

A DANGEROUS SERMON

Thursday, October 12

Reading: Jeremiah 7, 26

Jeremiah 7:8 *"But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless. **9** Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, **10** and then come and stand before Me in this house, which bears My Name, and say, 'We are safe'--safe to do all these detestable things? **11** Has this house, which bears My Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.*

The book of Jeremiah can be confusing because the chapters are not in chronological order. They were arranged by theme. In Jeremiah 7 and following we have one of the prophet's most famous sermons. Chapter 26 gives us the situation and outcome of this sermon preached in the Temple courts to those who had come to "worship."

The heart of this sermon was to dispel the people's notion that they were safe simply because the Temple was in Jerusalem. They believed that they could live any way they wanted and then come to the Temple when trouble arrived and God would hear them. Jeremiah informs them that God has seen all their wickedness and idolatry. He would remove them from the land as He had done to the northern kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) and they would be slaughtered and the land left desolate. The Temple could not save them! It would be destroyed just as the first Tabernacle at Shiloh had been destroyed by the Philistines in the days of Eli and young Samuel (see 1 Samuel 4; Psalm 78:56ff).

The false prophets and priests wanted to kill Jeremiah for daring to pronounce judgment against "God's city." But he was protected and defended by some of the king's men, especially Ahikam who had been a trusted official under Jehoiakim's father, the godly King Josiah (2 Kings 22). However, the prophet Uriah was not so fortunate. He was executed by the king for saying the same things as Jeremiah.

POINTS TO PONDER:

1. The people of Jerusalem had taken faith in God and reduced it to trust in a building. What are some things we might put our trust in instead of God? Church attendance? Baptism? Living a good life? What happens when we take our eyes off the Lord and put it on other things?
2. Do we ever excuse our sin by saying that we can simply ask God for forgiveness and "it will all be OK"? This attitude exposes a heart that is not committed to the Lord. If you want salvation without service and forgiveness without holy living than you have not truly become a child of God.
3. Why does God rescue some of His servants and allows others to be persecuted and killed for their faith? That is a question that only God can answer! We cannot see the full picture, but we can know that God can use whatever happens to His people for His glory. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15). Are we praying for our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world? Are we ready to face persecution when it comes to our door?

Hebrews 13:3 Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.