Lesson 4: The Way of Salvation

Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-10:25

Review

Jeremiah is called by God to be a "prophet to the nations" and to speak primarily to the kingdom of Judah for the purpose of

- Warning the people of God's impending judgment via the kingdom of Babylon
- Calling the people to repentance and spiritual restoration,
- Delivering God's promise of a return to the land after 70 years of captivity, and
- Reminding the remnant left in Canaan to remain faithful to God

In spite of God's indictment of Judah's idolatry and spiritual unfaithfulness, the people fail to realize their spiritual condition and fail to respond to the Lord's chastening. Furthermore, the priests have failed in their duty to teach the people, and the prophets have failed to carry the message of God by preaching a message of peace that the people desire to hear. However, God still urges Judah to return to Him and calls the people to repentance. Underlying all of this is the warning that a failure to repent will result in God's judgment coming via the kingdom of Babylon.

Chapter 5 shows that the dichotomy of God's righteous character and Judah's wicked condition require judgment. Jeremiah looks for godly men who can withstand the wickedness prevalent in society, but none can be found. Instead, the people continue their temple rituals, the false prophets perpetuate the people's denial, and the priests maintain the status quo, all at the expense of the fatherless, poor, and needy. Given His character, God must avenge Himself on "such a nation as this". Chapter 6 portrays a powerful enemy coming out of the north from which no defense can be made. Judah's only hope is to repent and walk in the old paths that have been handed down. However, the people refuse to listen, and God's attempts to "refine" the people of their impurity and wickedness have failed. Therefore, as "rejected silver", Judah is on course to face God's wrath at the hands of Babylon.

1. How did Judah's trust in the temple cause them to be delusional with regard to their present state (7:4, 8-11; Micah 3:11)? How can we be guilty of the same thing?

2. How was Judah's use of sacrifices not in keeping with what God intended (7:21-28; I Samuel 15:22-23; Isaiah 1:10-20)?

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3.	How is the obstinate nature of Judah described in 8:4-7?
4.	What false confidence did the people have in 8:8, and how would God hold the leaders of the people to account (8:8-12)?
5.	How did Judah demonstrate its refusal to know God (9:3-6)?
6.	What was the reason given for God's judgment against Judah, and what did that judgment entail (9:12-16)?
7.	How does Jeremiah contrast idols to the true God, and why is God alone to be feared (10:1-16)?