

August 12

Jeremiah 23

Hey everyone, Online Campus Pastor Robert Murphy and I have the privilege of doing the Daily Accelerator for August 12.

Today we read from Jeremiah 23, and the main theme is false prophets.

The false prophets looked like representatives of God but they did not speak for Him. Pure and simple they were charlatans who had discovered somewhere along the way that if you say "Thus saith the Lord" often enough and if you follow that formula with something that you know the people want to hear anyway, you can get a whole lot of people to follow you and you can do pretty well for yourself.

But if you tell them what they want to hear: something like remember we are God's chosen people and as long as the temple of the Lord is in Jerusalem we will be safe because God will protect us -- that message will fly. We saw this with yesterday's Daily Accelerator, when Hananiah was falsely prophesying Judah's victory.

The false prophets don't confront sin. They false prophets don't say when God is angry. And because of this, they were a factor in leading Judah astray. Here's what God says in chapter 23 verses 21-22:

I did not send these prophets,
yet they have run with their message;
I did not speak to them,
yet they have prophesied.
But if they had stood in my council,
they would have proclaimed my words to my people
and would have turned them from their evil ways
and from their evil deeds.

A few verses later, God says he is against these false prophets.

That is a scary place to be, against God. Now, you may think this doesn't apply to you because you aren't a prophet. But do you leverage a saying like "Thus saith the Lord" for your own gain? As Pastor Gavin talked about recently, are we more concerned about reflecting the culture than redeeming it? With these false prophets, that was the case and they were promptly rejected by God.

That's the way it was in 600 B.C. in Jerusalem and unfortunately it is not uncommon in America today. The "tell me what you want to hear so I can tell it back to you" prophets are still with us. You hear it when these false prophets talk about no one will go to Hell, or they preach a prosperity gospel like "name it and claim it".

The Apostle Paul says that as we approach the end of the age and the Second Coming of Christ, people will have "itching ears" and will increasingly be led astray by false shepherds and

false prophets who simply tell them what they want to hear. We need to be on guard. Now, is the second coming of Christ near? Well, it's closer than it ever has been. Either way, we need to respond to God's word, no matter what it may be. Even if it means being scorned, made fun of, or losing a friend, we need to be faithful to God. He is our Lord, not the approval of people.

The Apostle Paul said, in Romans 8, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." I believe Jeremiah had an inkling of this, and it's part of the reason he boldly prophesied on behalf of God.

May we be reminded to proclaim truth on behalf of God.