

# ***International Bible Lessons Commentary***

## ***Jeremiah 30:1-3, 18-24***

**New Revised Standard Version**

***International Bible Lessons***

**Sunday, September 7, 2014**

**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, September 7, 2014**, is from **Jeremiah 30:1-3, 18-24**. **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 30:1-3, 18-24**

##### **(Jeremiah 30:1) The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:**

In Jeremiah chapters 30-33, Jeremiah recorded words of consolation, encouragement, and hope from the LORD. Jeremiah lived through the reigns of five kings of Judah and was a prophet in Judah during 40 years of preaching. He prefaced many of the words he spoke with these words, "Thus says the LORD," so leaders and people would know he was not just giving his political or religious opinions. Baruch recorded on scrolls the words that Jeremiah dictated, after Jeremiah in some sense took dictation from the LORD when he said, "Thus says the LORD." The Holy Spirit inspired the words of Jeremiah and protected him and Baruch from error; therefore, we read his book in the Old Testament and learn how Jesus the Messiah would establish the new covenant.

##### **(Jeremiah 30:2) Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.**

The "LORD" is "Yahweh" who had led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Because of their idolatry, after King Solomon's reign, the nation had divided into the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah. "The God of Israel" means that even though the Kingdom of Israel (that comprised 10 of the 12 tribes of Jacob) had been destroyed by the Assyrians in 722 BC as God's punishment, God the LORD was still the God over all of the tribes of Judah and Israel. God commanded Jeremiah to write

everything He said to him. Even though the Kingdom of Judah was destroyed in 587 BC, the Book of Jeremiah was preserved and God's promises remembered throughout their years of exile.

**(Jeremiah 30:3) For the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors and they shall take possession of it.**

For 40 years, the LORD through Jeremiah had called the people to repent and turn from their sins, which even included sacrificing their children to their idols. They refused to repent and even persecuted Jeremiah. Now, right before the city of Jerusalem was to be burned and the temple destroyed by the Babylonians, God offered words of comfort and hope to those who would survive death and exile. After their exile, God fulfilled His promises and those who chose to return went back to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple.

**(Jeremiah 30:18) Thus says the LORD: I am going to restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob, and have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt upon its mound, and the citadel set on its rightful site.**

Jacob was the father of the 12 tribes of Israel, and God wanted to declare that He was still the LORD over all Israel, not only the Kingdom of Judah. Some of the Israelites lived in houses in cities. Some of these cities were fortified and some were without walls. In times of danger, those who lived in villages without walls, in tents, or on farms fled to the fortified cities. Some still lived in tents as their father had commanded them (see Jeremiah 35:1-19). After 70 years of captivity, some of the Judeans returned from exile and rebuilt the city of Jerusalem, which had become a mound from previous destructions. [Cities that are repeatedly abandoned and rebuilt after destructions over hundreds or thousands of years become mounds that archaeologists call a "tell." Archaeologists excavate a "tell" (or "tel") to learn about the different periods of occupation and destruction and rebuilding.] The citadel or tower was rebuilt on the rebuilt walls at its former site for defense to protect the city of Jerusalem.

**(Jeremiah 30:19) Out of them shall come thanksgiving, and the sound of merrymakers. I will make them many, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be disdained.**

After about 40 years of dire and gloomy warnings from Jeremiah that if the people did not repent the Babylonians would destroy their city and temple, and take into captivity those who survived, God told Jeremiah that after He disciplined the people a few would return to Him with thanksgiving and joy, and over time would increase to once again become many merrymakers. In exile, the people would multiply greatly, and the few who returned from exile would rejoin those left behind and become an honored

multitude. In the days of King Cyrus and King Darius, the people returned and these pagan kings helped them rebuild their city, the city walls, and their temple. Those who disdained them and opposed them (their neighbors) eventually had to help them as these pagan kings commanded them, so they would not be disdained.

**(Jeremiah 30:20) Their children shall be as of old, their congregation shall be established before me; and I will punish all who oppress them.**

The children of the Israelites who left Egypt entered the Promised Land under Joshua and these children as adults remained loyal to the LORD, with a few exceptions that were quickly dealt with by God and Joshua (see Joshua, chapter 7). The children of the Israelites who went into exile in Babylon and who returned to Judah and Jerusalem would be faithful to God and be established before Him. The children of both groups had witnessed the discipline of God on their parents, so they chose to obey God.

**(Jeremiah 30:21) Their prince shall be one of their own, their ruler shall come from their midst; I will bring him near, and he shall approach me, for who would otherwise dare to approach me? says the LORD.**

From Jeremiah 30:24, we learn that the most complete understanding of Jeremiah 30:21-24 would only be given “in the latter days” or in the days of the Messiah who would establish the new covenant that God would make with His people. The Messiah would be from the tribe of Judah and He would be a prince of the house of David. He would be a leader and ruler of God’s people under a new covenant. Because the LORD had sent the Messiah, the Messiah could approach Him whereas no one else would dare to do so because of their sins and fear of punishment. After the Messiah established the new covenant, He invited all of His followers to approach God with a clean conscience.

**(Jeremiah 30:22) And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.**

These words of the LORD remind us of Psalm 100 and other Psalms that must have brought great comfort to Jeremiah as he remembered them, especially during times of great persecution and suffering. In Psalm 100, the psalmist said, “We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture” (Psalm 100:3). Through Jeremiah’s prophecy, in spite of what the people would suffer as God disciplined them, God still considered them His people and their God and they would once again find joy in their God.

**(Jeremiah 30:23) Look, the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked.**

On the one hand, the fierce discipline of the LORD would soon fall upon the wicked King Zedekiah and the other idolatrous Judeans in Jerusalem. On the other hand, the wicked Babylonians would also suffer the punishment of the LORD after the Judeans’ years of exile came to an end. Forty years after the crucifixion of the Messiah, the

Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple, and later the Roman Empire was destroyed, which reminds us of what happened to the Babylonian Empire at the hand of God after they punished His people. When the Messiah returns, the wrath of the LORD will once again burst upon the wicked.

**(Jeremiah 30:24) The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his mind. In the latter days you will understand this.**

Unlike the wood, stone, and gold-gilded idols of the Israelites and their pagan neighbors, the true God thinks, plans, executes His plans, and accomplishes everything that He intends and promises. God is moral, and God has given people His moral law to bless them with right laws and right living. Because God is moral, God will punish those who persist in unrepentant disobedience and afflict His people. Someday, God will bring the just rule of the Messiah visibly upon the whole earth, and the Messiah will overcome all the wicked and establish justice and peace throughout the whole earth.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. Why do you think God told Jeremiah to write what he said in a book?
2. After God punished the kingdom of Judah, what did He promise to do?
3. Why do you think God identified himself as the God of Israel and said He would restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob?
4. Who does God punish?
5. Who did God say shall approach Him? Who would dare to approach Him? Today, who can approach God without fear?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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