

**JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)  
PROGRAM 38 (#909218)  
WEEK 8 (909346)  
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**Precept Ministries International**  
P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218  
1-888-734-7707/ [www.preceptsforlife.com](http://www.preceptsforlife.com)

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**SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)**

**TITLE: Program 38 – Too Far Gone?**

**WEDNESDAY** (11/4/09)

**OPEN**

If you understand God, if you know who He is, if you've read the Bible, if you understand His ways, you know that America has to be judged by God. And yet, the question is, could we still escape the judgment of God or have we gone too far? Is there no turning back? Could God turn the economy around? Could God turn the culture around? He sure could, but what would it take?

**PART ONE**

It is exciting, isn't it, to think about America turning around? About America returning to God, about America getting rid of the sin and its culture and coming back to righteousness? About America being a nation where the aliens feel secure, where the orphans and the widows are not afraid? America the great. We've sung about it. We've sung about "America the Beautiful." We've sung about God blessing America. Could that happen

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again? Well, you know what? When we go to Jeremiah chapter 21, we find out that there is a king by the name of Zedekiah, and he knows that the enemy is outside the gate. He knows that the enemy is coming against him. He has heard the prophecies of Jeremiah, and he has heard about the broken pot shattered into pieces so that it is un-repairable. And yet, what does he want? He wants God to bless Judah. He wants Jeremiah to put in a good word with God. And, you know what? It's interesting to me that when a child is missing in the United States of America and we fear that it's been abducted or when somebody is missing, we always talk about prayer. Well, who are we praying to? Are we praying to a God that can help? Are we praying to a God that can hear? Are we praying to a God that can move? I mean pray? So and so is sick, pray for him. Why is it that all of a sudden we're ready to ask for prayer because we're at the end of our own ability? Pray that the rain will come. Pray that the rain will stop. Pray that the tornado will turn. Pray that the storm will turn. Who are we praying to? Who are you praying to? Are you praying to a God who is capable of doing that? Are you praying to a God that's a vengeful God that says, "No, you've had it. You've crossed over the line?" Are you praying to a God who is [full of loving-kindness, whose mercies and compassions fail not, but are new every morning?] (PARAPHRASE, Lamentation 3:22-23) What is your concept of God? The next time someone says to you, "You know, we really need to pray about this. Or I wish you would pray about this," ask them, "Who do you want me to pray to? Why do you want me to pray to God or to that person? Tell me about Him that? Give me a reason for praying to Him." "Well, you know, you're the religious one." You say, "But what is it that makes you want me to pray?" Let's get in some discussions like this. Let's talk about can America be turned around? I can tell you about William Kerry, and about what he did in India. I can tell you about Abraham Kuyper and what he did in the Dutch Republic. I can tell you how societies, and Wilberforce turned, and the Clapham Sect turned around the culture of

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England when it was at its very bottom, when it was in its pits. I can tell you about men like that. The question is, are you willing to be a man like that? A women like that? Are you willing to stand for God, to talk to God, to give a true opinion and estimate of God? Well, we've come to Jeremiah chapter 21. And from this point in the book it's like things change. And it's like things change because it begins to say, the word of the Lord that came during Zedekiah's day, that came during the reign of Jehoiakim. And more and more now, in a sense, we know where we are. I believe that what we saw in Jeremiah yesterday when Jeremiah cries to God and talks about how he is going to shut up, but the word is like a fire inside of him and then how he curses the day that he was born. (See Jeremiah 20:9,14) I believe that that's the last great lament that we have from Jeremiah. Now the book gets into the history. Now we start seeing the historical event and the message of what's happening in Jeremiah's life. Just wanted you to know that as we enter into Jeremiah chapter 21, and this week has gone by without me telling you that I want to hear from you, without me telling you, "Hey! Go online and communicate with me." It's "[preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com)," "[preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com)." We want to hear from you. We want you to download the free study guides. We want you to study with us. We want to tell you where you can get into a local class, where you can gather together with a group of believers, of like mind, that are hungry and thirsting after knowledge. Where you can grow, and be nurtured, and be disciplined, and disciple others. Where you can discover truth for yourself, where you can go deeper, and where you then in turn can disciple. And, of course, I have to tell you this, we need your support. You know, and it's very biblical. You say, "Things are tight right now." I know they're tight. They're tight for all of us. And yet, now is not the time to stop giving. Now is the time to increase our giving in ministries that are going to benefit these days. This is our hour for "[Precepts for Life](http://preceptsforlife.com)," because if you need to know anything, you need to know how to feed yourself from the Word of God because you're going to be tested to the core.

And you've got to know truth for yourself. And more and more false prophets are going to increase, and you've got to know and be able to spot them. Well, **"The word [of the Lord]...."** Jeremiah chapter 21, verse 1, **"...which came to Jeremiah from the LORD when King Zedekiah sent [him to] Pashhur...."** (Jeremiah 21:1) "Oh," you say, "there he is again." This is, **"...the son of Malchijah, and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, saying."** (Jeremiah 21:1) So let's stop and get the setting. This is a different Pashhur. He's going to show up again in chapter 38, verse 1. And so, Zedekiah who is the king, he's the last king before they go into captivity, gets this other Pashhur, and Zephaniah the priest. And he tells them, **"[Go] inquire of the LORD on our behalf, for Nebuchadnezzar [the] king of Babylon is warring against us...."** (Jeremiah 21:2) So already, the enemy was outside the gates. Now he's outside the gates for a third time. The first siege of Jerusalem happens in 605 B.C. The second siege of Jerusalem happens in 597 B.C., and that's when Jehoiachin is taken. And then the third siege of Jerusalem happens when Zedekiah, or his name is also called Mattaniah, is reigning so you need to remember that. So Nebuchadnezzar, the son of Nabopolassar, who is the king of Babylon, this heir, this prince to the throne, is waging war. Now, he's already come. I want you to know by the time of Zedekiah, he's already become the king of Babylon. But until 605 B.C, he was not the king of Babylon. And so the word of the Lord comes and they want to know what Jeremiah is going to say. **"...Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonderful acts, so that the enemy will withdraw from us."** (Jeremiah 21:2) Perhaps this whole situation can be changed around. Go, go, go ask Jeremiah inquire of him, find out! And, **"Then Jeremiah said to them, 'You shall say to Zedekiah as follows: "Thus says the LORD [the] God of Israel, 'Behold, I am about to turn back the weapons of war....'"'"** (Jeremiah 21:3-4) Oh, that sounds good news. Good news, He's going to turn back the weapons of war! Oh, no. He says, **"...I am about to turn**

**back the weapons of war which are in your hands....””” (Jeremiah 21:4)** In other words, your weapons are not going to prevail against the enemy. That’s what I’m saying to you. Now watch carefully what He says, **“““...I am about to turn back the weapons of war which are in your hands, with which you are warring against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the wall....””” (Jeremiah 21:4)** So there is a siege going on. So remember we are marking “siege,” we are marking, “besiege.” We are taking a pencil and we are drawing like a wall. He says, **“““...And I will gather them....,”””** Babylon and the Chaldeans, **“““...into the center of this city.””” (Jeremiah 21:4)** And He says, and **“““I Myself will war....,””” (Jeremiah 21:5)** Oh, God’s going to defend us! No. He says, **“““I Myself will war against you....,””” (Jeremiah 21:5)** Against Judah. **“““I...will war against you with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm, even in anger and wrath and great indignation. I will also strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; [and] they will die of a great pestilence...[and] the sword and the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their foes and into the hand of those who seek their lives....,””” (Jeremiah 21:5-7)** You say, “See, there is no hope. There is no turning around.” O Beloved, I haven’t finished the chapter. Remember, God’s justice and His righteousness.

## **PART TWO**

Well, I left you, Beloved, in the midst of Jeremiah’s word to king Zedekiah when he was hoping that the Lord would deal with him according to all of his wonderful acts. And that’s not the message he is getting. Listen to what He continues to say. He’s talking about, He’s going to deal with him in anger, in wrath, in great indignation. Jeremiah 21, verse 6, **“““I will...strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast; they will die of a great pestilence. Then afterwards,’ declares the LORD, ‘I**

will give over Zedekiah king of Judah and his servants and the people, even those who survive in [the] city from the pestilence, [and] the sword and the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their foes and into the hand of those who seek their lives....””” (Jeremiah 21:6-7) That is bad news. And it says, “““...He...,””” speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, “““...will strike them down with the edge of the sword. He will not spare them nor have pity nor compassion.” You shall also say to [those] people, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I [have] set before you...,’””” listen carefully, “““...the way of life and...death.””” (Jeremiah 21:7-8) Immediately, you go back and you think, “Oh, Deuteronomy!” [I’ve set before you life and death blessing and cursing.] (PARAPHRASE, Deuteronomy 30:19) That’s not what He is talking about here so you have to keep reading. “““He who dwells in [the] city will die by the sword and...famine and...pestilence...he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans....””” (Jeremiah 21:9) The Chaldeans, Babylonians, the same empire. “““...Who are besieging you will live, and he will have his own life as booty.’””” (Jeremiah 21:9) Now what is He saying? You stay here in the city, you’re going to die. You’re going to die of a sword. You’re going to die of hunger. You’re going to die of pestilence. But listen, if you get up and you go out with Nebuchadnezzar, and you go to Babylon. And get out your map and look at Jerusalem, and look at how they’re going to go north. And they’re going to go up until they hit the Euphrates, and then they are going to go east, and then they will go southeast as they go down to Babylon. Those are the ones that are going to live, the ones that go down. So [I’ve set before you life and death.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 21:8) You stay here; you die. You go there; you live. As a matter of fact, He is going to tell them later on through the prophets that when you get to Babylon you settle in. You’re going to be there for a while. We are going to see that next week, how long they’re going to be there. But He says, “You’re going to be

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there for a while, so you settle down and you pray for the prosperity of Babylon.” Seems incongruous, doesn’t it? But listen to what He says, **“““For I have set....,””** God is speaking, **“““...My face against this city for harm and not for good....”””** (Jeremiah 21:10) Are you saying to me, Kay, that you’re likening this to America? I really believe that God’s face is set against America unless something happens. You say, “What?” Well, let’s look at it. You say, “But America and Israel are different.” That’s right. But you’ve got to remember that God is not just the God of Israel, not just the God of Jacob, but all the nations. **“The earth is the LORD’S and the fullness thereof...”** (Psalms 24:1) He is the God of all the nations. All the nations will come to Him. [All the nations eventually will beat their swords into plowshares, and they will come up to Jerusalem and they will say to the Lord, “Teach us your ways,” that’s what Isaiah 2 says.] (PARAPHRASE, Isaiah 2:4) So He says, **“““...I have set My face against this city for harm and not for good...It will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon and he will burn it with fire.”””** (Jeremiah 21:10) So we know how Jerusalem is going to be destroyed. It’s going to be burned with fire. This happened in 586 B.C. **““Then say to the household of the king of Judah, ‘Hear the word of the LORD.’””** (Jeremiah 21:11) And then he says, **“““O house of David, thus says the LORD: ‘Administer justice every morning....’”””** (Jeremiah 21:12) Every morning I want you to administer justice, O house of David. He says, **“““...And deliver the person who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor, [and] that My wrath may not go forth like fire....”””** (Jeremiah 21:12) Hey, you want to stop My judgment? You want to not have Jerusalem burned? Then this is what I’m telling you to do, administer justice. Put away the graft, put away the corruption, put away the playing of politics, put away saying one thing and doing another, put away playing to the society and playing to the people, and play to God. Put that away. **“““...Administer justice every morning...that My wrath may not go...like [a] fire and burn with none**

**to extinguish it, because of the evil of their deeds.””” (Jeremiah 21:12)**

You want to turn things around? Then what you do is you administer justice.

He says, **“““Behold, I am against you, O valley dweller, O rocky plain,’ declares the LORD, ‘You men who say, “Who will come down against us? Or who will enter...our habitations?”””” (Jeremiah 21:13)** He says,

**“““But I will punish you according to the results of your deeds....”””**

**(Jeremiah 21:14)** God’s very just, God’s very fair. It’s according to your deeds. [You sow to the flesh you reap corruption. You sow to the spirit and of the spirit you reap eternal life.] (PARAPHRASE, Galatians 6:8) He says,

**“““But I will punish you according to the results of your deeds,’**

**declares the LORD, ‘And I will kindle a fire in its forest that it may**

**devour all [of] its environs.””” (Jeremiah 21:14)** Then chapter 22, **“Thus**

**says the LORD, ‘Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak [the] word....” (Jeremiah 22:1)** Now we don’t know what king this

is. It’s like: Just go to any king that is the king at that present time over the

house of Judah, **“...and say, “Hear the word of the LORD, O king of**

**Judah, who sits on David’s throne, you and your servants and your**

**people who enter these gates. Thus says the LORD, ‘Do justice and**

**righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of [the] oppressor...do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger....,”””**

that would be the alien, **“““...the orphan, or the widow...do not shed**

**innocent blood in this place. (Jeremiah 22:2-3)** For if you men will

**indeed perform this thing....,”””** hang on it gets good, **“““...then kings**

**will enter the gates of this house....,””” (Jeremiah 22:4)** “Oh,” you say,

“Other kings are coming?” No! **“““...[Your own] kings will enter the**

**gates of this house sitting in David’s place on [David’s] throne....,”””** he

says, **“““...[and] riding in chariots and...horses, even the king himself**

**and his servants and his people.””” (Jeremiah 22:4)** And then he says,

**“““But if you [don’t] obey these words...this house will become a**

**desolation.””” (Jeremiah 22:5)** What is God saying to us today? God is

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saying to us. It is possible for America to turn around even as it was possible with Nebuchadnezzar out there besieging the city or whenever it was. It was possible to turn the tide if they would turn to God, if they would return, if they would repent, if they would relent, if they would listen, if they would obey, if they would put away their idols. And the same thing goes for America. We need to preach that because America needs to hear it.