

## *Is The Church Missing The Harvest?*

Jeremiah 8:20-22

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Let me give some background to the message this morning because so many people miss the intention of this passage of scripture. The Israelites did and maybe we do too.

a. Jeremiah was a prophet during the decline and fall of the southern kingdom of Judah. He is the author of the book of Jeremiah, as well as the book of Lamentations...a record of his lament over the demise of Judah. He is often referred to as the "Weeping Prophet of Israel. He could have been called the child prophet too.

b. Jeremiah's comment, in vs. 20 (The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved) has to do with Israel missing her opportunity to repent from the error of her ways. She had, time and time again, turned from God, by turning down God as the one and only true God, their provider, their helper, and their creator. They were chasing what we call lesser gods, with no power. Graven images.

1) She had worshipped many false gods, and had refused to let the Lord rule in her life. As a result, Israel went into Babylonian captivity, and Jerusalem was destroyed. Jeremiah had reason to weep didn't he? Don't you think? "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Jeremiah 9:1. What he was saying is, I wish my head were a well of water and my eyes fountains of tears. So I could weep day and night for casualties of my dear, dear people. They stayed in captivity for seventy (70) years, because of their disbeliefs.

2. Jeremiah likens Israel's missed opportunity to turn to God to that of a missed harvest: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." What does this mean to you? Have we missed the harvest? Are we not saved? Are we in the summer of our seasons? The summer of our life? You may not know, because you don't have to be old for that season to happen.

a. In the scriptures, the Lord often uses the word "harvest" to represent the abundance of lost souls that need to be harvested for God. Matthew 9:37-38, explains that to us, "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous,

but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." We have to remember, that many of his followers had deserted Jesus, and he ask the 12, do you want to leave me too. He's also asking us today what we want to do. Do we want to help or do we want to leave him too. The choice is yours.

3. May I say to you this morning, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." The world is full of men and women and young people who need Jesus Christ. When you were lost, did you need Jesus Christ? Did you know you needed Christ? Did you need the bubbly more, did you need the cash more, did you need the stash more, or did you need the trick or treat more? The things that are false gods and Satan uses to entice us from time to time. Our Father gave us a way out in JESUS CHRIST.

a. The question is "Who will reach the lost? Who will tell them that GOD truly loves? Who will teach them of that love? What will the missionary do, what will the preacher do, what will the church do, and what will you do? Jesus said, "It is our duty to tell the world about him". We are to tell by doing, to tell by being seen, to tell by teaching.

b. Church we are surrounded by the unsaved. They are our coworkers, they are our family members, they are our neighbors, and they are the people we meet on the street every day. Jesus has given us a command, to feed his sheep. Because like he asked Peter, he is asking us, if you love me, feed my sheep. Do we love him? Why aren't we feeding his sheep?

4. The purpose of the message this morning is to stir up our hearts for the rounding up of lost souls and to remind us that we are to reap where God has sown. God forbid that because of our negligence any man would have to say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," as they burn in hell. They will if we don't help them to know JESUS CHRIST before they die or before we die.

## I. WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF THE LOST

A. They are without God.

1. Judah had sinned against God. As a result, her cities were burned and her people went into captivity. The question today is, are our cities on fire? Are they being burned down by UNGODLINESS? Are they

being burned down by murder, rape, robbery and dishonesty? Are we being held captive by our vices and the sins that we refuse to admit that we have or are committing. Are we being held captive or hostage by not speaking out against those things that we know are wrong?

- a. Lamentation 1:1 “How does the city sit solitary by, that was once full of people and how is become as a widow. She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, now is she become tributary!”
- b. 1:3 tells us, “Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction and because of great servitude: she dwells among the heathen, and she will find no rest.” Are we being compelled to keep quiet protecting ourselves, for fear of our lives? Are we more afraid of man than GOD?

2. In a real sense, man without God is in captivity. He is a captive to his sin. That is why JESUS came to set “ the captives free.” IN LUKE4: 18, HE said, “THE spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. Can you see, are you bruised? Is the Spirit of the Lord upon you? Are you doing your part to tell about the Kingdom of God?

## II. HOW CAN WE HELP THE CONDITION OF THE LOST??

We can help the lost find salvation and lose fear by our walk with the LORD. By being honest and letting, them know that the walk is not an easy one, but by the GRACE of GOD, you will not turn back. Be a witness to them, make a testimony, and let GOD’S love come from your heart, through our lips.

They can see. By telling them that we fall down, but we get up with the help of the HOLY SPIRIT. BY telling them THAT JESUS said, “ seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all things will be added to you.” THAT is the message, that we must get out indeed must put out in the name of JESUS.

Look to Jesus he is there. Look for Jesus he is near, knock and the Holy Spirit will enter into your life, ask and he will explain all things to you.

So today, I want you to see how the LORD JESUS viewed people as a harvest to be gathered. Jesus went about all of the cities and villages teaching in the synagogues preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. Matt.9: 35

IN the harvest sense, I want you to see how JESUS CHRIST immediately became the servant of the world, The Son of GOD a servant of humanity, the Savior of the world watered and nourished. He literally poured out himself in ministering to others. It was not easy, when we consider that they did not appreciate all that JESUS did for them, maybe we don't appreciate what he is doing for us, as the husbandry man of humanity today, maybe we don't even appreciate what is being preached.

### III. JESUS THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

I want you to see how the LORD JESUS viewed people as a harvest to be gathered. Because Jesus said, in John 20:21, "as the Father has sent me, so I also send you." Jesus Christ is still calling for laborers to join him in sowing the gospel seeds and reaping eternal souls for the glory of GOD. Yes, Jesus Christ is still the Lord of the harvest, through the Holy Spirit. The harvest is the reason that we are here today, and why we came to this earth. "I knew you in your mother's belly, and even before the beginning of the world", said the LORD.

AS we look at the time of Jeremiah, we see that the people would not tolerate the prophet of GOD, because they had declared, "we are wise, and the Law of the LORD is with us," Jere. 8:8. BUT the LORD'S covenants do not give His people license to sin or to ignore HIS WORD. They missed the change to be harvested, by their actions. Have we missed the opportunity to be harvested by our actions?

Then, as now, people foolishly assume that each person should have the freedom to worship whomever he or she chooses according to his own conscience. But JESUS declared: I am the WAY, The TRUTH, and THE LIFE: no man cometh to the FATHER, but by me. JOHN 14: 6

Some people today call themselves Christians, but continue to live in secret sins. They are confident that GOD would never allow them to be destroyed since they are chosen people, Christian that is. The ability to repent is there, but some believe that they can do no wrong against GOD, so they ask for no forgiveness.

### IV. AS I CLOSE:

I must ask this question again. IS THE CHURCH MISSING THE HARVEST? Is the church missing the harvest? There are still many souls to be saved, harvested for the kingdom. IT'S HARVEST TIME. IT'S HARVEST TIME

FOR THE KINGDOM. What are we going to do; we have been given a job to do. We had better get busy! We better get to work. Jesus is calling us to continue His great works, are you in it to the end like He was on earth and will be to the end? Softly and gently JESUS is calling, poor sinner come home, come home. Do you want to go to be with my LORD?

THE famous explorer Rear Admiral Robert Peary, who is credited as being the first man to reach the North Pole, while on one of his many expeditions, headed North by dog sled, and at the end of the day, stopped to take a latitude bearing, he discovered that he was actually further away than when he had started. The mystery was solved when he discovered that he was traveling on floating ice, which was moving south faster than he was moving north. He thought that he was running in the right direction, but was doing further from his goal.

I believe that the church is making the same mistake in the same situation, it is moving in many directions, trying many programs, attempting many tasks; but all the while getting further and further away from the goals of it's founder, JESUS CHRIST, and what he had for it from the beginning. Why are we missing it? IN Matt. 9:38, JESUS called himself the LORD of the harvest. The harvest moved him to leave the ivory palaces of Heaven and come to a world of WOE. He said in LUKE 1 9:10,"THE SON of MAN has come to seek and save that which was lost."

Are we doing our part for the kingdom, not in church, but out in the world? Are we bringing others into knowledge of God? That he loves them that He died for them, that He has prepared a place for them, if they call upon his name and ask to be forgiven. That he is coming back again to call all of the saved unto himself. The harvest will be over when HE comes to claim those who called upon His Name to be saved. Thank GOD ALMIGHTY

That he will judge us for our deeds, all the while loving us for whom we are, his children, faithful tried and true. Church we have a job to do. We must, indeed are required to join in the harvest of souls for Jesus Christ. Let us get busy in the NAME of JESUS CHRIST. Amen!