. For many years (a sign of God's patient longsuffering), the Israelites chose not to listen to the Lord.

• The people were faithless.

1. They knew the warnings and promises of God's judgment, but their lives showed they didn't believe them. (2 Kings 17:7, 13-14, 34-41) - *declares that God does not keep His word or promises.*
2. They were consumed with being like other nations and faithless people. (17:8, 11, 15) - *declares that God's way is not best; there are other "gods" that satisfy, protect, and provide.*
3. They tried to secretly commit their sins. (17:9) - *declares that God is not all-knowing or all-powerful; God can be fooled.*
4. They returned over and over to the empty, powerless "worship" of Baal. - (17:9-12, 16-17) *declares reliance on and affection toward things outside of God; declares God's position in our lives can be replaced.*
5. They consistently rejected any responsibility or part they held in God's covenants. - (17:34-41) *declared that God would not or could not hold them responsible as long as they had the formalities of religion covered.*

HARD-HEARTED: THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF JUDAH - 2 CHRONICLES 36:11-21

While the Kingdom of Judah did have a few leaders that followed the Lord, the people never turned to God for more than a generation. Though they lasted longer than the ten northern tribes, they continually grew more calloused. The final king of Judah was named Zedekiah, and his reign and fall were characteristic of the people.

1. Pride was at the root of their outward sins. - (2 Chronicles 36:12)

- a. Rejection of God's past and present message - (36:12, 16)
- b. Ridicule of God's messengers - (36:15-16)

- c. Rebellion against God's opportunities - (36:13)
 - The destruction of Jerusalem did not all come in one cataclysmic battle; it came in stages.
 - Nebuchadnezzar had removed the previous king of Judah and made Zedekiah swear allegiance.
 - In return, Israel could stay in Jerusalem and the kingdom remained intact.
 - They had the opportunity to repent and return to worshipping the Lord.
 - Jeremiah had counseled Zedekiah not to rebel against Babylon, but the king listened to false prophets who spoke illusions of grandeur and victory. (Jeremiah 32:1-5)

2. Hard-heartedness was displayed in an unwillingness to repent. (36:13-14)

- a. They sinned "very much" (*rabah - more and more; multiplying*). Not only did they continue sinning, but they increased their sinning. (36:14)
- b. They polluted the temple they had built for their God by using it for other things. (36:14)
- c. They ignored the merciful, compassionate messages of God. (36:15)
- d. They turned their hearts against God and his messengers. (36:16) - A sign of hard-hearted people is that eventually they do not simply turn away from God, but they push against Him.

DESTRUCTION: GOD BRINGS JUDGMENT ON HIS PEOPLE - 2 CHRONICLES 36:17-23

1. God's judgment removed every source of pride for the people.
 - a. Killed their young men. - (36:17) - their heirs and ability to pass a line or heritage
 - b. Removed all the vessels and treasures of the temple. - (36:18) - their physical "trophies" of blessing
 - c. Burned the temple. - (36:19) - their representation of God's presence
 - d. Broke down their walls. - (36:19) - their sense of protection and separation from others
 - e. Burned the palace. - (36:19) - their status as a kingdom
 - f. Carried the survivors into captivity. - (36:20) - their pride as an independent nation; they were returned to their beginnings of bondage
2. God kept everything needed to fulfill His promise. Their destruction made it clear that His covenant was not based on them. He would still offer a plan of hope, but it would be depended on His Son and not "His children." (36:22-23)

God would now make a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34)... → Come back next week

This week, dwell on the fact that God will judge all sin, but can save all people. Sin will be judged in Christ or in hell. There is still time on this earth before God's ultimate judgment. What will we do?

In the Lord's Eyes...				
	Did What Was Right Like David	Did What Was Right but Not Like David	Did What Was Evil	Did What Was Evil, but More Than Others
The Northern Kingdom of Israel		Jehu (but followed in the sins of Jeroboam)	Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Ahaziah, Joram, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, Hoshea	Omri, Ahab
The Southern Kingdom of Judah	Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah	Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham	Rehoboam, Abijam, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, Zedekiah	Manasseh, Amon