

Journey through Jeremiah Part 2 – A Rod & Seething Pot

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Th.D. – Wednesday, December 28, 2016

† Jeremiah 1:11-19

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

13 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north.

14 Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

15 For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

16 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

17 Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

18 For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

Last week we had an introduction to the Book of Jeremiah and we listed 7 unique features of this Book and we also expounded upon the first 10 verses which gave us the who, what, when, where, and why.

Tonight with the help of the Lord I want us to look at the rest of Chapter 1 which discusses an almond tree and a seething pot.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

Immediately after Jeremiah tells us about his calling to be a prophet he then dives right into the things that the LORD reveals to him.

He says that the LORD asks him what he sees. Although the Bible does not say this was a vision, I believe that is what it is. Some men believe he actually saw a rod sticking up out of the ground, I suppose that is possible but the seething pot that he sees in the next verse certainly would have to be a vision.

The thing that Jeremiah sees is a very strange thing for us. How many of you have ever seen a rod of an almond tree? How many even know what that is? The word “**rod**” here comes from a Hebrew word which means “**germinate**” it is describing a *new growth of a shoot* that is coming up. In other words it is a stick coming up out of the ground showing new growth.

If the rod of an almond tree sounds familiar to you perhaps you recall **the rod of Aaron?** In the Book of Numbers chapter 16 we are told of the story where a man named Korah along with a bunch of other men, rose up against Moses and Aaron.

They accused them of trying to exalt themselves up higher than everyone else because Moses was the leader and Aaron was the high priest. So Moses falls on his face in front of the LORD and prays. The LORD opened the ground beneath Korah and all of his family and swallowed them whole. Then he sent out fire and burnt up 250 other men that were speaking against Moses and Aaron.

Well, because of this the people continued murmuring and accusing Moses of killing God's people. So the LORD instructed Moses what to do:

Numbers 17:1-11

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

6 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

7 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.

8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, **and yielded almonds.**

9 And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.

10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.

11 And Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he.

So, the LORD has used the symbol of a rod of an almond tree as a symbol of His power and authority. Over and over in the Bible the rod is used as a means of correction or chastening. God uses the rod of correction as the means to exercise judgement against sin. For example in **Revelation 2:27: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.**

Also in **Revelation 19:15: And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.**

So, the rod that Jeremiah sees is going to be the chastening rod of God.

He says that it is *of an almond tree*. The word “**almond**” in Hebrew has the meaning of “**to awaken**.” One of the unique things about an almond tree is that it is the first of the trees to awaken after winter and start springing forth new growth. Jeremiah has been ordained a prophet by God to “awaken” his people to their sins and warn them of the coming chastening of the rod which would be swift and powerful.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

The LORD assures Jeremiah that his chastening is going to come quickly. He says “I will hasten my word to perform it.” They have already been warned for years and years so by the time Jeremiah comes into the ministry they have been forsaking the LORD for many years. God’s judgement is swiftly going to come down on them.

Some History:

I think we need to pause right here and make a few clarifications:

1. Under the first 3 Kings of Israel; Saul, David, and Solomon: the nation of Israel was one unified nation.
2. After Solomon died, Israel broke out in Civil War and became divided under two Kingdoms:
 - The Northern Kingdom, called “**Israel**,” led by King Jeroboam
 - The Southern Kingdom, called “**Judah**,” led by King Rehoboam.
3. In approx. 734 B.C., the Northern Kingdom, Israel, was invaded by the Assyrians and the inhabitants began being taken into captivity.
4. In approx. 727 B.C., the Northern Kingdom was invaded again their capital city of Samaria fell, and the rest of the Northern Kingdom’s inhabitants were taken in captivity.
5. In approx. 626 B.C., Jeremiah begins his prophetic ministry, this is around 21-years before Judah is taken.
6. In approx. 605 B.C, Judah, was invaded, their capital city of Jerusalem fell, and the inhabitants began being taken into captivity by the Babylonians, which the Assyrians were now part of.
 - Some of the first to be taken were men such as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azaria. (Otherwise known as Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.)

13 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is toward the north.

At the time of this occurrence, the Northern Kingdom of Israel had already been taken into captivity for nearly 100 years.

† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Bible