

Sunday Morning Message

August 27, 2023

Title – *“Don’t Cut the Word of God Out of Your Life”*

Text – Jeremiah 36

Congregational Reading – Jeremiah 36:29 - 32

Introduction

A few months back, I preached a message about a great revival that took place during the reign of King Josiah after they had accidentally discovered a copy of the Book of the Law, the Bible, while doing a renovation in the House of God. When they found the Bible, they read it and immediately began to make changes in the kingdom which resulted in God tremendously blessing the kingdom. This morning we are going to examine another king of Judah, who happens to be one of the sons of King Josiah. This king’s name is Jehoiakim, and we will discover that he is nothing like his father. You will recall that Josiah found the Book of God, and when he read it, he “rent” his clothes because he knew that the nation had gotten away from the will of God. King Josiah immediately began to implement the principles found in this Book, the Bible, and God spared the nation, at least temporarily, from the coming judgment.

Josiah’s son, on the other hand, hears part of the Word of God, and does not like what he hears so he then takes a knife, and cuts it out, and throws it in the fire. The king is not affected at all by what he had heard. He doesn’t rend his clothes as his father had done; and he does not heed what he has heard. He has no fear of God whatever. As a result, God must bring forth judgment. Unfortunately, this king was just a reflection of the spiritual condition of the nation. They really did not want to hear what God had to say, so they were perfectly OK with Jehoiakim’s attempt to remove the Bible from their culture. This casual and caustic attitude that Judah had toward the Bible was one of the reasons why God allowed her to be conquered and destroyed.

Note – If you want to have victory in your life, you better have a reverential fear of God and what He says in His Word.

It is interesting to note that the New Testament Book of Revelation addresses this same subject when God states that nothing should be added to or subtracted from His Word:

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:" - (Revelation 22:18)

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." - (Revelation 22:19)

Jehoiakim cut out the portions of the Word of God that he did not like. It is very interesting that he was cut out of the genealogical record of kings found in Matthew's gospel:

"And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:" - (Matthew 1:11)

Matthew says, Jechonias and his brethren, but he does not specifically name Jehoiakim. We are studying 1st and 2nd Kings on Sunday Evening, so we will learn more about each of the kings of Israel and Judah in greater detail as we progress through these books, but for now, let's quickly consider these kings that were part of Judah's history in the years preceding her being conquered by the Babylonians.

Kings of Judah:

First, it is important to remember that there are two kingdoms:

The Northern Kingdom – Israel – split off after the reign of Solomon.

The Southern Kingdom – Judah – capital is Jerusalem.

Hezekiah – good king – he was the king when Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC.

Manasseh – bad king – worse than Judah had – yet he humbled himself before God before his death.

Amon – bad king – reigned only 2 years – his servants killed him.

Josiah – great king – God postponed the judgment that Judah had coming.

Jehoahaz – only reigned for 3 months – was bad king.

Eliakim – named changed by Pharaoh-Necho to **Jehoiakim** – Jehoahaz's brother - bad king – eventually ends of being taken into Babylon.

Jehoiachin – also called Jechoniah or Coniah – bad king - curse was placed upon him in Jeremiah 22. Carried away into Babylon.

"Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." - (Jeremiah 22:30)

He is listed in Matthew's genealogy, but not in Luke's. Luke records the physical line of Christ through Mary; but Matthew records the legal line of Christ through Joseph.

Mattaniah – named changed by King Nebuchadnezzar to Zedekiah – bad king – Nebuchadnezzar had all his sons killed right before his eyes were plucked out – carried away into Babylon.

Transition

This morning, as we examine Jeremiah 36, we will see how King Jehoiakim had no respect for the Word of God; not only did he not heed it, but he was also brazen enough to destroy it. He tried to cut out and burn the Bible out of his life.

I. The Inspiration of the Word of God (vs. 1 – 4)

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." – (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Notice in v. 3, God reveals how His Word would be profitable to the people of Judah.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." – (2 Peter 1:20-21)

The words that God commanded to be written in the "roll of a book" were the words that God had already given Jeremiah regarding the coming judgment of Judah and Jerusalem.

Notice that God gave the words to Jeremiah; and Jeremiah gave them to Baruch who recorded them. A person who records what God gave through a prophet was known as an amanuensis. Jeremiah dictated to Baruch what God gave to him.

When we consider God giving us His word, we often use four words that help us understand the process:

1. Revelation is when God reveals Himself to us. There is what we call general revelation, which can be seen through nature and through the law of God written upon all our hearts. Specific revelation involves the process that God used to specifically tell us about Himself and His plan for our lives.

2. Inspiration is the breath of God, or the Spirit of God upon the words given to and through the prophet. (See vs. 17 – 18)
3. Preservation is God's divine protection of the Word and words of God through generations of time and translation of languages. God's Word in the Old Testament was written originally in Hebrew, but His word and the inspiration that was in it has been preserved for us in English. The Bible is just as much alive in English as it was in Hebrew.
4. Illumination is the process that Holy Spirit uses to help us understand His Word.

"14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

II. Distribution of the Word of God (vs. 5 – 19)

Jeremiah sent Baruch to deliver and read the Word of God to the House of God.

Notice the Word of God was to be read in the House of God.

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- (1 Timothy 3:15)

The Bible can and should be read anywhere, but the church is the place where God's Word should have the pre-eminence. It is the place where the Bible is read, taught, and preached; and it is also the place where the Word of God is distributed through to the outside world.

Notice v. 7, we again see the profitability of heeding God's Word; listening and obeying what He tells us.

III. The Destruction of the Word of God (vs. 20 – 26)

The Word of God is Cut – people today do the same thing – they cut out what they do not like or agree with. They try to make the Bible meet their agenda, rather than conforming their agenda to the Word of God.

The Word of God is Destroyed – The enemies of God had been trying to remove the Word of God from off the face of the earth. Destroying the Word has been a favorite tactic of the devil since day 1. Example – Satan lied to Eve. He also removed part of the verses he quoted to Jesus during the temptation in the wilderness.

Illustration - The communists and Nazi's have tried to remove the Word.

In 1915, A Russian Armenian was reading his Bible when he was beheaded. I saw the Bible--large, thick, and well used. Inside was a reddish stain that permeated most of the book. The stain was the blood of this man, one of more than a million casualties of a religious and ethnic holocaust. About 70 years later a large shipment of bibles entered Romania from the West, and Ceausescu's (dictator of Romania) lieutenants confiscated them, shredded them, and turned them into pulp. Then they had the pulp reconstituted into toilet paper and sold to the West. (Robert A Seiple, president, *World Vision*, June-July, 1990.)

The underground church in China is estimated to be larger than the church in Europe and America combined.

Notice in v. 24, we see the real problem in Jehoiakim's day, which is the exact same problem that we have today. This king and these people did not fear God; nor did they have any regard for the potential consequences of their actions. People who fear God revere his word.

Do you fear God? Does the Word of God hold a special place of importance in your life.

Illustration – Chuck Linderman got mad at me one time because I took his Bible and put it on the floor.

We put the pulpit in the middle of the platform because it is the desk the holds the Word and words of God.

IV. The Preservation of the Word of God (vs. 27 – 32)

Notice in v. 29, God reveals the reason the king did wanted the Bible burned: because he did not like what God had to say. It was not politically correct; it did not fit in with the agenda of the government.

Note – You watch what happens in the future regarding the Words of God. Our society is everyday becoming more intolerant of the Bible. They do not like what it has to say. The Bible specifically addressed all the issues that our nation is debating about, and many do not want to hear what God said about these things.

Illustrate – Homosexuality and transgenderism are clearly denounced as sin in the Bible. Our culture does not want to hear that. Our culture wants that part of the Bible cut out and burned. Our culture wants to “heap to themselves teachers” who are going to leave that part of the Bible out of their messages.

God just gave His Word to Jeremiah again, and He gave Him even more words. No doubt, He added some words of added judgment for this king and these leaders who were attempting to remove the influence of the Bible from the kingdom.

You cannot destroy the Bible. You can destroy a Bible, but for every Bible you destroy, God will just produce more. Randy Alcorn, in his book *Safely Home*, talks about the smuggling of Bibles into communist China. China does have an official bible that is only available to some of its citizens and only includes the parts of God's Word that the government agrees with. However, Christians in China have been smuggling in real copies of the Word of God. The more the government tries to suppress the Word of God, the more God distributes it.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." - (Psalm 12:6-7)

You cannot destroy the Word of God.

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." - (Psalm 119:89)

V. The Application for Us

Don't Mess with the Book

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." - (Deuteronomy 4:2)

1. Fear the Word
2. Read the Word
3. Submit to the Word
4. Spread the Word

"Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them."