

THE PROPHETIC WORD TODAY

The Cup of God's Wrath

Text: Jer. 25

Introduction: Jeremiah preached God's message faithfully for a quarter of a century: repent or perish. God was patient – over 23 years He waited. Finally, the day came that God said the people's time is up. I'll do as I promised. He sent this word through Jeremiah.

Jer. 25 ³ “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this *is* the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. ⁴ And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. ⁵ They said, ‘Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. ⁶ Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.’ ⁷ Yet you have not listened to Me,” says the LORD, “that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

⁸ “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Because you have not heard My words, ⁹ behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ says the LORD, ‘and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. ¹⁰ Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹ And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

¹⁵⁻²⁷ For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: “Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. ... Judah...Egypt...the Philistines ... Edom, Moab, and the people of Ammon; ... Tyre, ... Sidon, ...Arabia ... Zimri, ... Elam, ... the Medes; ²⁶ all the kings of the north, far and near, ...

²⁸ And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “You shall certainly drink! ²⁹ For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth,” says the LORD of hosts.’

Jeremiah had tried to tell the people for years a truth people of our own time easily forget.

I. THE EXECUTION OF THE WRATH OF GOD IS A CERTAINTY.

Jer. 25:28 And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "You shall certainly drink!"

A. A certainty for nations.

1. Num. 11:1-33; People complained. God burned the outer edge of the camp.
2. Num. 32:10; People were fearful of the new land. Sentenced to wander 40 years and never enter.
3. Josh. 23:16; Warning if they turned away from following the Lord, they would perish. They turned away, and they perished.
4. Israel; Refused to repent. Assyria destroyed. What people left alive were enslaved.
5. Judah; The cup of God's wrath given also to them. Babylonians would destroy even Jerusalem.

Each nation has thought itself the exception, but God's voice sounds, "You must drink."

The great city of Nineveh was thought invincible. So much so that Diodorus Siculus said that Nineveh would never fall until the river that flowed beside it became her enemy. But Nahum was told by God to declare the city's destruction. In the course of time the city was successfully defending itself from the attack of an enemy when the river that had been its life giving friend for ages suddenly rose out of its banks and washed away the protecting walls of the city, leaving it a helpless victim to the wrath of God.

God's wrath upon a wicked nation is a certainty.

B. A certainty for individuals.

1. "Be ye not deceived... whatsoever a man soweth he shall also reap." Those that experience the natural consequences of sin taste of the cup of God's wrath.

Eph. 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

You, who are now in rebellion against God, listen to the message of the Book about His love and grace; but all the while you dare not forget the truth the Bible also reveals that there comes a time when you must drink of the cup of God's wrath. At that point there is no choice. "You must drink."

II. GOD'S WRATH IS DESERVED.

- A. Never sent capriciously.

- B. Wickedness and rebellion results in a hardened heart. **God`s wrath usually comes after much pleading and patience.** Example – the people God told the Israelites to destroy. Romans says they had a witness. Some were direct descendants of patriarchs. Yet the record of their sin is unparalleled in history – “child sacrifice.”

III. GOD’S WRATH IS PURPOSEFUL.

Do not think of God as just “getting even.”

- A. God’s wrath has a very definite purpose.
1. By repeated punishments in the wilderness God disciplined a people ready to take the Promised Land by faith. They moved from fear of giants to faith in God.
 2. By repeated conquering by foes around Canaan, God taught them exclusive loyalty.
 3. By destruction and exile of Israel and Judah, God made a people who would faithfully preserve His word and prophecies until the coming of His Son.

Without God’s wrath, the children of Israel would still be wandering in the desert.

Without God’s wrath, they would be trusting their own strength.

Without God’s wrath, they would have destroyed His word and prophecies entrusted to them to keep and preserve.

Some say that one should not become a believer out of fear. That is not the only reason; maybe not the best, but it is one. If you have not trusted Christ...

- B. Fear of the wrath of God should lead you to believe.

Illustration: I most often obeyed my father out of love and respect but sometimes out of fear of consequences. And what was sometimes obedience out of fear became obedience out of love.

The threat of the pouring out of the cup of God’s wrath upon the unbeliever is purposed to make him fear.

Rev. 14:10-11 ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

If you are without Christ, you have every right to fear!

He is not brave who says he is not afraid of God or hell – he is a fool. “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.”

I have heard that people should not trust Christ just as “fire insurance.” I admit, that is not the most noble reason. But I tell you that if that is your only reason to trust Him, if you can find no other, you best run to the altar this morning letting nothing detain or delay you. For the words of Jonathan Edwards describe your perilous condition:

“There is nothing that keeps “you” at any one moment out of hell but the mere sovereign pleasure of God.”

Why do you suppose God told us of the horrors of hell? Because many need to be threatened by the wrath of God before they will surrender their rebellious souls.

The wrath of God is a certainty.
It is deserved.
But it is purposeful.

Jer. 23:20 The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly.

The wrath of God is purposed to redeem.

IV. THE WRATH OF GOD IS AVOIDABLE.

- A. Since God’s wrath is purposed to redeem, when that redemptive purpose is fulfilled one need not fear it. When a person has trusted Christ, he need not fear the wrath of God.

John 3:35-36 ³⁵ The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Rom. 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be **saved from wrath** through Him.

- B. God does not want to exercise His wrath.**

- C. “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance.”**

1. He was patient with Israel.
2. He was patient with Judah.
3. He is patient with you.

But the time comes when His wrath is executed. At that moment “where the tree falls, so shall it lie.” The execution of God’s wrath is a certainty upon those who deserve it. His wrath is purposed to redeem, to point men to their need for Christ. All who will trust Christ can avoid that wrath that ultimately comes.

INVITATION God told Jeremiah to take the cup of His wrath and give to the nations to drink. 600 hundred years later Jesus also took a cup and said, “This cup is the new covenant of my blood.” That cup reminds us that Jesus, the Son of God, came and died for you. If you will simply put your faith in Him, that new covenant is yours, your sins are forgiven, your life is saved, and the cup of God’s wrath is removed from your lips. From one cup you must drink. Which one will it be?

LORD`S SUPPER