

“O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed; I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.” Jer. 20:7-9.

This was taken from one of many so-called “Jeremiads,” – (“Jeremiad,” defined as an elaborate and prolonged lamentation or tale of woe) – named for the prophet Jeremiah because of his multitude of elaborate, prolonged lamentations or holy tales of woe as recounted by the Holy Ghost in the Bible books of “The Book Of Jeremiah,” and “The Lamentations Of Jeremiah.” The 52 chapters of **Jeremiah** are not necessarily chronological, and the Jeremiads generally stand alone. No part of Holy Scripture more closely and nervously illustrates the true meaning of Heb. 4:12 & 13; to wit:

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.” (Heb. 4:12,13)

To prayerfully study the Holy Ghost inspired Jeremiads, and apply them to one’s own experiences and circumstances, throws Heavenly light upon Bro. Cowper’s little poem expounding the Savior’s words, ***“Blessed are they that mourn,”*** (Mat. 5:4); to wit: *“The path of sorrow, and that path alone, Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”* Take, for example, our text. Jeremiah had just gone through a most harrowing ordeal (a harrowing ordeal is a most distressing or tormenting ordeal) – all for performing a mission exactly as the Lord God Almighty commanded him to perform (!)(!)(!).

Moreover, at the time of his call and commission Bro. Jeremiah had what he thought was an ironclad guarantee that covered the subject matter of his present complaint; to wit: ***“And I (the Lord God) will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands. 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. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city (i.e., a fortress, a city fortified to the uttermost), and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah (i.e., Josiah, Jehoahaz Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah), against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land (i.e., the entire population). And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.” Jer. 1:16-19.***

Thus you see that under the terms of Jeremiah’s ORIGINAL COMMISSION, the prophet’s duty was to preach God’s word faithfully, and the Lord’s part was to mightily defend Jeremiah from all adversaries. In addition, particular events might call for Jeremiah’s faithful preaching in specific detail – tailored to the event. For example, take the event that led to Jeremiah’s famous outcry as recorded by the Holy Ghost in our text; to wit: ***“O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived.” Jer. 20:7.*** After all, despite God’s promise of absolute protection from all adversaries – making Jeremiah a veritable impregnable fortress, an iron pillar, etc. – on which promise Jeremiah had relied – Jeremiah had just been beaten and humiliated and placed in the stocks and jailed over night – by the governor of the temple – for the sole reason that he had been preaching what, when, and where the Lord had specifically ordered him. Hence, the Jeremiad, the elaborate and prolonged lamentation or tale of woe complaint of the overwrought prophet; to wit: ***“O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed; I am in derision daily.” Jer. 20:7.***

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The Holy Ghost has briefly recorded this amazing event involving the first incarceration (many more followed) – of Jeremiah; and I believe a prayerful study of the incident will be very spiritually edifying for us. It involved an ad hoc preaching excursion with an earthen vessel from the potter's house, and a polyglot group of very, VERY old – (they were “*ancient*,” really) – lay persons and clerics; to wit:

“Thus saith the Lord, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests.” (Jer. 19:1)

What a sight. Jeremiah, Pied Piper style, marching at the head of a huge gaggle of decrepit old folks – out the filthy, smelly East Gate (called the Dung Gate, where all the filthiness and garbage and waste of every kind from Jerusalem was regularly taken and dumped in the valley of Hinnom), such that the Valley of Hinnom was a gigantic, perpetually burning, landfill accommodating all of Jerusalem. Gill: “*From the filth and abomination of the place, and the shocking torments here exercised, HELL, from hence, in the New Testament, is called Gehenna.*” Gill agrees with the position I've taken with regard to the congregation of old people gathered by Jeremiah figuratively in “*HELL*,” with the well-grounded expectation that these old people – on whose watch Judah and Jerusalem have apostatized grievously – that these old people will be shocked into broadcasting Jeremiah's message from God far and wide. Talk about a bully pulpit. Talk about a giant bull horn. God's word for those people – from the mouth of His servant Jeremiah – was crystal clear; to wit:

“And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of the east gate, AND PROCLAIM THERE THE WORDS THAT I SHALL TELL THEE, And say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, THE WHICH WHOSOEVER HEARETH, HIS EARS SHALL TINGLE.” (Jer. 19:2,3)

Beloved, can you now picture this scene just outside ancient Jerusalem, where these old people are standing atop the smelly landfill standing for Hell in several languages, and Gehenna, the final Hell of punishment throughout the New Testament (Mk. 9:43,45,47) – maybe all wondering what Jeremiah was up to – (Gill thinks the Lord God supernaturally worked on their minds inclining them, against their nature, to join Jeremiah's congregation in the Valley of Hinnom – or Jeremiah would have had nobody to preach to that day.) But when Jeremiah told those people that God was going to destroy Jerusalem as easily and as thoroughly as a clay pot shatters to smithereens and shivers when thrown or dropped ever so slightly against a rock. Jerusalem (America) is doomed; such that, “*I will bring evil upon this place, THE WHICH WHOSOEVER HEARETH, HIS EARS SHALL TINGLE.*” Jer. 19:3. I say, when those old people heard those words out of Jeremiah's mouth, I always easily envision hysterical panic setting in and pandemonium walking upon the scene, down in the Valley of Hinnom.

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The Valley of the son of Hinnom, but The Valley of Slaughter.” (Jer. 19:6)

The words of God going forth from the mouth of Jeremiah describing the then forthcoming destruction of old Jerusalem are simply devastating; but they are mild compared to the holy words describing the imminent coming of the WRATH OF THE LAMB; to wit: “*And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the*

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throne, and from THE WRATH OF THE LAMB; For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6:12-17.

The destruction of Jerusalem – both times, first by Babylon c. 585 BC, and then by Rome c. 72 AD – each one adumbrates the horrific events soon to attend the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory. Meanwhile, we have for our learning the high drama playing itself out in the Valley of Slaughter, as the words of the Holy Ghost were gushing out of the mouth of Jeremiah, such as Jesus described; to wit:

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."(Jn. 7:37,38)

The blessed mouth that framed and articulated those precious words, was the same mouth that warned mankind that the Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb was coming on apace. And it was the same holy mouth that ordered Jeremiah to lead the Gray Panther Platoon, so to speak, into the Valley of Hinnom, through the east gate, ***"AND PROCLAIM THERE THE WORDS THAT I SHALL TELL THEE."*** Jer. 19:2. Thus Jeremiah indicates that the dynamite words of condemnation and doom for Jerusalem and Judah which he preached to the old people in the Valley of Slaughter were not placed in his mouth until he reached the Valley; to wit: ***"And go forth unto the valley...and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee."*** Jer. 19:2. There amidst the suffocating stench of raw sewerage, garbage, human dung, dead animal carcasses, and all else constituting daily waste from a great city (Jerusalem) enough to fill a great natural valley and rising to a great noxious pile of a landfill – I say in such a foul environment, and standing atop the pile of raw sewerage, etc., Jeremiah was energized and inspired to preach ***"and proclaim there the words that I (the Lord God) shall tell thee."*** Jer. 19:2.

Only such a stinking milieu could adequately symbolize the filthy sins of the Jews at that hour and the day of their calamity; just as only such a stinking milieu can properly or adequately symbolize the spiritual and moral condition of America at this hour today. And, Beloved, this is what the Lord ordered Jeremiah to proclaim against in the Valley of Slaughter; and this preaching in turn incurred the fierce anger of Jeremiah's contemporaries against the prophet; and this exact same sort of preaching by WBC has excited the same kind of animosity against this ***"little flock of slaughter"*** Zech. 11:7. But, as Christ promised, ***"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*** Lk. 12:32. Meanwhile, the masses of the eternally damned today, treat the saints of WBC the same as their spiritual ancestors treated Jeremiah in his day; to wit:

"Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, AND LET US NOT GIVE HEED TO ANY OF HIS WORDS." (Jer. 18:18)

Nevertheless, and undeterred, the prophet's words fresh from the Lord to all mankind – through the megaphone of his congregation of the Old Folks At Home – I say, Bless God, that Jeremiah's words got stronger and bolder; to wit:

"And I will cause them (the Jews) to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives; and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth."(Jer. 16:4)

Note: No funerals. No bodies to bury. Those Jews lived like dumb, brute beasts. Death did not change that bestial character. Their dead bodies are merely carcasses. All carcasses therefore are given to be meat for the carnivorous fowls of the heaven (as vultures, eagles, ravens, crows, falcons, etc.); and for the wild beasts of the earth (as lions, panthers, wolves, coyotes, wildcats, pumas, bears, etc.) Just think of the effect such preaching plus the stinking environment of the Valley of Hinnom had upon the congregation of senior citizens.

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Was there ever a Gospel preaching event more calculated to obtain instant and mass publication? Except, maybe, our now famous worldwide Gospel picketing ministry. And, Bro. Jeremiah is just getting warmed up, in what we may call, The Sermon In The Valley. (Mind you, The dear Lord Jesus is preaching this Sermon In The Valley just as surely as He preached, The Sermon On The Mountain; to wit:

***“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”
(Phil. 2:13)***

“Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:26,27)

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.” (Heb. 13:20,21)

And so you see, Beloved; that it was in fact our dear Lord Jesus down in that foul smelling Valley of Hinnom, otherwise called Tophet, doing all that powerful and condemnatory preaching, proclaiming the bloody fall of Jerusalem and related matters, USING THE MOUTH of Jeremiah, and using the company of senior citizens (albeit unconsciously to them) as a bully pulpit whereby to publish His Hellfire-and-brimstone sermon nationwide and worldwide. When it is said in 1st Pet. 3:19 that our Lord Jesus “*went and preached unto the spirits in prison, Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing,*” it is commonly accepted that our Lord Jesus – THROUGH NOAH – was preaching to all the antediluvian world – probably extensively, and probably for a long time, considering that Noah was “*a preparing*” the ark for 120 years. (Gen. 6:3).

Now consider the Lord Jesus Christ preaching – THROUGH JEREMIAH – down in the Valley; to wit: “*And I will make this city (Washington, or, America) desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. [Now, WATCH OUT (!)(!)(!)] AND I WILL CAUSE THEM TO EAT THE FLESH OF THEIR SONS AND THE FLESH OF THEIR DAUGHTERS, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them. [CRASH] (!)(!) THEN SHALT THOU BREAK THE BOTTLE IN THE SIGHT OF THE MEN THAT GO WITH THEE.*” Jer. 19:8-10.

By this time, the nerves of the Senior Citizens must have been pretty well shot. The Lord Jesus is doing the preaching through Jeremiah, and, just before sound effects calls for the thundering crash of clay pottery to emphasize the most nerve shattering part of the sermon – resort to cannibalism to survive the siege of the Chaldeans – there is a strong suggestion that the verdict is in, so to speak, and the congregation of old, old people have rejected Jeremiah’s message in toto; to wit:

“Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the Lord had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the Lord’s house; and said to all the people, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.” (Jer. 19:14,15)

THE JEWS: THEN, NOW, TOMORROW, ALWAYS, FOREVER, IMPENITENT !!!

I love you. Amen.