

DESOLATION THIS DAY

(Discourse Handout)

1.0 Discourse Goals: Scripturally, what is ancient Israel's 70 years desolation? When did it occur?

2.0 Foundation Text and Context:

- Judah in deplorable spiritual condition. God sent Jeremiah to urge Judah to repent.
- Jer.25:8,9,11 (70 years of concurrent punishment on the people and land desolation).

3.0 First, Babylon Subjugated (enslaved or put in servitude) the Jews:

- 2 Chron.36:5-7; Dan.1:1-3 Nebuchadnezzar began subjugation in 3rd yr. of Jehoiakim's reign
- Jeremiah calls this action a "captivity" of Jews, not a desolation of land. (29:14)

4.0 Second, Babylon Desolated the Land of Judah:

- Jere. uses 3 Heb. words translated desolation (18:16; 25:11; 34:22) which mean ruin, waste,
- Jeremiah delivered the desolation prophecy and was an eyewitness to its fulfillment
- Five steps in Jeremiah's prophecies & testimony that led up to & included the land desolation.

4.1 Jeremiah Declared Judah's Unfaithfulness – Violating the Old Law Covenant (11:1-10)

- Idol worship (1:16, 5:19; 11:10,17). Sabbath violation (17:21-27); Neglect of needy (5:28; 7:6)
- Lying & deceit (9:4-6); National & individual prostitution (3:1-3)
- National and individual adultery (3:6-9; 5:7; 9:2; 23:10; 29:23)
- Sacrifice of children to Baal (19:5; 32:35); Violated 7 year Heb. freedom law (34:8-11,14,17)

4.2 Jeremiah Repeatedly Counseled Judah to Repent (3:14; 4:1; 7:3-7)

- Judah responded by persecuting and injuring Jeremiah (20:2; 37:15-18; 32:3 Chs.36-38).

4.3 Jeremiah Foretold the Progressive and Final Consequences of Judah's Refusal to Repent

- Foreign invasion and resulting captivity to some (10:17,18; 13:19; 15:2,4)
- Starvation death to some (11:22; 15:2, 16:4; 21:9; 27:13; 38:2; 42:17; 44:12)
- Violent death to some (11:22; 15:2,9; 21:6-9; 27:13; 34:20)
- Final punishment is desolation of the whole land (4:20-27); coming desolation described as:
 - Jer.4:7 (rural land and cities desolated, without inhabitant)
 - Jer.9:11 (Jerusalem and all Judah cities vacated – no inhabitants & uninhabitable)
 - Jer.17:27 (Jerusalem's defenses [fortresses, gates, etc] burned to the ground)
 - Jer.21:3,10 (During his last 2 years, Zed. warned of coming desolation)(cf.39:1,2; 52:4,5)
 - Jer.21:14 (Judah's forests and surrounding areas burned to the ground)
 - Jer.22:1-7 (Zedekiah's palace [his residence] dismantled and burned)
 - Reason: King Jehoiakim violated labor laws to build it (22:6-18)
 - Jer.33:10 (no human population, and no animals)
 - Jer.34:1,2,6,22 (During final battle with Nebuchadnezzar, Judah not yet desolated)

4.4 Jeremiah Personally Witnessed & Declared the Occurrence & the Timing of Judah's Desolation

- Jer.39:1,2,8 (Jerusalem besieged in 9th year of Zedekiah's reign (52:4,5); Jerusalem invaded midway through the 11th year of Zedekiah's reign (52:6,7,12-14); Jews weak, starving, & defenseless; (52:6); City walls breached; Jews killed or exiled and city burned (39:8,9; 52:13); A few poor (vinedressers) remained temporarily (39:10).
- Jer.39:11-14; 40:6 (Jeremiah not taken to Babylon; left with remnant in Judah as eyewitness)
- Jeremiah chapters 41, 42, & 43 tell us what happened to the remnant of Judah...
 - Some: killed (41:7); fled east to Ammon (41:15); fled south to Egypt (41:16,17)

- Jer.43:7; 44:1 (last of remnant arrived in Egypt)
- Jer.42:8-16 (Jeremiah previously advised remnant to stay in Judah; don't leave, stay alive)
- Jer.43:2-7 (Remnant rebelliously disregarded Jeremiah's instructions & went to Egypt)
- Jer.41:1,10,16,17; 43:7 (Final remnant's flight to Egypt in latter part of Zedekiah's 11th year)
- Jer.43:11; 44:27 (Jerem. told remnant Nebuch. would destroy Egypt & remnant would die)
- Jer.44:1,2,6,22 (Once remnant entered Egypt, Jeremiah declared Judah this day desolate)
- Jer.39;1-5; 52:12-14 (desolation occurred in the last part of Zedekiah's 11th year of his reign)

4.5 Jeremiah Prophesied an End to Judah's Desolation

- Jeremiah continues to describe the desolation from which Judah will later be restored
- Jer.33:7-12 (no man, no beast, no streets in Jerusalem or other cities of Judah)

5.0 Five Other Witnesses Confirm Jeremiah's Description, Timing, & 70 Year Length of Desolation

5.1 Compiler(s) of Second Kings –

- 2 Kings 24:1,14; 25:1-12 (temple & houses burned, remnant flees; prisoners taken; no mention of any desolation until last year of Zedekiah's reign)

5.2 Compiler(s) of Second Chronicles

- 2 Chron.36:18-20 (temple raided & burned, city walls destroyed, people removed)
- 2 Chron.36:21 (chronicler expressly refers to Jeremiah's 70 years as years of desolation)

5.3 Daniel

- Daniel 9:1-2 (Daniel quotes Jeremiah that the 70 years are years of desolation)

5.4 Zechariah

- Zech.1:12 (70 years is the length of time God shows "no mercy" on cities of Judah)

5.5 Moses – Arguably the Most Important Witness

- (Actually, Moses predated Jeremiah by 1000+ years. Jeremiah probably relied on Moses)
- Moses tells why the 70 years of uninhabited & uninhabitable land were necessary
- Lev.26:31-34 (Because the rebellious Jews did not obey the sabbath requirements, imposing 70 years of uninhabited and uninhabitable land conditions was the only way the land would get 70 years of rest that complied with the jubilee law)

6.0 Conclusion

- Jeremiah said the people of Judah would be punished with subjugation and land desolation
- These two forms of punishment were to exist concurrently within a single 70-year span
- Desolation means two conditions: rendering the land uninhabited and uninhabitable
- To fulfill 70 perfect jubilee years, God required this condition to exist for 70 full years
- The 70 years of desolation did not begin until late in the 11th year of Zedekiah (606 BC) when he was forced from his throne, Jews killed in the land or deported to Babylon, structures and forests of Judah physically destroyed, and remnant fled to and arrived in foreign lands.
- While still in Judah, Jeremiah personally saw and lived amidst the destruction in Judah
- In 606 BC, Jeremiah was in Egypt with the remnant. It was then and there that God directed him to declare the very day (ie., "this day" 44:1,2,6,22) the desolation in Judah officially begun
- Rom.14:5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*.
Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.