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**What Will You Do in the End?**  
**Series: The Weeping Prophet**  
**March 20, 2022**  
**Rev. Andrew Hawkins, Ph.D.**  
**The Village Church**  
**Evening Service**

- I. 5.31d – **Question of Universal Significance**
- A. **Jeremiah 5:31** (ESV) — ... but what will you do when the end comes?
- B. **Jeremiah 5:30–31** (ESV) —
1. 30 An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land:
  2. 31 the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?
- C. What is really appalling, horrible
1. Not the destruction to come
  2. But the unholy trinity
    - a. **Prophets** prophesying falsely
    - b. **Priests** ruling on their own authority
      - (1) As opposed to God by His word
    - c. **People** loving it
  3. This is how you know there is no way out
    - a. Prophets
      - (1) Speak for God (not)
    - b. Priests
      - (1) Represent people to God
      - (2) Provide instruction for people; how to be right with God
      - (3) Substitute own authority for God's
        - (a) Gospel of human construction
    - c. People
      - (1) Love it that way
      - (2) No conscience
  4. No checks and balances
    - a. Cf American government
      - (1) Executive
      - (2) Legislative
      - (3) Judicial
    - b. If all three conspired to destroy American way of life, no possibility of preserving that way of life
    - c. If the people liked it that way – even worse
- D. In that case, what will you do in the end?
1. Maybe you have that question with respect to the US government in these troubled days

- a. But that's not what this is about
- b. This is about the people of God
- 2. People of God are destined for judgment – what to do?
- E. **Answer**
  - 1. **Jeremiah 6:1** (ESV) —
    - a. 1 Flee for safety, O people of Benjamin, from the midst of Jerusalem!
    - b. Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and raise a signal on Beth-haccherem,
    - c. for disaster looms out of the north, and great destruction.
  - 2. **Flee for safety**
    - a. Whoever is left with an ounce of spiritual discernment
  - 3. **Blow trumpet**
    - a. Warn anyone else with an ounce of spiritual sensitivity
  - 4. Destruction is about to take place

## II. **Another “End-times” Warning**

- A. From Jesus
  - 1. **Matthew 24:15–22** (ESV) —
    - a. 15 “So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),
    - b. 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.
    - c. 17 Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house,
    - d. 18 and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak.
    - e. 19 And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days!
    - f. 20 Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath.
    - g. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.
    - h. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.
  - 2. Another warning to flee
    - a. Destruction is about to happen in Jerusalem
    - b. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Century
  - 3. Would take place in 70 AD
- B. 70 AD?
  - 1. Matthew 23 – “this generation”
    - a. Jesus blasts Pharisees with woes
  - 2. **Matthew 23:34–39** (ESV) —
    - a. 34 Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town,
    - b. 35 so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son

of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

- c. 36 Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.
- d. 37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!
- e. 38 See, your house is left to you desolate.
- f. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’ ”

3. **Matthew 24:1–2** (ESV) —

- a. 1 Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple.
- b. 2 But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”
  - (1) Destruction of temple

4. **Matthew 24:3** (ESV) —

- a. 3 As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”
  - (1) Disciple’s question
  - (2) When?
  - (3) What sign?
- b. Jesus’ answer
  - (1) False Christs
  - (2) War, rumors of wars
  - (3) Famines, earthquakes
  - (4) Tribulation for disciples; martyrdom, hatred by nations
  - (5) Apostasy, betrayal
  - (6) False prophets
  - (7) Lawlessness
  - (8) Preaching of gospel
  - (9) Abomination of desolation in holy place (Daniel)
    - (a) That’s when to get out of town!
  - (10) Great tribulation
  - (11) Sun, moon, stars darkened
  - (12) Son of Man coming with power and glory
  - (13) Gathering of elect

5. **Matthew 24:34** (ESV) —

- a. 34 Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.
  - (1) All destruction/tribulation signs mentioned are OT allusions to judgments on Judah, Israel or other nations

- (2) They all have referents to OT events
  - C. Matthew 24 certainly refers to destruction of Jerusalem
    - 1. Whether or not it looks farther to the final eschaton, let others debate
  - D. Point – warning of destruction
    - 1. 70 AD was absolutely catastrophic
      - a. Testified to by Josephus, other Gentile writers
    - 2. Power of Jesus’ prophetic accuracy was astonishing
    - 3. Happened because...
      - a. Prophets prophesied falsely
      - b. Priests ruled by their own authority
        - (1) Add Pharisees to priests
      - c. People loved it that way
    - 4. Result
      - a. They missed Messiah!
      - b. No turning back; no solution
        - (1) Due to the unholy trinity
      - c. Scattered Jews for more than two millennia
- III. **Jeremiah’s Attack** – working backwards
  - A. **Clergy** (Prophets and Priests)
    - 1. Ryken: In almost every chapter so far, Jeremiah has been clergy-bashing. I doubt he was very popular at denominational meetings.
    - 2. George Whitefield (The Method of Grace): As God can send a nation of people no greater blessing than to give them faithful, sincere, upright ministers, so the greatest curse that God can possibly send upon a people in this world is to give them over to blind, unregenerate, carnal, lukewarm, unskillful guides.
    - 3. **Liers**
      - a. **Jeremiah 5:31** (ESV) — 31 the prophets prophesy falsely...
      - b. **Jeremiah 6:14** (ESV) — 14 They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace.
      - c. Neville Chamberlain of the OT: “We have achieved peace in our time.”
        - (1) Conceded the Sudetenland to Hitler at the Munich Conference in 1938
        - (2) Hitler ignored the pact; continued aggression
        - (3) When Hitler invaded Poland, Britain entered the war
      - d. Peace, peace – the lie of liberalism
        - (1) Sin does not separate us from God
        - (2) Humans have capacity to save ourselves
        - (3) All human beings are God’s children and in no danger of eternal judgment
      - e. Pastors who fail to preach judgment are prophesying falsely
    - 4. **Incompetent physicians**
      - a. **Jeremiah 6:14** (ESV) — 14 They have healed the wound of my people lightly...

- b. Ryken: Prophets ought to be surgeons of the soul, correctly diagnosing the spiritual condition of God’s people. In Jeremiah’s day surgery was needed, but the prophets turned out to be quack-doctors; they did not more than apply a tourniquet... “There, there,” they said, “let me give you a Band-aid.” But what the people really needed was a heart transplant.
  - 5. **Shameless**
    - a. **Jeremiah 6:15** (ESV) — 15 Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. ...
  - 6. **Selfish (greedy)**
    - a. **Jeremiah 6:13** (ESV) — 13 “For from the least to the greatest of them, everyone is greedy for unjust gain...
  - 7. H. Richard Niebuhr (liberalism of last century): A God without wrath brings men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.
  - 8. Today?
    - a. Ryken: Preaching that entertains more than it instructs, soothes more than it convicts, and appeases more than it confronts has become the rule rather the exception in the evangelical church.
- B. **Rich and Powerful** (Fat Cats; Ryken)
  - 1. **Jeremiah 5:26–29** (ESV) —
    - a. 26 For wicked men are found among my people; they lurk like fowlers lying in wait. They set a trap; they catch men.
    - b. 27 Like a cage full of birds, their houses are full of deceit; therefore they have become great and rich;
    - c. 28 they have grown fat and sleek. They know no bounds in deeds of evil; they judge not with justice the cause of the fatherless, to make it prosper, and they do not defend the rights of the needy.
    - d. 29 Shall I not punish them for these things? declares the LORD, and shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this?”
  - 2. Fat cats?
    - a. Fat and sleek
    - b. Like to catch birds
  - 3. **Rich and powerful**
    - a. Not evil in itself
    - b. Ryken: The problem with these fat cats was not just that they were rich and powerful. The Bible does not condemn the rich for being rich (although it does explain how hard it is for the rich to trust God for their salvation). Nor does the Bible condemn the powerful for being powerful (although it does warn against the abuse of power). No, the problem with these fat cats was that they had gained their wealth and power by defrauding the poor.
  - 4. Two kinds of problems
    - a. **Sins of commission**



- (1) **Jeremiah 6:10** (ESV) — 10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot listen; behold, the word of the LORD is to them an object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it.
- d. **Isaiah 6:9–10** (ESV) —
- (1) 9 And he said, “Go, and say to this people: “ ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’
- (2) 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”
- e. Just don’t get it
- f. Ryken: An elder once met with a woman who wanted to join the church. As they talked, he could sense that she was not really trusting in Christ for her salvation; she was still trusting in her own good deeds to appease God. So he confronted her, reminding her that her good deeds could not atone for her sins and that only the merits of Jesus Christ could save her. The woman listened to the elder very carefully, nodding her head and saying, “Yes, yes, I understand.” When he was finished, she said, “Okay, *now* am I good enough to get in?”
- g. **Matthew 13:11-15** (ESV) —
- (1) 11 And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
- (2) 12 For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.
- (3) 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.
- (4) 14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “ ‘ “You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.”
- (5) 15 For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’
3. John Guest: **Without reverence**
- a. **Jeremiah 5:22** (ESV) —
- (1) 22 Do you not fear me? declares the LORD. Do you not tremble before me? I placed the sand as the boundary for

the sea, a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass; though the waves toss, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over it.

- b. Ryken: Yet our culture refuses to give God glory for his work of creation. The secular mind recognizes some beauty in the created order, but refuses to praise the God who made all things beautiful.
- c. Carl Sagan: Design? Absolutely – without question. Designer? Not a hint.
- d. **Jeremiah 5:23** (ESV) —  
(1) 23 But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and gone away.

4. John Guest: **Without gratitude**

- a. Gratitude for God's grace
- b. **Jeremiah 5:24** (ESV) —  
(1) 24 They do not say in their hearts, 'Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest.'
- c. Last two verses – creation  
(1) This verse – providence
- d. Consequence – 5.25  
(1) **Jeremiah 5:25** (ESV) — 25 Your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have kept good from you.
- e. **Deuteronomy 11:16–17** (ESV) —  
(1) 16 Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them;  
(2) 17 then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you.  
(3) Punishment fits the crime

IV. **What about the rest of us?**

- A. Does it apply only to “them” – lying clergy, fat cats, blind fools?
- B. **Jeremiah 5:1–5** (ESV) —
  - 1. 1 Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, look and take note! Search her squares to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth, that I may pardon her.
  - 2. 2 Though they say, “As the LORD lives,” yet they swear falsely.
  - 3. 3 O LORD, do not your eyes look for truth? You have struck them down, but they felt no anguish; you have consumed them, but they refused to take correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.
  - 4. 4 Then I said, “These are only the poor; they have no sense; for they do not know the way of the LORD, the justice of their God.



5. 5 I will go to the great and will speak to them, for they know the way of the LORD, the justice of their God.” But they all alike had broken the yoke; they had burst the bonds.
6. Cf Abraham’s bartering with God for Sodom
  - a. From 50 to 10
  - b. If 10 God would not destroy it
7. Ryken: What Jeremiah discovered, however, was that Jerusalem had become New Sodom. Salemites were no more righteous than Sodomites.
- C. Ryken: The search would be every bit as disappointing if Jeremiah walked all the towns and cities of the United States. He would have as much trouble finding a righteous man in Washington or Peoria or Kalamazoo as anywhere else. Could he have found truth among our journalists, honesty among our politicians, generosity among our businessmen, integrity among our clergy, or love within our families?
- D. Ryken: Indeed, Jeremiah’s quest would have been equally hopeless if he had walked all the pages of human history. Where and when could he have found one man to be righteous for the people? If Jeremiah had lived for 3,000 years he would have had ample time to pace the streets of humanity, searching for “one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth.”
- E. **Ecclesiastes 7:20** (ESV) — 20 Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.
- F. NT
  1. **Romans 3:9–12** (ESV) —
    - a. 9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,
    - b. 10 as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;
    - c. 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.
    - d. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”
- G. **There is no one who meets Jeremiah’s qualifications**
  1. Does justice (righteousness)
  2. Seeks truth
- H. But there is one!
  1. **John 1:14** (ESV) —
    - a. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
  2. **John 14:6** (ESV) —
    - a. 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
  3. **Mark 1:24** (ESV) —
    - a. 24 “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.”
    - b. That testimony – from a demon!
  4. **Acts 3:14** (ESV) —

- a. 14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you...
  - b. Peter
- 5. Acts 7:52 (ESV) —
  - a. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered...
  - b. Stephen
- 6. 1 John 2:1–2 (ESV) —
  - a. 1 ... if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
  - b. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.
  - c. John's testimony
- I. That One has died for our sins
  - 1. Only way we can have a right relationship with God
- J. That ultimately determines what happens to us in the end
  - 1. Only way to avoid the ultimate judgment against sin, avoid everlasting destruction of hell
    - a. Of which the destruction of Jerusalem (both in 586 and in AD 70) were just brief tastes of the everlasting weeping and gnashing of teeth, the outer darkness, the complete alienation from God and all of his goodness, the utter experience of the destructive power of evil, the enduring searing pain of hell
- K. What do we do in the end?
  - 1. Cast ourselves on the mercy of the only one who was righteous
    - a. The only one who was truth incarnate
  - 2. The only hope for all of us
    - a. Blind fools
    - b. Fat cats
    - c. Even for us deceitful clergy
  - 3. The only way we can
    - a. See with spiritual eyes
    - b. Love our neighbors with the love of God
    - c. Minister faithfully and truthfully to the people of God