

Come to Understanding

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

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Wind and Confusion

Like many of us, Jeremiah did not welcome the calling that Yahweh had for his life. Even though Yahweh knew him before he was conceived and had sanctified him before he was born, Jeremiah resisted his calling as a prophet:

- 4 Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
- 5 Before I formed you in the belly I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, *and* I ordained you a prophet unto the nations.
- 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord Yahweh! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. -Jeremiah 1

This reluctant prophet, Jeremiah, was the son of Hilkiah the high priest. He was called during the reign of King Josiah to speak Yahweh's words to Judah:

- 1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that *were* in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:
- 2 To whom the word of Yahweh came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. -Jeremiah 1

Hilkiah was responsible for bringing the long-rejected Word of God back to the people of Judah. He found the abandoned "book of the law" during the restoration of the temple of Yahweh:

- 8 And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Yahweh. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. -2 Kings 22

Prior to Hilkiah's discovery, Josiah had conscientiously tried to be a righteous king. He attempted to do that which was "right in the sight of Yahweh" and also to do that which he believed King David had done:

- 2 And he did *that which* was right in the sight of Yahweh, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. -2 Kings 22

However, the words of the "book of the law" showed Josiah that he was off course. Realizing that the worship he was promoting was contrary to Yahweh's word, he humbled himself, tearing his clothes as a sign of his broken hearted repentance:

- 10 And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest has delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

- 11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he tore his clothes. -2 Kings 22

He immediately sent word to the prophetess, Huldah, for confirmation of what he had learned in the "book of the law." She answered back with an updated warning from Yahweh of His anger because they were worshipping the images of idols!

- 16 Thus says Yahweh, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read:
- 17 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. -2 Kings 22

Josiah gathered all of the people of Judah and Jerusalem, including the elders, the priests, and the prophets, and read to them the "words of the book of the covenant," which Hilkiah, Jeremiah's father, had found. The king and all of Judah and Jerusalem made a covenant to keep the words that they had heard "with all *their* heart and all *their* soul:"

- 1 And the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.
- 2 And the king went up into the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of Yahweh.
- 3 And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all *their* heart and all *their* soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant. -2 Kings 23

With that, Josiah ordered Hilkiah to get rid of the objects of abominable worship, as well as the idolatrous priests that were leading the people of Judah in their religious errors. The purging began in the temple of Yahweh, destroying the images of Baal and of the grove (asherah), which were objects for goddess worship. He also destroyed the nearby "houses of the sodomites:"

**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**

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- 4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of Yahweh all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them to Bethel.
- 5 And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense to Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.
- 6 And he brought out the grove from the house of Yahweh, outside Jerusalem, to the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.
- 7 And he broke down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of Yahweh, where the women wove hangings for the grove. -2 Kings 23

Further demonstrating his repentance for the religious errors of Judah, Josiah commanded them to keep the Passover:

- 21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto Yahweh your God, as *it is* written in the book of this covenant.
- 22 Surely there was not held such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah;
- 23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* this passover was held to Yahweh in Jerusalem. -2 Kings 23

However, Josiah's outward efforts to return Judah back to Yahweh were apparently not sufficient to turn their hearts back to Him. Therefore, Yahweh sent Jeremiah, as well as other prophets, to again call upon them to repent from worshipping the images of other gods and goddesses. Judah continued to do as they had been doing, only much of it was done in secret. The prophet Ezekiel described the secret worship of images in the temple that were being performed by the "ancients of the house of Israel," religious leaders that should have been leading Judah to repent:

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- 7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.
- 8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had dug in the wall, behold a door.
- 9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.
- 10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about.
- 11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.
- 12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, have you seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, Yahweh sees us not; Yahweh has forsaken the earth. -Ezekiel 8

Even Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan, the scribe that had read the "book of the law" to Josiah, was among the "ancients of the house of Israel" that were secretly worshipping forbidden images hidden beneath the temple of Yahweh! It's no marvel that Yahweh called Jeremiah to stand at the gate of the temple and to warn the people that entered to repent of the worship that was going on inside. They were trusting in the "lying words" that excused their idolatrous worship practices because they were doing them in the temple of Yahweh:

- 2 Stand in the gate of Yahweh's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of Yahweh, all *you of* Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship Yahweh.
- 3 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.
- 4 Trust you not in lying words, saying, The temple of Yahweh, The temple of Yahweh, The temple of Yahweh, *are* these. -Jeremiah 7

There was no one to tell them the truth, which was that their images were all "wind and confusion:"

- 28 For I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counselor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word.
- 29 Behold, they *are* all vanity; their works *are* nothing: their molten images *are* wind and confusion. -Isaiah 41
- Yahweh declares His name through Yahshua (Jesus):
- 6 I Yahweh have called you in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and give you for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;
- 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.
- 8 I *am* Yahweh: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. -Isaiah 42

His word, spoken through His prophets, brings an unpopular message to an idolatrous world: "their molten images *are* wind and confusion."