

“IN GOD WE TRUST”

Text: Jeremiah 17:1-4

Subject: “Remaining Unshakable In A Shaking World”

Introduction

Fact: It’s no secret to anyone, that everything ungodly is being shaken around us.

Fact: It’s no secret to anyone that hell has opened to unleash a violent assault against our young people, our families, our elderly, our school system, our government system, and all who stand with moral conviction.

Fact: It’s no secret that a steady diet of ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Newsweek, Time and U.S. News World Report would give no one a reason to be joyful and excited about the future.

(But God Knows Where We Live)

Haggai 2:6, 7 “For thus saith the Lord of hosts, I will shake the heavens and the earth.”

(Yet Also God Says In V. 7)

“I will shake all nations and fill my house with my glory.”

Question: What’s the good news while things are being shaken around us?

Question: What’s the word from God to my heart?

(Remember the setting of Jeremiah 17)

- ◆ Jeremiah is writing during the dark days of Judah.
- ◆ There was much form of godliness but no power.
- ◆ There was the strain of sin (2:22) and, there was a forsaking of the old ways. (6:16)
- ◆ There was a harvest being lost. (8:20)
- ◆ There were carnal shepherds (pastors who were selfish, divisive and scattered the sheep to get their own way (23:1) and, there was disrespect for the Word of God. (36:21-24)
- ◆ There is the reporting in Jeremiah of divine judgments, the 70 years of captivity, rebukes, warning and prophecies concerning hostile nations.

(Yet in the midst of Jeremiah)

There is good news for all of us in a world that is shaking.

Three Absolutes That Affect The Way You Live

I. You Can Trust God More than Your Flesh Within (Vs. 1-4)

Question: How does the Lord describe the power of sin (the flesh nature) in His people?

Answer: (V. 1) “The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond.”

What does it mean?

- ◆ The iron stylus and diamond points were used for engraving.
- ◆ They were used to engrave on the hardest substances in the ancient world.
- ◆ And Jeremiah gives an illustration to make a deep impression upon us today.

Fact: You can write with a pencil on a stone (and rub off the mark).

Fact: You can write with a crayon on a stone (and scratch it off).

Fact: You can write with chalk on a stone (and can wash it off).

Fact: But when you inscribe something deep on a hard surface, you can only remove the inscription by destroying that surface on which it is written.

In Other Words

- ◆ Judah had tolerated sin to the extent that it had a profound effect upon their hearts.
- ◆ It had become engraved so deeply that nothing ordinary could remove it.
- ◆ Sin had such a powerful hold on Judah that in Verse 1, even the altar was polluted and defiled.

The pen of iron and point of a diamond means:

1. That sin always leaves a record of itself.
2. That sin always plants memories and creates guilt.
3. That sin always enslaves the one who sins.
4. That sin always distances the sinner from God.
5. That sin always poisons your spiritual system.
6. That sin always robs you of joy and enthusiasm.
7. That sin always hurts more than just yourself.

Look at sin's pain in Verse 2

“Even Judah’s children had their minds polluted by their parent’s sin with idols.”

In Other Words

- ◆ What the children saw they practiced (and)
- ◆ The generation to follow was affected by the tolerances of the generation before them.

In Other Words

- ◆ Whatever sin I excuse and tolerate in my heart today (right now)
- ◆ That same sin engraves itself deeper and deeper and defeats me more and more. **(So much so)**
- ◆ That whatever compromises we allow to remain, those same allowances will grow and be hurtful to those we touch.

In Other Words

- ◆ For your own sake and for the sake of those who follow you, tolerate nothing that would defile you, stain you and leave its engraved mark upon you.

Question: Is the power of God greater than every besetting sin?

Question: Is God able to crucify, break the power of and free me of any sin?

If so, how?

(Verse 10) #1. The Lord Searches Us Within

“I the Lord search the heart.”

- ◆ He turns the light on, He comes by His Spirit!
- ◆ He convicts me, He tells me, “Enough is enough”.

(Verse 14) #2. The Lord Saves Us From Ourselves:

“Heal me O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved”.

Question: Are you willing to pray this prayer?

- ◆ If you are, the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus will free you from the law of sin that leads to death!!! **(Why?)**
- ◆ Because the grace of God to change your heart is greater than the pens and diamonds of sin!

(You can trust the power of God to overcome the power of the flesh nature within.)

II. You Can Trust God More Than Your Friends Nearby (V. 5, 6)

Ask: Can your friends deliver you from sin?

Ask: Can any man change you inwardly?

Ask: Can someone outside you put joy, power or purpose in your heart?

(V. 5) “Thus saith the Lord, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm and whose heart departeth from the Lord.”

What does it mean?

- ◆ Judah had put their confidence in Egypt instead of Jehovah.
- ◆ Judah had trusted their political allies and the Babylonian army. (And were taken captive.)

Why?

- ◆ Because a million friends of yours can never do what God can do for you!!!
- ◆ And God describes the heart of someone in church who refuses to depend on God in faith.

Question: What are the consequences of failing to run to God for help?

Question: What’s the reward (the payoff) of thinking we can make it without God’s help?

Question: What’s the by-product of a believer who quits praying, quits meditating on Scripture, quits forgiving offenses, quits seeking God, quits being hungry for more and more and more of God?

Four Sad Consequences in V. 6

(I call them the four rewards of backsliding)

(V. 6) **Reward #1. “He shall be like the heath in the desert”**

- ◆ The heath is a dwarfed juniper tree.
- ◆ It doesn’t grow much because it lives without moisture.
- ◆ It lives in a barren, dry, desolate climate.

Fact: A backsliding believer will not grow and will just exist in a spiritual desert.

(V. 6) **Reward #2. “And shall not see when good cometh” (What does it mean?)**

- ◆ It means that a non-hungry, non-growing plant (believer) will not see when good comes. **(or)**
- ◆ Simply becomes insensitive to what God is doing when God comes their way.
- ◆ It means; that when God pours out rain of the Holy Spirit, only those eager and anticipating and looking will receive.

(In Other Words)

- ◆ We will forfeit the blessing of God’s visitation, if we are content with anything less.

Question: How many of you want to see good when good comes your way?

Question: How many of you want to see Jesus, when Jesus passes your way?

Question: How many of you want to be “ready to receive” when God pours out of His Spirit upon all flesh as promised?

(V. 6) **Reward #3. “But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness”**

Question: What are the parched places?

- ◆ These are gardens left unattended where the weeds turn it into a wilderness.
- ◆ One “whose heart has drifted from the Lord.” **In other words**

- ◆ A departing (drifting) Christian will allow weeds to take over in the heart.

(The Result Is)

- ◆ That what I fail to address, weed out and ignore, will deceive me and dominate me over time (This is why Verse 9 is so powerful, I can be deceived and lulled to sleep and not know it.)

Question: How many of you have ever fallen asleep at some time (when you weren't in bed planning to sleep)?

(V. 6) Reward #4. “In a salt land not inhabited”

- ◆ “Salt” means: “unfit to live in”
- ◆ “Not inhabited” means: no life, no fruit, no one nearby to minister to. **(Why not?)**
- ◆ Because you can only give out what you first take in.

- #1. You can trust God to free you from flesh that rules you,
- #2. You can trust God to do more as you seek Him, than any earthly friend.

III. You Can Trust God More Than Your Frighting Circumstances (Vs. 7, 8)

Question: What's the glorious reward of:

- #1. Seeking God to forgive me and free me from every besetting sin?
- #2. Seeking God with all my heart so that I won't backslide and drift into a spiritual desert?

(Verse 8 Records That Glorious Reward)

- ◆ Of a heart that is close to God, ◆ And refuses to drift and slide backwards

It's an Awesome Revelation That Encourages Every Single Heart!

“For you will be like a tree planted by the water, that spreads out your roots by the river.”

The Four Rewards of an Up-to-Date Spirit Filled Christian

Reward #1. “Shall not see when heat cometh”

- ◆ The Hebrew word for “see” is “fear”
- ◆ Notice this: God doesn't say you'll escape the heat. (Heat comes to the saved and the unsaved alike).
- ◆ He just says you won't fear it because faith in the truth sets you free from all fear.

Question: What do I believe in that crucifies my temptation to fear, worry and pout?

(Seven Nails in the Coffin of Fear and Worry)

1. Psalm 18:30: “As for God, His way is perfect.”
2. Psalm 31:15: “Our times are in His hands.”
3. Hebrews 13:5: “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”
4. Psalm 37:23: “The steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord.”
5. Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good.”
6. II Corinthians 12:9: “My grace is sufficient for you.”
7. Philippians 4:19: “God will supply all our needs.”

Reward #2. “Your leaf shall be green”

Question: What's it mean? It means:

Answer: #1. That God will give you the ability to flourish even in adverse conditions (and)
#2. Hidden resources will be the secret to your strength. **(In other words)**

- ◆ The devil intends the heat to scorch you, sour you and sideline you.
- ◆ But God says, He will give you a well in the desert!

Reward #3. "Shall not be careful in the year of draught"

- ◆ The word "careful" means: "anxious"
- ◆ It means: walking close with God will put confidence in your heart.
- ◆ Even in the "year of drought" or, when you're supposed to fret and pull your hair out,
- ◆ God will sustain you with perfect peace regardless of the climate around you.

Reward #4. "Neither shall cease from yielding fruit"
(What a glorious promise)

- ◆ That when you scream "ouch God, it hurts"
- ◆ That when you feel the heat and drought,
- ◆ That what you believe is wilderness and wasted,
- ◆ That what the devil said was a setback and a barren season.

God was growing fruit all the while. Why?

- ◆ Because the devil can throw things at you.
- ◆ But the devil can't keep God from working in you.

What's the secret?

1. Be free from sin that engraves its mark upon your heart.
2. Be faithful and up to date with God so that your deserts can be turned in gardens.

AMEN!
Bill Kirk