

## THE HARVEST IS PAST

### **TEXT: JEREMIAH 8:11-22**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. We have here in Jeremiah 8 a most touching lamentation over the fallen condition of the people of Israel.
  2. Warren Wiersbe says the latter half of Jeremiah 8 "blend three voices: God's voice of judgment, the people's voice of despair, and the prophet's voice of anguish as he contemplated the ruin of a once-great nation" (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*).
- God's voice of judgment (8:13, 17, 19).
  - The people's voice of despair (8:14, 15, 20).
  - The prophet's voice of anguish (8:18, 21).
3. Soon King Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army would invade Jerusalem, destroy the temple, and take the people of Judah into captivity in Babylon.
  4. In fact, Jeremiah prophesied before, during and after the exile of Judah. And his prophetic vision looks beyond the Babylonian captivity to the return of the Jewish remnant after seventy years, their worldwide dispersion, the coming tribulation (which Jeremiah calls "the time of Jacob's trouble" in 30:7), and the millennial kingdom.
  5. In Jeremiah 8:5, the LORD rebukes them for their "perpetual backsliding." This rebuke could apply to certain church members!
  6. As we look at Jeremiah's day we see many similarities with our day. I want to draw special attention to verse 20 -- "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

#### **I. OUR COUNTRY NEEDS TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

#### **II. FAMILIES NEED TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

#### **III. SINNERS NEED TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

#### **I. OUR COUNTRY NEEDS TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

1. People today are perplexed, bewildered, confused, and overwhelmed -  
- the economy is bad, the Ebola virus is spreading, ISIS and other terrorists are chopping off heads -- even here in America, etc.
2. According to the Department of Homeland Security, four ISIS terrorists were apprehended last week at the Mexican border attempting to cross into Texas. ISIS is here in the USA.
3. In Matthew 24:3, our Lord's disciples asked Him, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

4. Our Lord answered them, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences (like Ebola), and earthquakes, in divers places" (Matt. 24:4-7).
5. Consider Luke's account. Our Lord said, "But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by" (Luke 21:9).
6. "Be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass" (Luke 21:9).
7. Our English word "terror" comes from the French *terroure*, which came from the Latin *terror*, meaning "great fear." The word was popularized during the French "Reign of Terror" (French Revolution) when the revolutionists were chopping off heads with their guillotines.
8. Today the Muslim terrorists are chopping off heads. Revelation 20:4 tells us that during the coming tribulation, the antichrist and his subordinates will be chopping off heads.
9. Our Lord said, "Be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass" (Luke 21:9). How much time do we have left? "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20).
10. God is trying to get our attention, but most people are not listening.
11. Regarding Jeremiah 8:22, J. Vernon McGee said, "God had made adequate provision, but they refused the remedy" (*Thru the Bible*).
12. And so it is today. America has turned its back on God. The wicked and godless news media keep saying that voters do not care about moral issues, just the economy.
13. But as long as America continues to reject the Word of God, things will just get worse and worse -- including the economy!
14. Last Monday, the Supreme Court stated it would not hear appeals from those opposed to so-called "same-sex marriage" in five states, meaning these same-sex marriages could immediately begin in those five states, and set the stage for legalization in several other states.
15. Only two U.S. senators have spoken out against the announcement, Senators Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Mike Lee (R-Utah).
16. Besides Senators Lee and Cruz, only a handful of other political leaders have spoken out, such as the governors of Louisiana and Oklahoma.

17. Our own governor, Andrew Cuomo, has been an outspoken promoter of homosexuality and so-called same-sex marriage. In fact, he has said that those opposed to abortion and homosexuality are "extremists" and should leave New York State.
18. Both New York senators, Mr. Schumer and Mrs. Gillibrand, are pro-homosexual and pro-abortion. America has abdicated its role as the strong principled and moral leader in the world because our elected officials are unprincipled and immoral men and women.
19. And who votes for these wicked politicians? Uninformed, misinformed, lazy, foolish voters -- and many of them are Christian!
20. And what about preachers? Where are the prominent preachers speaking out against all of this wickedness and foolishness?
21. Today men are becoming more and more weak and effeminate, and women are becoming more and more coarse and masculine.
22. What we are seeing today in America is a rapid slide to Sodom and Gomorrah. In 1996, Judge Robert Bork said America is "Slouching Towards Gomorrah." We're no longer "slouching." Today America is racing towards Sodom and Gomorrah!
23. The television and Internet is full of smut and filth. Rap and hip-hop music is X-rated. The public schools are indoctrination centers for sex education and anti-American philosophies. Most of our elected officials are crooked, cowardly, corrupt, and creepy.
24. Meanwhile, the world is becoming more dangerous, and our nation is becoming more depraved, debased, and degraded. Unless we see a genuine revival here in America, we will not survive as a nation.

## **II. FAMILIES NEED TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

1. God only ordained three institutions -- the family, government, and the church. The family came first, but today in America we are seeing a complete breakdown of the family.
2. I recently read a book written by a black man named Jason Riley. The book is entitled, *Please Stop Helping Us: How Liberals Make It Harder for Blacks to Succeed*.
3. In a recent interview, Mr. Riley said this, "The real problem is the breakdown of the black family. One of the statistics I like to remind people of is that as late as 1960, two out of three black children were raised in two-parent homes. Today, more than 70 percent of black children are not. In some of these ghettos, it runs as high as 80 or 90 percent of black kids living in single-parent homes. I think that has a lot to do with those bad

outcomes we see in terms of school completion, in terms of involvement in the criminal justice system, drug use, and teen pregnancy, and so forth. It's the lack of fathers in homes raising boys, teaching them what it means to be men, and teaching them what it means to be black. I think the breakdown of the family has been extremely detrimental to black culture."

4. I do not say this to make anyone feel bad. If you are in a broken family situation, God is gracious. If you are saved, God is your Father.
5. God put the church here to help in any way we can. Some of the young men in our church might not have a Christian dad in the home, but they some good role models here in the church.
6. And more importantly, they have the Lord. Our Lord said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20).
7. Hebrews 13:5 says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
8. By the way, this breakdown of the family is happening all over. It's not just in bad neighborhoods. Today in America, over 40 percent of all babies are born out of wedlock!
9. According to government statistics: 72.3 percent of blacks are now born out-of-wedlock; 66.2 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives; 53.3 percent of Hispanics; 29.1 percent of whites; and 17.2 percent of Asians.
10. The Asians aren't doing as bad as the rest, but after being subjected to all of the filth and corruption in modern society they will probably catch up!
11. The problem is not just moral. The problem is spiritual. America needs to get back to the Bible. People need to hear the Gospel and get saved by the grace of God.
12. Many assembled here today have unsaved family members. Get serious about winning them to the Lord. Pray fervently for them.
13. The Bible says, "The Lord is...longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).
14. Noah was able to get his family on the ark.
15. Rahab the harlot said to the two Jewish spies, "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my

- father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death" (Joshua 2:12, 13). And we see in Joshua 6 that God honored her request (cf. 6:17). Rahab was burdened for her family. Are you?
16. God wants to save the entire family. It is a tremendous blessing when the entire family is saved -- father, mother, and all the children.
17. Joshua said, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:15). We need more men like Joshua!
18. God wants to save the whole household. In Acts 10, an angel said to Cornelius, "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (cf. Acts 11:13, 14).
19. This is a pattern we see in Scripture. In Philippi, Lydia and her household were saved first, and then the Philippian jailer and his household were saved (Acts 16:14, 15).
20. Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

### **III. SINNERS NEED TO GET RIGHT WITH GOD**

1. Job 18:5 says, "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out."
2. Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."
3. Proverbs 11:21 says, "The wicked shall not be unpunished."
4. Proverbs 13:9 says, "The lamp of the wicked shall be put out."
5. Our Lord said in Matthew 13:49 and 50, that at the end of the world, He shall send forth His angels, and they "shall sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
6. Are you saved? Jeremiah 8:20 says, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."
7. In Scripture, the harvest is often used as a picture of God's judgment. Joel 3:13 says, "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

8. In the book of Revelation chapter 14 we see a vivid picture of this terrible harvest (Rev. 14:14-20).

**CONCLUSION:** *(poem I first saw in a tract)*

When all the great plants of our cities  
Have turned out their last finished work;  
When our merchants have made their last bargain  
And dismissed the last tired clerk.  
When our banks have raked in the last dollar  
And have paid out the last dividend;  
When the Judge of the earth says, "Close for the night,"  
And asks for a balance - What then?

When the choir has sung its last anthem,  
And the preacher has said his last prayer,  
When the people have heard their last sermon  
And the sound has died out on the air;  
When the Bible lies closed on the pulpit,  
And the pews are all empty of men,  
When each one stands facing his record -  
And the great book is opened - What then?

When the actors have played their last drama  
And the mimic has made his last pun;  
When the movies have flashed the last picture,  
And the billboard displayed its last run.  
When the crowds seeking pleasure have vanished  
And have gone into darkness again -  
And the world that rejected its Saviour,  
Is asked for a reason - What then?

When the bugle's last call sinks in silence,  
And the long marching columns stand still;  
When the captain has given his last orders,  
And they've captured the last fort and hill,  
When the flag has been hauled from the masthead,  
And the wounded afield have checked in,  
When the trumpet of ages is sounded -  
And we stand up before Him - What then?  
When your life friend has run to a finish,

And the last you can do is then done;  
When your work here on earth is all ended,  
And eternity's issues begun.  
As you think of how long God has pleaded,  
Of how Christ bore your sins on the tree;  
And your soul stands there naked before Him,  
And the Father denies you - What then?  
*Author unknown*