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The Wooley Springs Helper

March 15, 2020

FIVE STEPS TO DESTRUCTION

Jeremiah had been called at a very critical time in the history of Israel and Judah. The Northern Kingdom, Israel, had already been carried away. Isaiah, who prophesied some 700 years before Christ, had warned Israel repeatedly of her sins, yet she would not hear nor take heed.

Jeremiah had been called to be a prophet to the southern tribe of Judah, but he felt ill equipped for the task because of his age (Jer. 1:5, 6). However, Jehovah had other plans indeed, "...Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (Jer. 1:9, 10). Even later in this book Jeremiah's apprehension would shine forth. Fortunately, the drive to preach was stronger than the fear he may have possessed. "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I would not stay" (Jer. 20:9).

The times of Jeremiah were very much like our times. It was a period of wealth and prosperity, yet lacking in, and poor in, spirituality and godliness. In Jeremiah we find a picture of this hellish society as we follow the five steps of destruction outlined by this prophet.

The Word of the Lord was a reproach (Jer. 6:10). In Jeremiah 8:9 we see that “the wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?” They were a people who obeyed not the voice of the Lord, nor received correction (Jer. 7:28). It is no wonder they went backward and not forward (Jer. 7:24).

Everyone was given to covetousness (Jer. 6:13). Isaiah would describe the people as “greedy dogs which can never have enough” (Isa. 56:11). We must realize that covetousness is idolatry, and we must beware of it (Col. 3:5; Luke 12:15). Salvation cannot be purchased with silver or gold (Zeph. 1:18), nor is Jehovah impressed with treasures we accumulate here on earth. We must lay up treasures in heaven as we walk contentedly here (Matt. 6:19-24; Heb. 13:5).

They said, “Peace, peace; when there is no peace” (Jer. 6:14). They were a people who did not recognize the problems that surrounded them. Many today fail to recognize the problems the church faces. The Bible speaks of false teachers in every time frame. In fact, Peter said, “but there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (2 Pet. 2:1). Though we live in a time of blessing, we must also realize that we must beware (Col. 2:8).

They could not blush (Jer. 6:15). Zephaniah said, “The unjust knoweth no shame” (Zeph. 3:5). The fine art of blushing is being lost. Immodesty is becoming the sign of the times, and there seems to be no shame. Wild, rebellious children, and sin going unopposed should be a shame to any people, and yet is the order of the day for many. We need to get back to the purity of God’s standard.

They refused to walk in the old paths (Jer. 6:16). There are those who are clamoring for change and for that which is new. However, we must realize that the Bible says now what it said in the beginning. In the area of New Testament Christianity, we must realize that the church and the message are more than 1900 years old. We need to seek the “old paths” of God’s Word.

We can learn great lessons from the Old Testament if we will. May we keep those things in mind as we study our Bible much, much, more.

– Don Walker, *The Old Hickory Bulletin*

The Danger *of* *Close Influences*

Every single one of us are influenced by others. It doesn't matter how strong our character, our faith, our commitment, we can be led in a bad direction by those we care about. This is why it is so important to be careful of the relationships we cultivate.

Solomon, a paragon of wisdom, was influenced by his wives. "But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh; women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites - from the nations of whom the Lord said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.' Solomon clung to these in love." (1 Kings 11:1-2). In verse 4 of the text, "For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David."

There are a multitude of examples of such evil influences that can be seen throughout the Old and New Testaments. The pattern is repeated again and again in our own lives. Paul knew this truth, and warned, "Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.' Awake to righteousness and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame" (1 Corinthians 15:33-34).

Seek out the companionship of other Christian friends, family and spouses. Avoid evil companions. Our souls may very well depend on it!

- Stan Cox

Dean Sammet is now at home. She is recovering from injured suffered in a fall at home.

cock is recovering from ankle surgery.

Keep these in your prayers: Pat McCay, Loyd and Ruth Neeley, Ollie Eckstein, Tim Russell, Jeff Sims, Ronnie Faulk, and James Steele.

Gospel meeting at Eastside this week, today through Tuesday. Services today at 3:00, Monday and Tuesday at 00. Gardner Hall, speaker. (There are reports that eeting has been cancelled; check before going.)

The Potter's Wheel

*I took a piece of potter's clay
And gently fashioned it one day
And as my fingers pressed it still
It moved and yielded to my will.*

*I came again when days were past
The bit of clay was hard at last
The form I gave it still it bore
But I could change that form no more.*

*I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day
And molded with my power and art
young child's soft and yielding heart.*

*I came again when days were gone
It was a man I looked upon
He still that first impression wore
And I could change it never more.*

—author unknown
