

# Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,  
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

June 1, 2011

Volume 10 Number 11

## Good Words and Fair Speeches

As we look around and see a world moving toward greater chaos and confusion, most of us are eager to hear some good word. Paul, however, warns about those who will use “good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple:”

- 17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them.
- 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Yahshua the Messiah, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. -Romans 16

The “good words” aren’t good if they cause the unsuspecting to believe a lie. The word “simple,” as translated here, is from the Greek word *ακακος* (*akakos*), which means:

- 1) without guile or fraud, harmless, free from guilt
- 2) fearing no evil from others, distrusting no one

(see *Online Bible Concordance*)

Many of us naively pack churches and flock to the airwaves to hear messages containing hollow words that some claim to have been delivered to them directly from God Himself. Meanwhile, the harsh reality of Yahweh’s call for heartfelt repentance as the alternative to the impending judgment described in His own Word is often unwelcome among those who claim to be God’s people.

So it was with the prophet Jeremiah. He delivered the good word of Yahweh, the blessings of which were dependant upon the willingness of the people of Judah to repent from their corrupt worship practices and turn back to Yahweh with all of their hearts. Because of their unrepentance, he offered this prophecy from Yahweh:

- 8 Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts; Because you have not heard my words,
- 9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, says Yahweh, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations.
- 10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom,

and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

- 11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. -Jeremiah 25

This prophesied judgment, however, was conditional. Judah could be spared from the wrath that Yahweh would exercise through His “servant,” the King of Babylon. Yahweh sent Jeremiah to speak to all of the false worshippers in Judah and tell them to repent from what they were doing. If they did so, then He might repent from His plan to send the evil of the King of Babylon upon them:

- 2 Thus says Yahweh; Stand in the court of Yahweh’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in Yahweh’s house, all the words that I command you to speak to them; diminish not a word:
- 3 If so be they will listen, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do to them because of the evil of their doings. -Jeremiah 26

When the religious people of Judah heard Jeremiah’s prophecy, which he gave in the house of Yahweh, they were not happy. Instead of humbling themselves in heartfelt repentance unto Yahweh, they threatened to kill Jeremiah:

- 7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of Yahweh.
- 8 Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Yahweh had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, You shall surely die. -Jeremiah 26

The people of Judah did not want to hear the words of Jeremiah. Consequently, a competing prophet named Hananiah rose up to tell Judah what they wanted to hear. His popular message was that Yahweh had told him that the gloomy prophecy of Jeremiah was wrong. The captivity, he said, would not be for seventy years as Jeremiah had prophesied. Instead, it would only last for two years!

- 2 Thus speaks Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.
- 3 Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of Yahweh’s house, that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon: -Jeremiah 28

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,  
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

## Come to Understanding

This was the kind of good news that so many people are eager to hear: salvation without repentance. Hananiah claimed that, without humbling themselves and turning from their false worship, Judah would be saved from the King of Babylon within two years. While the prophecy may have sounded wonderful to the people of Judah, it wasn't true. Jeremiah told Hananiah that he was causing the people "to trust in a lie" and was teaching rebellion. Therefore, Yahweh removed him from the earth:

- 15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah to Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; Yahweh has not sent you; but you make this people to trust in a lie.
- 16 Therefore thus says Yahweh; Behold, I will cast you from off the face of the earth: this year you shall die, because you have taught rebellion against Yahweh.
- 17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month. -Jeremiah 28

Hananiah was giving Judah a false sense of security. The people readily accepted his prophecy because he told them what they wanted to hear. They could continue with their false worship, without the need for repentance, and still be saved from the extended wrath of the King of Babylon. The good news he told them was a lie, because it was not what Yahweh had said. Then Jeremiah told them the truth:

- 8 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *are* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed.
- 9 For they prophesy falsely to you in my name: I have not sent them, says Yahweh.
- 10 For thus says Yahweh, That after seventy years are accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.
- 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says Yahweh, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. -Jeremiah 29

The thoughts of Yahweh toward them, and toward us, are "thoughts of peace, and not of evil." However, it is often only after we have gone through trials and tribulations that

our hearts are sufficiently humbled to come to true repentance for our sins against Yahweh. That is when we are able to realize that the thoughts of Yahweh toward us are truly "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Yahweh said that is when we can call upon Him and He will listen to us. That is when we will finally be able to receive the blessings of the promise that He has for us:

- 12 Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray unto me, and I will listen to you.
- 13 And you shall seek me, and find *me*, when you shall search for me with all your heart.
- 14 And I will be found by you, says Yahweh: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places where I have driven you, says Yahweh; and I will bring you again into the place *from* where I caused you to be carried away captive. -Jeremiah 29

It is because Yahweh loves His people that He chastens them. He puts them through trials and tribulations:

- 6 For whom the Lord *Yahweh* loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. -Hebrews 12
- Worldly sorrow often brings unsaving tearful confessions from the head and mouth, but it is "godly sorrow" that brings heart-changing repentance unto salvation. Paul explains:
- 10 For godly sorrow works repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world works death. -2 Corinthians 7

The repentance that follows the chastening and godly sorrow that we are often required to experience yields the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" enabling us to be partakers of the holiness of God:

- 10 For they truly for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.
- 11 Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. -Hebrews 12

Yahweh warned the false prophets that promised life without repentance:

- 22 Because with lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:
- 23 Therefore you shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and you shall know that I *am* Yahweh. -Ezekiel 13

Regardless of the "good words and fair speeches" that deceive the "hearts of the simple," God demonstrates His love toward us in ways that we may find grievous. That is because it is His will that none of us perish, but that we all would receive His promise by faith as we come to repentance. Peter explains:

- 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. -2 Peter 3

*Come to Understanding* is sent out twice per month free of charge. To add someone to our list of readers, please contact us at:

Institute for Biblical and Historical Studies  
P.O. Box 12, 114 East Main Street  
Addison, Michigan 49220 U.S.A.  
biblical@ibiblical.org

You may view this and past editions online at: [www.ibiblical.org](http://www.ibiblical.org)  
Scriptures are from the:  
Proper Name Version of the King James Bible.



©2011 Institute for Biblical and Historical Studies. All rights reserved.  
You may freely copy this publication, provided you acknowledge its source and inform us of your use.