

May 24, 2020

"Repent of Injustice"  
Lesson 4 of Unit

Jeremiah 22:1-10

**Intro**

So far this quarter, we have looked at passages from Amos, Habakkuk, Micah, Malachi, Isaiah, I Corinthians, Esther, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and last week from Jeremiah. That's 10 books—a lot of territory. And what connects all of these passages is the idea of justice. Unit 1 was titled "God Requires Justice", and Unit 2 was called, "God Promises a Just Kingdom".

This third unit is "Called to God's Work of Justice". Who is being called to do this work? Many verses refer to God's calling his kings and their officials to be just. But the obvious (to me) extension is that all of us who call Jesus our Savior are also called to be just. Today's passage is like that. God is talking initially to the king and his officials, but the consequences of disobedience fall on all the people and all the land, which strongly implies that all the people are required to seek and do justice, not just the king.

**Read Jeremiah 22:1-10**

1. In vs. 1, Jeremiah is told to go to "the palace (house) of the king". Who would be in the king's palace/house? What might this suggest about who is supposed to hear this message from God?
2. In vs. 2, the king is referred to as sitting "on the throne of David". What does this suggest timewise about who is to hear and heed this message? Who is specifically told here that the message is for them?
3. What phrase is repeated in verses 1, 2, and 3? What reasons can you think of for why this phrase might have been repeated so frequently in such a short time?
4. Read Ezek. 45:9 and Amos 5:24, then read vs. 3. Why does God start this message with leaders first?
5. Is there a difference in the meanings of the words "just" and "right"? If so, what? If not, how are they the same or similar?

6. What does it mean to you to do what is just and right? What does God say in vs. 3 is His definition of doing what is just and right?

(Note: Our text offers these points about this topic: “Doing what is just is to ensure fair treatment but is not limited to that. It also extends to developing and maintaining healthy, honest, and respectful relationships at all levels. To do...right is to create and maintain those kinds of relationships. God’s character sets the standard for what is just and right (Lev. 25:17, Ps. 89:14, Is. 56:1, Mic. 6:8). Both must be expressed toward everyone at all times.)

7. What is God’s promise in vs. 4 to the kings who keep his commands to practice justice and righteousness? In vs. 5, what are the consequences of choosing not to obey these commands?

8. In vs. 6, what does God say His view is of the house of the king of Judah? What does he intend to do if the king (rulers) don’t show justice and righteousness? What does that say about how God views these two actions?

9. In vs. 7, who are the historical destroyers that God will send? What idea is God conveying by saying that these destroyers will cut and burn “your choicest cedars”?

10. The actions that God proposes in vs. 5-7 lead to the aftermath of vs. 8-9. The people from surrounding non-God following nations ask “Why?” in vs. 8. What is the reason in vs. 9 for God’s actions? Why did He want Judah to show justice and righteousness?

11. In vs. 10, the dead king is usually understood to refer to Josiah (see 2 Chron. 35:25), and “him who was exiled” as referring to Jehoahaz, who succeeded Josiah (see 2 Kings 23:29-32). After reading these passages, why would God say not to mourn for Josiah, but to mourn for someone like Jehoahaz?

Application: The words of Jeremiah’s prophecy in 22:1-10 are similar to many other prophetic pronouncements: obey God and He will bless, disobey and He will punish. God does this because His ultimate goal is to have people see Him and know Him. His leaders and followers both are meant to show the glory of God in what they do as well as what they say. This will then draw people to him. Judah chose not to behave as God wanted, and their choices led to their captivity.

We are faced with the same challenge today, with the same goals from God and the same consequences. Our text says, “As we demonstrate God’s righteousness and just character in our actions, we also must expose the injustice inflicted on the powerless by oppressive people and systems. But we don’t just draw people to God as an abstract. Rather we draw people to the living Jesus. To reject this mission is to risk experiencing God in ways we will not like.”

Prayer: Father, we desire to be people who resemble you in our thoughts, words, and actions. Show us if any of our words or actions have been unjust, and forgive us for those failures to be like You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.