

## One Heart and One Way (Jeremiah 33:1–18)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (8/23/2020)

### Introduction

Jeremiah 33 opens with, “*The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut up in the court of the guard.*” This is a continuation of the discourse begun in the previous chapter. Jeremiah was given a word from the Lord that his cousin, Hanamel, son of Shalum, would come to ask the prophet to redeem a field near his hometown of Anathoth.

Jeremiah was concerned about the validity of the impression because such a request was futile, seeing the Chaldeans were already laying siege to the city of Jerusalem. The Lord previously announced that the city would be destroyed, and the king would be taken to Babylon where he would die. Why would the Lord want the prophet to do this senseless task?

When Hanamel came, Jeremiah records, “*Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD*” (v. 8). Jeremiah obeyed the request and purchased the field. However, afterward he sought the Lord for an explanation. The Lord responded by asking, “*Is anything too hard for me?*” (v. 27).

The Lord judged His sinful and rebellious people; however, the judgment was not for mere punishment but was redemptive and corrective. His aim was to bring His people back to “*this place*” (Jerusalem and Judah) and make them dwell in safety (peace [v. 37]). This was followed by a powerful promise: “*They shall be my people, and I will be their God*” (v. 38), previously stated in 24:7; 31:1 and 33. God’s purpose in all tribulation is to save people for His glory (v. 42). The Agent for this glorious restoration is “*the righteous Branch*” (23:5).

This second time the word came to Jeremiah was a further revelation of God’s program of redemption, beginning with another promise (33:3). The great hidden things are astonishingly glorious, and the anchor for this promise is His name or reputation (v. 2). He is the eternal Living One who made the covenant with His people, and He is sovereignly determined to fulfill all He promised in that covenant (Deut. 4:30, 31; Jer. 33:10, 11).

There are three things in the text before us: (1) the *process* that the Lord uses to accomplish His aim, (2) the *way of righteousness* that drives His process, and (3) the *fruit of righteousness*—joy and gladness in His people.

### I. The Process of Restoration

In the first chapter, the Lord told Jeremiah, “*See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant*” (1:10). There are two things in the process God uses to redeem and restore His creation to its original purpose in righteousness: destroying the corrupt and performing a moral cleansing.

1. There must be a destruction of the old evil order to restore the right and true order.
  - a. This fact is easy to witness in every age of redemptive history—the flood, the tower of Babel, apostate Israel and the old covenant, and Gentile and pagan world governments. Biblical history records the ongoing work of destroying the old fallen and sinful order so that He can create a new order in righteousness (Heb. 8:6, 13). Finally, with respect to creation itself in the words of Peter, we are “*waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God*” (2 Pet. 3:12, 13).

b. This process of tearing down to build up is also true of the salvation of individuals. Salvation is a sovereign work of God, bringing sinners to the end of themselves in utter despair, working true repentance and confession. This must precede deliverance into the glorious light of forgiveness and freedom through the gospel of Christ. Note Isaiah's confession only after he beheld "*the King, the LORD of hosts!*" (Isa. 6:5). Or, take the case of the publican, who plead, "*God, be merciful to me, a sinner!*" Jesus assured us that "*this man went down to his house justified*" (Luke 18:13, 14).

2. The moral cleansing that results in the joy of salvation.

a. This cleansing begins with our standing before God (Luke 1:76–79).

b. This cleaning continues in the believer's life until glorification, what we call *sanctification* (Rom. 8:18–29).

## II. The Way of Righteousness

1. God's *Agent of righteousness* is Jesus Christ the righteous Branch promised back in Ch. 23 and reintroduced here (v. 16).

a. To accomplish God's righteous purpose, He is named *Yahweh Tsidkenu*—"the Lord our righteousness." In Chapter 23 the *Branch* that is called *Yahweh Tsidkenu*: "*This is the name by which he [the Branch] will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'*" In Ch. 33, the *Name* is applied to Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom in which the people of God dwell for eternity (Heb. 12:22–24).

b. Jesus Christ is the *sum* of all things (v. 14). In God's great wisdom, He revealed to the church the "*mystery of his will,*" in which He declares that His purpose (desire or will) is fulfilled (Eph. 1:7–10).

2. Righteousness is the *principle* of the restoration promised.

a. What is righteousness, exactly? To clarify its use, one needs but shorten it to its root—*right*. Righteousness is truth and light in action.

b. No sinner is righteous (Rom. 3:11, 12), but the good news is found in verses 21, 22.

c. Jesus Christ was raised up in order to fulfill the promise made to Israel and Judah (v. 15). Sin must be defeated and destroyed for righteousness to restore His people to Him (Matt. 3:10, 15). Jesus identified with the unrighteous so that, through His death, they might be made righteous by faith in Him (1 Cor. 1:30).

## What We Can Conclude

1. God tears down in order to rebuild. He brings judgment before He saves. The rebuilding process begins with a moral cleansing and a reestablishment of true righteousness so that He can be His people's God and do them good. God sovereignly does it all. We can do nothing of ourselves.

2. Jesus, the righteous Branch, was raised up from David to fulfill the work of restoration and renewal (Rom. 5:19).

3. Because many are made righteous, "*In this place ... there shall be heard again the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness* (Jer. 33:10, 11).

Jesus is the sum of all things! Hallelujah!