

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Jeremiah 33:1-11

King James Version

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, September 28, 2014

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, September 28, 2014**, is from **Jeremiah 33:1-11**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is usually posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Jeremiah 33:1-11

(Jeremiah 33:1) Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

Jeremiah received words of consolation and hope for himself and the kingdom even while wicked King Zedekiah had him in the palace prison. Jeremiah had preached repentance to the king, the priests, the prophets, and the people for almost 40 years, and if they had turned back to God they could have avoided suffering the justice of God, death, and exile in Babylon.

(Jeremiah 33:2) Thus saith the LORD the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD *is* his name;

The Israelites had turned from the true God (Yahweh) to Baal and Molech and other idols – even sacrificing their own children by throwing them into a fire and burning incense to false gods from their rooftops. Jeremiah, therefore, had to tell them the name, nature, and character of the true God that he represented and spoke for as a prophet of Yahweh. Yahweh had created, formed, and established the earth: Yahweh was the one and only all-powerful and holy God – that Moses met on the mountain.

(Jeremiah 33:3) Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Yahweh gave this promise primarily to Jeremiah and to those who truly serve God. If the wicked call to God, their first words must express sorrowful repentance and a

sincere desire to return to God. God will not reveal great and hidden things to the wicked, but God will reveal great and hidden things to those who love and serve God (Yahweh).

(Jeremiah 33:4) For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by the mounts, and by the sword;

The Judeans themselves began the destruction of Jerusalem in order to strengthen the defenses of the city's walls. Of course, their manmade defenses could not stop them from suffering the discipline of God through the army of Nebuchadnezzar (who was unknowingly in the service of God and who was successful militarily because God was using him as a mere tool to bring corrective discipline upon His people).

(Jeremiah 33:5) They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *it is* to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.

“Chaldeans” was another name for “Babylonians.” Because of the wickedness of those in Judah and Jerusalem, God would no longer look upon them with favor. They had been

wicked for so long in spite of all God's peaceful efforts through His prophets to lead them to repent that God expressed His justifiable anger as a holy God in judgment upon them. Through the army of the Chaldeans, God would strike them down and kill them; perhaps as some were dying they returned to God in repentance and true faith, to the God of steadfast love and mercy. Others may have repented and returned to God during their long march into exile in Babylon or while they suffered in Babylon.

(Jeremiah 33:6) Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

After God had punished them, He would restore them. His punishment was disciplinary and reveals that God is just and merciful, not desiring that any should perish: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). God would heal the people in exile both physically and spiritually. They would learn to worship God even in Babylon and without their temple. They would find abundance, prosperity, and security in Babylon when they worshiped the true God. They would return to Jerusalem, rebuild it, and prosper once again as God provided for them after the defeat of the Babylonians.

(Jeremiah 33:7) And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

Throughout the Book of Jeremiah, God reaffirmed His love for both the northern and the southern kingdoms, for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. For a time they prospered in spite of their rebellion against God and their idolatry until God had to punish them, because if He had not punished them His patience would have ceased to be a virtue and He would have been unjust. Because Yahweh is a God of steadfast love and faithfulness, God promised to rebuild them as a kingdom, and God would make them prosper and they would recognize the fact that all of their blessings came from God and God alone.

(Jeremiah 33:8) And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

The Israelites and Judeans identified their material prosperity with the blessings of God. As long as they prospered materially, they believed God was blessing them and they ignored Jeremiah's preaching and the law of God. They sinned as long as they prospered. After God punished them by touching them materially, God promised to heal and cleanse them morally and spiritually as well as forgive

them after their rebellion had made it necessary for him to punish them severely.

(Jeremiah 33:9) And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

After their judgment and their return to obedience, the people would make Jerusalem a joy to themselves and a joy to God once again. All the nations of the earth would see the work of God among His people in the new Kingdom of Israel and they would reverence or fear the true God because of His good work of restoration among His people. This happened in a small measure after their return from exile in Babylon, and will happen fully when the Messiah returns.

(Jeremiah 33:10) Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say *shall be* desolate without man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,

While still a prisoner and even before the Chaldeans breached the walls of the city and destroyed it, Jeremiah

described the consequences of the people's rebellion against God: the city is "desolate." Yet, after the people were carried far away into exile, they would return and repopulate the city after seventy years of exile. No animals were heard in the city because the people had eaten all of them while under siege, but animals and people would return after God corrected His people with the appropriate discipline.

(Jeremiah 33:11) The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

When Ezra, Nehemiah, and others rebuilt the city, the city walls, and the temple, mirth and gladness returned to the city. People felt confident to marry and raise children in the city and to sing and give thanks to God. Only God could have restored the fortunes of His people, and the very existence of Israel as a people who worship Yahweh is a good reason to believe in God. Once again, Jeremiah's words of praise and thanksgiving remind us of the Psalms, and the fact that Jeremiah was very familiar with the Book

of Psalms (which must have brought him great comfort when he was persecuted).

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. While Jeremiah remained in prison, how did God continue to encourage him?
2. How does God encourage you when you face troubles and you do not know the future?
3. Why did God hide His face from the people in Jerusalem? Do you think He will do the same thing today in cities around the world for the same reason?
4. In spite of their wickedness, what did God say He would do with the people?
5. Read Jeremiah 33:11 again. The New Testament teaches that the Church is the Bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7, Revelation 21:9, and Revelation 22:17). Compare what you have read to Christian worship today. What parts of Jeremiah 33:11 do you enjoy in a service of worship? What parts would you like to do more when you worship God? What does Jeremiah 33:11 teach you about how you can worship God every day even by yourself? What promise did God give Jeremiah for the people and how does it compare to some of the promises of Jesus to you?

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