We have a long passage in Jeremiah to study this morning, so I'm going to divide it into nine sections, and we'll read a section at a time and then comment on it during the Bible study. But as a preparation for what we're going to study, I want to go right back to the ***CALL*** of Jeremiah and read again the ***POEM*** about that call which we read a year ago which conveys something of the breadth---the scope---of Jeremiah's ministry. Here is the ***MODERN POETIC ACCOUNT*** of his call.

*Some years ago, when I was young, in the middle of my teens sporting jeans or lounging on the rooftops back in Israel, my life began to drag. My hopes were dull--- as dismal as Sheol... that dungeon of the dead... that cavern underground, yawning up at God and defiantly exposing its black and murky seas inside, where everything is limp and* ***LIFELESS****.*

*My name is Jeremiah---or Jerry if you like---and my father was a priest, which doesn't really matter in the least, except that when I was a boy, I had no* ***BEAT****... I had no go, no gang where I belonged, like some boys that I know. I had no* ***NUMBER*** *I could dial, no football, and no groove until a frightening* ***MESSAGE*** *was delivered to my house by my God---yes, by God... my God called 'Yahweh Lord of Hosts'. That day was like the day when scared young lovers first permit the magic touch of tender powdered skin, sensitized by love to stir the nerves of life within. Yes, I was scared... as scared as you my friend, when you don't know just what to do with a screaming in your head; for on that day, God* ***SUMMONED*** *me to stand before his council filled with fearsome beings in a sapphire, heavenly court alive with shimmering glory, and hear his* ***BOLD DECREE****.*

*When you look around that council, you can see swift* ***CHERUBIM****, like snarling, golden sphinxes with flickering golden wings---the weirdest things. And you can see tall* ***MESSENGERS*** *of heaven, poised to parachute to earth like silver lightning bolts or flying horsemen riding down on long white laser beams that reached the ground. But no one left the court, and no one disappeared from sight in the clouds that clothed the earth that night. At last, the Lord addressed me to my face in a shrill magnetic voice that dragged me from my corner to the hot seat in the forecourt of the council. "Young man," he said, "I've chosen* ***YOU*** *for a difficult assignment: to be my new* ***AMBASADOR*** *at large to the people of this land. Since you were but an embryo, my hands have worked on you like a sculptor or a potter at his wheel, to* ***MOULD*** *your will with unseen skill, so that you will be a true man. The one who stands* ***FOR ME****, stands up* ***FOR ME*** *and tries to understand* ***FOR ME*** *what I am doing on the earth." But I said, "God, there must be some mistake. I can't do work like that. After all, I'm only in my teens, sporting jeans and lounging on the rooftops. I've had no training in diplomacy or politics, in how to speak or how to pray in public. You'll soon be sorry God, if you pick someone like me. Well God... well can't you see?" But God thinks he is God---which isn't very odd, I guess. And he doesn't hold with kids like me telling him his job, I guess.*

*Then God replied, "Keep quiet, son. Don't answer me like that. Don't say you're only in your teens; for you will* ***GO*** *wherever I decide, and you will* ***SAY THE WORDS*** *which I supply. Don't be afraid of anyone at all, for they are just as scared as you---if you could see inside their hardening hearts and hardening arteries. And more than that, don't be afraid to fail, as most men seem to be for* ***I AM WITH YOU*** *even when you do. Yes, I am... I am. Stand up then, Jeremiah, stand up and be a man."*

*The court of heavenly beings sat silent, cold, and strained as God stretched forth his slender, flickering hand to lash my lip as with a whip or with a cattle brand. "My words," said, God, "have filled your mouth and loosened up your tongue like acids will, when you have had your fill of something very sharp. That's all you really need. Now go... go off and win the world. Make its history out of date by* ***CHANGING*****MEN** *and* ***REARRANGING******FATE*** *with words that I provide---with* ***VIOLENT WORDS****. You heard! Your role is 'first ambassador' to tell this squirming world that I am flinging* ***JUSTICE*** *at every evil nation, to straighten out this mess. Now go!"*

*So, off I went to* ***BREAK*** *the world---to make it spin and reel just like a bitten eel. For I was now a man of God, a* ***MESSENGER*** *with power in my words, to mould the might of nations according to a* ***PLAN*** *unknown to men...or so I thought. I hope you understand.*

Well, do you?? Before we, then, look at Jeremiah's words to the ***NATIONS OF THE WORLD***, as distinct from Israel, let's sing two verses of number 317. The first two verses of 317. 371.

Verse 1

*God is working his purpose out, as year succeeds to year,...*

*God is working his purpose out,*

*and the time is drawing near,...*

*Nearer and nearer draws the time,*

*the time that shall surely be,...*

*When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God,...*

*As the waters cover the sea*

Verse 2

*From utmost east to utmost west,*

*Where'er the church has gone,*

*By the mouth of many messengers*

*The call of God has come:*

*Give ear to me, you continents;*

*You isles, give ear to me,*

*That the earth may be filled with the glory of God*

*As the waters cover the sea.*

***We are Dealing with Reality: God’s Word Produces the Future!***

When we study the story of the fall of Jerusalem following the predictions of Jeremiah, there's a certain sense of ***UNREALITY*** about it, because it's so long ago and so far away---it's over 2000 years and over 2000 miles distant from our situation here in Guildford in 1976 (though Philip Boham, just back from Jerusalem, I'm quite sure, is living in this, because he has seen the stones left behind when Jerusalem fell; and you almost have to go to that place to get the ***REALITY*** of it). However, it's intensely important for us to be reading these things and studying them, because the same God who dealt with ***ISRAEL*** is dealing with ***BRITAIN*** (and the ***UNITED STATES) TODAY***, for God is alive and real. And Jeremiah was not only told to speak to his own land and to be an ambassador in ***ISRAEL***, he was told to be God's ambassador at large to ***ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD.***

Now, this came out in ***THE DAY OF HIS CALL*** way back in chapter one. Listen, *"Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, 'Behold I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over* ***NATIONS*** *and over* ***KINGDOMS*** *to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.' "* What you may not have fully realized yet is this. Not only did Jeremiah ***PREDICT*** the disaster that befell his land, his word ***PRODUCED*** that disaster. Now, this is a concept of prophecy which many do not grasp. They feel that the prophets were given divine inspiration to ***PREDICT*** events that would happen. What they have not realized is, that God ***PRODUCED*** those events by their (the prophets') word: *"The word of God is powerful, sharper than any two-edge sword. It doesn't return to God void.It* ***ACCOMPLISHES*** *that which he pleases."* It doesn't just ***ANNOUNCE*** it, it ***ACCOMPLISHES*** it. Are you beginning to get the feel of this? Therefore, Jeremiah had ***MORE POWER*** than Nebuchadnezzar. *"Behold,"* said God, *"I have set you over the nations to pluck them up and to plant them, to break them down and to build them up."* Because when God's word is in a man's mouth, he is not only able to ***PREDICT*** God's activity, he is able to ***PRODUCE*** it. And he is set ***OVER***, for there is nothing more powerful than to have the word of God in your hand. It not only ***PREDICTS***, it ***PRODUCES*** the future. Now that's Jeremiah. And, therefore, when he said, *"Jerusalem will fall,"* he was not just ***PREDICTING*** the end of his nation, he was ***PRODUCING*** it. And he was saying, *"My word will damn this nation."* And it did and God used his words to ***PRODUCE*** the effect.

And so, in the same way, the word of God today ***PRODUCES*** the effect. It does not return to him void. It ***ACCOMPLISHES***, not just ***ANNOUNCES***. It accomplishes what he pleases. And this morning as I preach his word --- not my words but whenever my word is his word---it will ***PRODUCE***, not just predict---not just preaching... it will ***ACCOMPLISH***, not just announce, what God wants to accomplish in your life this morning---provided you are willing to ***RESPOND*** and ***COOPERATE***. And so, to preach is not simply a mind-to-mind operation---lives are changed. And this morning we're going to get a sense of the ***GREATNESS OF GOD***. And we are going to see in the events of Israel---over 2,000 miles away and 2,000 years ago---a ***MICRCOSM*** in which we see how God is going to deal with ***ALL THE NATIONS***. And you find that prophet after prophet in the Old Testament not only spoke to ***ISRAEL*** but spoke through Israel to ***ALL THE NATIONS*** of the then known world.

Read ***ISAIAH*** chapter one verse three through to chapter two verse three; and he goes through ***SEVEN DIFFERENT NATIONS*** and speaks to them. Read Isaiah chapters 13 to 23, and you'll find Isaiah is not speaking to Israel but to other nations. Read ***EZEKIEL***, and you'll find that he spends 12 chapters speaking to ***OTHER NATIONS***, not Israel. And now in ***JEREMIAH*** we've come to the section which collects together the messages he gave, not to his own people, but to ***EVERY NATION*** in his known world: from ***EGYPT*** in the in the ***WEST*** of that world... to ***ELAM*** in the ***EAST*** of that world. And he went right through ***EVERY NATION***, and he said, *"This is what God will* ***do*** *to you."* And so, Jeremiah speaks and ***STILL SPEAKS***, for he said, *"God is going to deal with you because you are neighbors to Israel, and your attitude to* ***GOD'S PEOPLE*** *reveals your attitude to* ***GOD****."*

And I say that, today, in a world that has become a global village with instant universal communication, ***ALL OF US*** have become neighbors of Israel; and ***ALL OF US*** will be judged by God for our attitude to that nation. And we are now so financially ***PERJURED*** that we are ***UNABLE*** as a nation to stand up for Israel. We have reached the point where a wealthy home in London for sale has the for-sale notice put up in ***ARABIC***, because the Arabs will buy it. And that is going to prevent us from fulfilling our relationship with God's people. And so, this is a relevant word. And in chapters 46 to 49 Jeremiah says, *"Because of your attitude to* ***ISRAEL****, the God of Israel will deal with you as a nation, and you will be* ***FINISHED****."* And therefore, it is most ***RELEVANT***. It's as up to date as tomorrow morning's newspaper.

Now let's say a few things about ***GOD***, because the main purpose in reading the ***OLD TESTAMENT*** is to find out about ***GOD***. The God of the Old Testament is the God of Jesus. He told people to ***SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES***, which would mean the Old Testament, because there was ***TRUTH***, and the scripture cannot be broken. There was the God who was the father of our Lord Jesus. And those who dismissed the Old Testament God as an un-Christian God have to reckon with ***CHRIST***, who believed in this God, because he was this God's own son.

***Five Characteristics of God***

And so here are ***FIVE THINGS*** I would say about God which come out of chapters 46 to 49 before we read any of it. ***1)*** Number ***ONE***, God is ***REAL***... God is real. There may be mystery in God, but there is no myth. There is no fiction, only effect. This God really does exist. He really is there. He is present in our universe, and, therefore, he is someone with whom we have to do, because he is ***REAL***. And no man or woman on earth can escape having dealings with him, because they are always in his presence. And one day will meet him face to face. God is ***REAL***.

***2)*** ***SECONDLY***, God is ***UNIVERSAL***. We tend to think reading the Bible that God is somehow local or national---that he was the God of the Jews, that he was confined to that little area and to that small people. But the God mentioned in chapters 46 to 49 is the God who deals with ***ALL*** ***NATIONS***. He is the God whom Paul announced in Athens as, *"The God who made* ***ALL NATIONS*** *of men, of one blood, to dwell together on the face of the earth."* And so, he is a ***UNIVERSAL*** God. There is no other; other gods do not exist. They are figments of the imagination, which is another way of saying they are ***IMAGES***. God is real and God is universal. Therefore, we have a solemn duty to tell every nation about this God. If God was simply local or national, and if one religion was as good as another, then there would be no call for missionary endeavor. But because God is ***UNIVERSAL***, every nation needs to hear his true word.

***3)*** The ***THIRD*** thing I would say about God is that God is a ***MORAL*** God. Right and wrong matter to him. God is a God of ***JUSTICE***, a God of ***FAIRNESS***. That comes out in one particular verse that we are going to read. "For thus says the Lord, 'If those who did not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, will you go unpunished?' " Which means that God is fair, God has a sense of justice, of balancing out life's wrongs. What ***SECURITY*** lies in that fact!! If we believed in an arbitrary God who wasn't bothered about injustice, who didn't mind if the wicked prospered and the innocent suffered, then life would indeed be terrible. We should be led to despair. But even though there is ***INJUSTICE*** in this world---as the Book of Ecclesiastes shows so clearly and faces so honestly---behind this world we know there is a God of ***JUSTICE*** to whom right and wrong matter and who is a FAIR God and who deals FAIRLY with the human race and with nations.

***4)*** The ***NEXT*** thing I want to say is that he is a ***PENAL*** God. I mean by that, that he is a God who PUNISHES. And this is a fact that we must never forget. God ***PUNISHES*** everyone, everyone---without exception---whether you belong to his people or not. If you belong to his people, then God punishes you because he ***LOVES*** you. And if he does not punish you, "You're a bastard," says the New Testament in Hebrews 12---you're not his son. But if his own family get punished, how much MORE will other peoples? And so, God is a ***PUNISHING*** God, and he ***PUNISHES*** his own people as well as every other people. And we need to remember this. And if you study the history of Israel, you're looking at God's own people; and look how he punished them. Why? Because he ***LOVED*** them. And, therefore, God is a ***PENAL*** God. And if you think that God is a nice old grandfather kind of God who never punishes, then ***THINK AGAIN***. And if you think that, because you are one of his people, he will never punish you, then ***THINK AGAIN***. Read the Old and the New Testament, and it's as clear as daylight. There is one verse in the section we're going to read, which is a very difficult verse for some people to accept.

Sorry, before I come to that, let me read another verse from chapter 46. (Jeremiah 46:10) "That ***DAY*** is the day of the Lord of hosts, a day of ***VENGEANCE*** to avenge himself on his foes." That is a thought which is uncongenial to human nature. The idea that when ***EVERYONE*** ***ELSE*** has had his day, when every ***NATION*** has had their day, God will have ***HIS*** day. And 'the ***DAY*** of the Lord' is a concept running through all the prophets and the New Testament, that 'one day'---which is already fixed in the calendar --- God will say, "Now it is ***MY*** day." And at the end of the day, it is 'the ***DAY*** of the Lord.' He is a ***PENAL*** God. He is the judge of all the earth, and it is the judge who has the last sentence in any court case.

Which brings me finally to something which will be even more difficult for some of you to accept: ***5)*** That God is an ***HISTORICAL*** God. I mean by that... that 'history' is ***'HIS-STORY'***. And I mean by that also... and this is the difficult one to swallow... that God is a God of ***WAR***. He is described as that in the scripture in both the Old and the New Testament. And in the last 4,000 years, only 300 years have been free from war. And therefore, if 'history' is ***'HIS-STORY’,*** then God is a God of ***WAR***; and God brings wars to pass upon the earth. And the concept behind chapters 46 to 49---which is the biblical philosophy of history---is that the prime instrument which God uses to judge nations, is to raise up an ***IMPERIAL TYRANT*** who will bring WAR on the nations whom God is disciplining. And the ***KEY WORD*** in chapters 46 to 49 is the word ***'SWORD’***. *"I will bring the* ***SWORD*** *against* ***EGYPT****. I will bring the* ***SWORD*** *against* ***PHILISTIA****. I will bring the* ***SWORD*** *against* ***AMMON****. I will bring the* ***SWORD*** *against* ***MOAB****, against* ***EDOM****, against* ***DAMASCUS****, against* ***KEDAR****, against* ***HAZOR****, against* ***ELAM****, against* ***BABYLON****."* God is a God who brings the ***SWORD***. And a nation that forgets God, and becomes complacent and at ease, and turns away from God's principles, is a nation ***INVITING ITSELF*** to be invaded militarily. Now this is the hard teaching of the word of God. It gives a sense of the greatness of God. It means that as we read history---which is just one succession of ***TYRANT AFTER TYRANT*** arising, and with imperialist ambition to conquer the world, bringing ***WAR*** to nation after nation---we see ***GOD'S HAND***. We see God dealing with nations. We see God bringing complacent nations to humility again, teaching them again those values that get lost in times of peace and prosperity. Few nations grow in character during ***AFFLUENCE***. Our deepest moral qualities are developed in ***ADVERSITY*** and not prosperity. And God, in his mercy, uses WAR as his instrument, and describes a man called "Nebuchadnezzar" --- who was no believer in God! He describes him as ’***MY SERVANT’.*** He describes a conqueror like Cyrus as "***MY SERVANT***." And we may therefore say that the *'Hitlers'* of this world, and the *'Napoleons'* of this world, and the *'Caesars'* of this world, are all encompassed by ***GOD'S HISTORICAL PLAN AND PURPOSE***. And that it is in ***THIS WAY*** that he brings nations to their knees.

***Jeremiah Speaks to Nine Nations***

Now, if this is uncongenial to you, then I'm afraid it's the word of God. It is here in Jeremiah. And we are going to read what Jeremiah has to say about ***NINE NATIONS***. The first and the third are the longest, and then they get shorter. So, I think it'll ease up as we study. But let's first of all read chapter 46:

*The word of the* ***LORD****, which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.*

*"About* ***EGYPT****. Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah:*

*'Prepare buckler and shield, and advance for battle! Harness the horses, mount, O horsemen! Take your stations with your helmets. Polish your spears. Put on your coats of mail!' Why have I seen it? They are dismayed and have turned backward. Their warriors are beaten down and have fled in haste; they look not back ---* ***TERROR ON EVERY SIDE****!" says the* ***LORD****. "The swift cannot flee away, nor the warrior escape; in the north by the river Euphrates they have stumbled and* ***FALLEN****.*

*"Who is this, rising like the Nile, like rivers whose waters surge? Egypt rises like the Nile, like rivers whose waters surge. He said, 'I will rise, I will cover the earth, I will destroy cities and their inhabitants.' Advance, O horses, and rage, O chariots! Let the warriors go forth: men of Ethiopia and Put who handle the shield, men of Lud, skilled in handling the bow. That day is the* ***DAY*** *of the Lord God of hosts, a day of* ***VENGEANCE*** *to avenge himself on his foes. The* ***SWORD*** *shall devour and be sated and drink its fill of their blood. For the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt! In vain you have used many medicines; there is no healing for you. The nations have heard of your shame, and the earth is full of your cry; for warrior has stumbled against warrior; they have both* ***FALLEN*** *together."*

*The word which the* ***LORD*** *spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to smite the land of Egypt:*

*"Declare in Egypt and proclaim in Migdol; proclaim in Memphis and Tahpanhes; say, 'Stand ready and be prepared, for the* ***SWORD*** *shall devour roundabout you.' Why has Apis fled? Why did not your bull stand? Because* ***THE LORD*** *thrust him down. Your multitude stumbled and fell, and they said one to another, 'Arise, and let us go back to our own people and to the land of our birth, because of the* ***SWORD*** *of the oppressor.' Call the name of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, 'Noisy one who lets the hour go by'. As I live---says the King, whose name is the* ***LORD*** *of hosts---like Tabor among the mountains and like Carmel by the sea, shall one come. Prepare yourselves baggage for exile, O inhabitants of Egypt! For Memphis shall become a waste, a ruin, without inhabitant.*

*"A beautiful* ***HEIFER*** *is* ***Egypt****, but a* ***GADFLY*** *from the north has come upon her. Even her hired soldiers in her midst are like fatted calves; yea, they have turned and fled together; they did not stand. For the* ***DAY OF THEIR CALAMITY*** *has come upon them, the time of their* ***PUNISHMENT****. She makes a sound like a* ***SERPENT*** *gliding away; for her enemies march in force, and come against her with axes, like those who fell trees. They shall cut down her forest," says the Lord, "though it is impenetrable, because they are more numerous than locusts; they are without number. The daughter of Egypt shall be put to* ***SHAME****, she shall be* ***DELIVERED*** *into the hand of a people from the north.*

*"The* ***LORD*** *of hosts, the God of Israel, said, 'Behold, I am bringing punishment upon Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt and her gods and her kings, upon Pharaoh and those who trust in him. I will* ***DELIVER THEM*** *into the hand of those who seek their life---into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his officers.* ***AFTERWARD*** *Egypt shall be I****NHABITED*** *as in the days of old," says the* ***LORD****.*

***Word to Egypt***

Now ***EGYPT*** had been the ***GREATEST*** world power throughout Israel's history. And if you have visited that land or seen pictures of the pyramids and the ruins of the cities, you'll know that Egypt was ***GREAT*** --- but not now. What happened to that greatness? What happened to those pharaohs? I'll tell you what happened. ***1)*** ***FIRST***, they made the mistake of ***OPPRESSING ISRAEL***. And Israel never forgot their captivity. They still don't. Every year at the Seder---at the Passover---they remember, *"We were slaves in Egypt."* And no nation caused so much suffering to Israel as Egypt. And ***2)*** they made the ***SECOND*** mistake of ***THINKING THEY WERE GOD***---or thinking that their gods could give them world dominion. And so, that empire grew and grew and grew... Until in the time of Jeremiah, they said, *"It's time that we took over the* ***WORLD****,"*---which in those days was the ***FERTILE CRESCENT*** stretching from the Nile through to the Tigress and Euphrates. And Egypt marched. On the way round the fertile crescent, the last good king of Israel, a mere youth---Josiah, who was trying to reform his land--- met Pharaoh, tried to stop him, and was killed at Megiddo. And they marched on like a great horde. "Rising like the Nile in flood," says Jeremiah. *"You rose like the Nile in flood, and you flooded around the fertile crescent. And you reached* ***CARCHEMISH*** *on the banks of the Euphrates. And you killed its inhabitants. And you settled there. And you said, 'Now Egypt stretches to the Euphrates.' "*

And within the year the famous battle of ***CARCHEMISH*** took place in 605 BC, and it ranks with the battle of Hastings and the Battle of Waterloo as one of the greatest ***TURNING POINTS*** in human history. The Battle of Carchemish found the Egyptians ***TRAPPED*** between Nebuchadnezzar and the river Euphrates. They had no boats to cross, and they were trapped. And Jeremiah had ***PREDICTED*** that defeat and described it in detail... and we have just read that description. But not only did Jeremiah describe beforehand the Battle of Carchemish... and therefore, not only did Jeremiah ***DECIDE*** the outcome of that battle, for his word ***PRODUCED***, not just ***PREDICTED*** it. He said, *"And Nebuchadnezzar will* ***INVADE EGYPT****, and you will go into* ***EXILE****.”*

Now, when God speaks to a people, he always uses ***LANGUAGE THEY UNDERSTAND***, and this comes out in these messages to the ***NATIONS***, as it does in the seven letters to the ***CHURCHES*** in Revelation 2 and 3. God always knows categories of language which people understand. And so, he talks about ***HEIFERS*** and ***BULLS*** and ***GADFLIES*** and **LOCUSTS**, and he says, *"When Nebuchadnezzar comes, your* ***BULL*** *will run."* Now that in itself is quite an amazing story, if you've had anything to do with bulls. But the next picture is even more understandable. If you are driving through the countryside, and you suddenly see a cow, a ***HEIFER***, with its tail straight up in the air charging across the field, you will know it's being attacked by a ***FLY***--a fly that will burrow into its skin. And the Nile Delta was full of cattle. Their god was in the form of a golden bull. That's where Aaron got the idea of a golden calf from. Their god was the god of Cyrus, or Athis; and they made a ***BULL***. *"Your* ***BULL*** *is fled and your nation is like a* ***HEIFER*** *being attacked by a* ***GADFLY****."* It's a vivid picture to anyone who's been farming.

And then he says, *"They will come upon you---the hordes of Nebuchadnezzar---like* ***LOCUSTS****."* You can only imagine that if you've seen a locust swarm. The only one I've ever been in was in Kano, in northern Nigeria, and the locusts were flying past at 10 miles an hour. You could run and keep up with them. And yet, for three quarters of an hour at midday, ***THE SKY WAS BLOTTED OUT*** and the insects are only that big. *"They will come upon you like* ***LOCUSTS****,"* and Egypt always dreaded the locust. *"And you will slither away like a* ***SNAKE****, keeping a low profile---hidden."* How vivid these pictures are. You've got to live in Egypt to understand the impact of this message of Jeremiah.

So, Jeremiah predicted ***TWO THINGS.*** ***1***) *“Even though you are at this moment thinking you're on the way to conquer the world, you'll be* ***DEFEATED*** *at Carchemish. By the river* ***EUPHRATES****, your army will be* ***TRAPPED****.”* Then ***2)*** *“Nebuchadnezzar will come back, and he'll* ***INVADE YOU****, and you will go into* ***EXILE****, and your greatness will be over.”* And these two events came true ***TO THE LETTER***. Not just because Jeremiah had ***PREDICTED*** it, but because he ***PRODUCED*** it. When God ***SPEAKS***, it ***HAPPENS***. From the very beginning when God said*, "Let there be light."* And the lights were switched on. And God said, *"Let the land be divided from the sea.”* And it was so. Therefore, when God says, *"You will be defeated by the river Euphrates,"* it was so. The Word of God ***PRODUCED*** the result and Jeremiah was ***DOING*** it. *"I have set* ***YOU*** *over the nations."* And later Jesus would say to his disciples, *"Go, I have given YOU authority, use my name. But* ***YOU*** *have the* ***AUTHORITY****,* ***YOU*** *have the* ***POWER****."* It's incredible concept of the Word of God.

So much for Egypt, with that little ***FINAL*** thing. A little note at the end says, *"And afterward it will be* ***INHABITED AGAIN****."* And so, it is ***PROVED***. And Egypt today is not deserted as other lands are. It has people living in it. No longer a great people... no longer building pyramids... but it is inhabited again. When God ***SAYS*** something--It ***HAPPENS*** to the letter.

***Word to the Philistines***

Now, let's read a shorter word to the ***PHILISTINES***--Chapter 47. We're going through to Chapter 49 today. *"The Word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh smote Gaza. Thus says the Lord, 'Behold WATERS are rising out of the north and shall become an overflowing torrent. They shall* ***OVERFLOW THE LAND*** *and all that fills it, the* ***CITY*** *and those who dwell in it. Men shall* ***CRY OUT****, and every inhabitant of the land shall* ***WAIL*** *at the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his stallions, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of their wheels. The fathers look not back to their children---so feeble are their hands---because of the* ***DAY*** *that is coming to* ***DESTROY*** *all the Philistines... to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper that remains. For the Lord is* ***DESTROYING*** *the Philistines---the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor. Baldness has come upon Gaza. Ashkelon has perished. Oh, remnant of the Anakim, how long will you gash yourselves? Ah, sword of the Lord, how long until you are quiet? Put yourself into your scabbard, rest and be still! How can it be* ***QUIET****, when the Lord has given it a* ***CHARGE*** *against Ashkelon and against the seashore? He has* ***APPOINTED*** *IT.' "*

Between the hills of Judea and the Mediterranean there is a flat plane, and there lived the ***PHILISTINES***. They knew that they were vulnerable, for they were the ***HIGHWAY*** between ***BABYLON*** and ***EGYPT***; but they had allies in the north. Further up the coast, there were the ***PHOENICIANS*** in Tyre and Sidon, and they had a ***PACT*** that either would come to the other's aid if they were attacked. Living on a plain as they did, the ***ONE*** thing they feared was a ***FLASH*** ***FLOOD***, which could sweep down from the Judean hills and swamp the plain. And so, God speaks to this people, and He says, *"I see an enemy coming from the* ***NORTH*** *like a* ***FLOOD*** *over the plain, cutting you off from your allies up in Tyre and Sidon, and causing you such* ***PANIC*** *that fathers will run without even looking at their own children."*

Did that come ***TRUE***? The answer is it did. For when the remnant of the Egyptian army came back to their homeland, on the way they swept through Philistine. Unable to defeat the ***LARGER*** foe, they decided to wreak their frustration on the ***SMALLER*** land of Philistia. And God says they were to vanish ***FOREVER***... and they have. There is nobody in the world today calling themselves a PHILISTINE. The only trace of this nation, which had been an enemy of Israel right through the period of the Judges---read the stories of Sampson, of Saul. Finally, David managed to bring them into subjection by defeating Goliath. But this nation has ***DISAPPEARED***. The only trace left is in the name ***PALESTINE***... Palestine. Now the Arabs use the name of the Philistines as the token of their homeland. That's all that's left, because they attacked God's people. *"In as much as you did it to the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."* This is the lesson we are going to have to learn from this. Our attitude to **GOD'S PEOPLE** is our real attitude to ***GOD***. Whatever else we may say or do, *"If a man says he loves* ***GOD*** *and hates his* ***BROTHER****, he is a* ***LIAR****."* Our attitude to ***GOD'S PEOPLE*** is our attitude to ***GOD***.

***Word to Moab***

Now let's read a longer one from ***MOAB***. *"Concerning Moab, thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. 'Woe to Nebo, for it is laid* ***WASTE****. Kiriathaim is put to* ***SHAME****. It is taken. The fortress is put to shame and* ***BROKEN DOWN****. The renown of Moab is no more. In Heshbon they planned evil against her: "Come and let us cut her off as a nation." You also, Oh Madmen, shall be brought to silence. The* ***SWORD*** *shall pursue you.' "*

Now this prophecy is a ***LONG ONE***. I'm going to leave you to read it in detail for yourself. But I want you to notice one or two verses.

***FIRST*** of all, the verse that tells us most clearly that God is ***A GOD OF WAR***. Verse 10, *"Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord with slackness."* Now there's quite a motto for you. That's a good text to have on your desk at work. *"Cursed is he who does* ***THE WORK OF THE LORD******WITH SLACKNESS.****"* But what is the work of the Lord here? Listen, *"And cursed is he who keeps back his sword from bloodshed."* There are times when ***THAT*** is the work of the Lord, *"And cursed as he who is* ***SLACK*** *in that."* Now ***MOAB*** was in ***TRANSJORDAN***. If you can visualize the map, here is the Mediterranean coast. Here is the river Jordan and the Dead Sea at the bottom. And ***MOAB*** was on the east side of the Dead Sea. It was one of three nations, ***AMMON***, ***MOAB***, ***EDOM***, which were just into Transjordan. And Moab was famous for its WINE---its vineyards were noted. If you really wanted to give somebody a nice drink, you gave them a cup of 'Moabite wine'. And it was prepared from the grapes and then so carefully matured. It had to be frequently poured from one vessel to another---like that, and ***DISTURBED***---or else it settled on its lees and was contaminated by its dregs.

That's the picture. And it is in that language that God speaks to Moab and says, *"Moab, you are like* ***WINE*** *that has not been poured from vessel to vessel. You've never been* ***INVADED****; you've never been* ***DISTURBED****. You are complacent, you are comfortable, you are at ease, and therefore, you are* ***CONTAMINATED*** *with the dregs of your society."* And here is a ***PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY***. God is saying that nation which is ***NEVER*** disturbed, which ***NEVER*** finds itself at war, which is ***NEVER*** poured from vessel to vessel, ***NEVER*** defeated, ***NEVER*** deported---that nation will be ***CONTAMINATED*** by its dregs. It'll be like wine that's not poured from vessel to vessel to ***MATURE PROPERLY***. And Moab was such a nation. It had never been invaded... it had grabbed land from Israel... it had grabbed land from the Reubenites. It was ***SECURE***.

And the **CROWNING CONDEMNATION** was this: that Moses and Israel passed through Moab on their way to the promised land, and told Moab of the true God. And this nation had the chance to know the truth; and instead, they chose a pagan god, ***CHEMOSH***. And God says here, *"Chemosh will not be able to help you."* And so, Moab is to be ***PUNISHED***. But---and here it comes again---***BUT NOT DESOLATED***. *"Afterward, it shall be inhabited again."* And it was.

***The Two Types of Punishment From God***

May I just pause for a moment and draw out the ***TWO TYPES OF PUNISHMENT*** that come from God? `It's important to recognize the two. ***1)*** ***ONE*** is what I might call ***DISCIPLINARY PUNISHMENT*** in which the person survives chastened. ***2)*** And the ***OTHER*** is ***DESTRUCTIVE PUNISHMENT*** in which the person or nation doesn't survive. If you like, It's the difference between corporal punishment and capital punishment. Corporal punishment is ***REFORMAORY***. Capital punishment is ***RETRIBUTIVE***. Corporal punishment: the person survives---we hope, a better person. Capital punishment: the person doesn't survive---it is a hopeless situation. And God uses both forms. And He is saying to some of these nations, *"Your punishment will be* ***DISCIPLINARY*** *and you will survive---Egypt will survive, Moab will survive."* But other nations, Edom, Kadar---we shall see them in a moment---will not survive, because their punishment is capital punishment, and no man will live in those lands. And as we shall see in a moment, no man ever has ever since.

And so, God has two kinds of punishment. And the ***GOOD NEWS*** is that for God's own people, the punishment is always ***DISCIPLINARY***. For others the punishment is ***DESTRUCTIVE***. And this is the ***LESSON*** we must learn. God punishes ***EVERYONE***, but he punishes his ***OWN CHILDREN*** out of ***LOVE*** that he may discipline and reform them. It is ***CORPORAL PUNISHMENT***. But ***SINNERS*** are punished with ***CAPITAL PUNISHMENT***. And as we read these prophecies against the nations, put them into ***CATEGORIES***: ***1)*** Is He destroying this nation utterly or ***2)*** is He going to discipline them with the loss of their land and then allow them to come back chastened, as He has disciplined His own people, Israel?

***Word to the Ammonites***

We move on to the ***AMMONITES***. The Ammonites lived just north of the Moabites. Moab was where Moses had died on Mount Nebo. Just north was Ammon. And in fact, the city which they had as their capital is still there, it is now called Amman. It is the capital of Jordan, where King Hussein lives. And God has said here that it would continue to be ***INHABITED***---it would not be deserted. And today King Hussein lives there. And today there's a revival going on there. And today I'm hearing of Arabs becoming Christians in Amman. And I read just two days ago that the British and Foreign Bible Society are going to open a Bible bookshop in Amman because there's a demand for the word of God in Amman. And we are now reading Jeremiah's prophecy about Amman. The Ammonites! Isn't history fascinating? The same God who promised that they would not be wiped out is working by His Spirit through a Spirit-filled Arab evangelist in Amman today.

Well let's read what God says here. They shared Moab's ***COMPLACENCY***. If there is one thing god cannot stand, it’s a ***COMPLACENT NATION*** that says, *"Everything is all right!"* A nation, to use the words here, "*A nation that trusts in its treasure,"*... a nation that has an arsenal bigger than others, and therefore, is ***CONFIDENT*** a nation that has more missiles than anybody else. This is offensive to God. And a nation, therefore, that becomes ***PROUD***. He said of Moab, *"He is very proud. His loftiness, his pride, his arrogance, and the haughtiness of his heart. I know his* ***INSOLENCE****,"* says the Lord. And that is the danger of a nation, that is affluent, that has peace, that has a good army, has plenty of money, plenty of weapons. That nation becomes ***PROUD, ARROGANT, DEFIANT, INDOLENT***. And ***AMMON*** was such a nation. "*Why do you boast of your valleys, O faithless daughter who trusted in her treasures saying, 'who will come against me?' "* They did one other thing. Ammon ***TOOK FROM THE TRIBE OF GAD***, land that God had given to Israel, as if Israel had no right to it. And so, *"God says, concerning the Ammonites, 'Has Israel, no sons; has he no heir.? Israel shall* ***DISPOSSES*** *those who dispossessed him,' says the Lord."* And sure enough that came ***TRUE*** of Ammon to the letter.

***Word to the Edomites***

Verse seven of chapter 49 begins a word about ***EDOM***. Since the prophecies are now quite short, we'll read them in full. *"Thus says the* ***LORD*** *of hosts, 'Is wisdom no more in Teman? Has council perished from the prudent? Has their wisdom vanished? Flee, turn back, dwell in the depths, O inhabitants of Dedan! For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him---the time when I punish him. If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? If thieves came by night, would they not destroy only enough for themselves? But I have stripped Esau bare; I have uncovered his hiding places, and he's not able to conceal himself. His children are destroyed, and his brothers and his neighbors. And he is no more. Leave your fatherless children. I will keep them alive and let your widows trust in Me.' For thus says the* ***LORD****: 'If those who did not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, will* ***YOU*** *go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished; but* ***YOU MUST DRINK.*** *For I have sworn by Myself,' says the* ***LORD****, 'that Bozrah shall become a* ***HORROR****, a* ***TAUNT****, a* ***WASTE****, and a* ***CURSE****. And all her cities shall be* ***PERPETUAL WASTES****.'*

*I (Jeremiah) have heard tidings from the* ***LORD****, and a* ***MESSENGER*** *has been sent among the nations: ‘Gather yourselves together and rise up against her for battle. For behold, I will make you small among the nations, despised among men. The horror you inspire has deceived you, and the pride of your heart.’*

*"You who live in the clefts of the rock, who hold the height of the hill. Though you make your nest as high as the eagle's, I will bring you down from there," says the* ***LORD****. "Edom shall become a* ***HORROR****. And everyone who passes by it will be horrified, will HISS because of all its disasters."*

Read the rest for yourself. How many of you have been to ***PETRA***? One… three… three others? How many of you have seen pictures of Petra? Few more. That's what we're talking about. I'll never forget my journey there---as those two others who've been will never forget it---riding on horse backs through a ***NARROW CRACK*** in the mountain, at times 10 to 12 feet wide and 150 feet deep. So ***IMPREGNABLE*** was the land of Edom---the descendant of Esau, twin brother of Jacob---that a handful of men could hold the entire country. They just poised on the clifftops with rocks to drop down this gorge. And when you come through that ***GORGE***, you come into the most incredible sight: a huge open area... acre upon acre, and temples and treasuries and government buildings C***ARVED OUT OF SOLID ROCK***---some of them as high, if not higher, than the peak of this, which is 65 feet high... carved into the solid red sandstone... ***CAVERNOUS*** places; you've never seen anything like it.

And in the ***MIDDLE*** of this open area---hidden inside the mountains, accessible only through this crack---there is one huge hump, ***MOUNT SEIR***, a thousand feet high. And there on the ***TOP*** lived ***EDOM*...** proud... prosperous. And God said, *"Oh* ***MOUNT SEIR****, I know your* ***PRIDE****. You're right up on the top of the rock, where the eagle makes his nest. But I'll bring you* ***DOWN****, and no man will ever live there again."* And the thing that struck you as you looked at these magnificent buildings, as you looked at the remains of the streets and the columns in the marketplace... I've never seen such magnificent buildings hollowed out of the solid rock. Every piece carved. From the pinnacles of the roofs, you could see as far as the Red Sea; and yet it was ***DESERTED***... not a man living there. Edom is ***FINISHED***. Just before I talk about Damascus, may I remind you that the last remnant of the Edomites---whom we know of---were a family by the name of ***HEROD***, Herod an Edomite. Yes, his family left Petra. They went to live in Israel, and he persuaded the Romans to make him *'King Herod the Great the Edomite'*. And he had the ***INFAMOUS FAMILY*** of Herod Agrippa and the other Herods. It was a terrible family and the last member of it died eaten up with worms.

***Word to Damascus***

Now ***DAMASCUS***. *"Concerning* ***DAMASCUS****. Hamath and Arpad are confounded, for they have heard evil tidings. They melt in fear. They're troubled like the sea, which cannot be quiet. Damascus has become feeble. She turned to flee, and panic ceased her. Anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her, as of a woman in travail. How the famous city is forsaken, the joyful city. Therefore, her young men shall* ***FALL*** *in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be* ***DESTROYED*** *in that day," says the Lord of hosts, "I will kindle a FIRE in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben Hadad."*

***DAMASCUS*** is a beautiful city. It nestles between the mountains of Syria and the desert, and there are two beautiful ***RIVERS*** coming down from the mountains through the city and into the desert where they dry up---Barada and Pharpar... clear blue rivers. And there where this fresh water... this city grew up on the main trade route between ***EGYPT*** and ***BABYLON***. It is still a beautiful city nestling as it does. And yet that beautiful famous city which everybody knew, God said, *"It will be burned with* ***FIRE****,"* and it was burned. We do not know ***WHAT*** its sin was. It's not told us here, but that it had sinned against God, is quite clear for God is just, and he said, *"Damascus will burn,"* but God did not say it would remain empty. And had it remained empty, Saul of Tarsus would not have gone there, and we would not have had the world's greatest missionary. But Damascus was ***REINHABITED*** after it was scorched, and Saul of Tarsus made his way to this very city and another burning, blinding light---the fire of God---blinded him, and he became the *'apostle of grace'*.

***Word to Kedar and Hazor***

***KEDAR*** and ***HAZOR***, again, I'll leave you to look at them. These are ARABS---descendants of Ishmael, the other son of Abraham. These are Arab nomads. We do not know where either of these places are. There is no trace of them on the map. We can trace many of the cities of the Old Testament, but these two are ***LOST*** beyond recall. Somewhere in the sands of the desert lie these two settlements, ***KEDAR*** and ***HAZOR***, and they're ***GONE***. And God said of them both, *"No man dwell in you* ***FOREVER****."* Why? What had they done? Listen, *"You dwell* ***SECURELY****,"* that's all. *"Therefore, I will bring* ***CALAMITY*** *upon you."* Now that may be a strange thing to you for God to say, but they had become again, complacent, proud self-sufficient, afraid of no man, and therefore, ***NOT AFRAID*** of God either. And it is nations like these that God cannot stand. *"For men are* ***WITHOUT EXCUSE****. The power and deity of God is clearly manifest in the things he has made."* A nation that thinks it can ***DEFEND*** itself is without excuse. A nation that becomes ***SECURE*** and ***COMPLACENT*** is a nation that has ***FORGOTTEN*** its creator. And God will deal with that nation and ***REMOVE IT*** from the face of the earth.

***Word to Elam***

Finally, the very ***LAST PROPHECY*** mentioned here is mentioned about ***ELAM***. We began with Egypt in the west of the then known world. We've gone right now to the east---the far east of the then known world, ***ELAM***. And even though they are so ***FAR FROM ISRAEL***, God still deals with them. The God of Israel knows about them. And he says, *"You too will have WAR. I will send the SWORD to you; but in the latter days I will* ***RESTORE*** *the fortunes of Elam."* Do you know that that latter promise came ***TRUE*** so literally that ***ELAM*** was one of the nations that finally defeated ***BABYLON***... which was the nation that had been used to defeat all the others we've mentioned. And do you know that ***ELAM*** is now ***IRAN*** and one of the most ***PROSPEROUS*** countries in the entire near East. And God says*, "I will restore the fortunes."* And the Shah of Persia is one of the richest men in the world. Would to God that he acknowledged it. He has given himself the title *'King of Kings, Lord of Lords'*. And I tremble for that country now. But God kept his word, and Elam's fortunes have been ***RESTORED*** and they are still there.

Can't you see the ***PICTURE***? **1)** When God says, *"This place will be inhabited again but* ***WITHOUT GREATNESS****,"* you can see it coming true in ***EGYPT***. **2)** When God says, *"This place will be inhabited by no man* ***FOREVER****,"* you can visit ***PETRA*** and find not one solitary soul living there, though it is an ideal place to live. **3)** When God says, *"This land will have its fortunes* ***RESTORED****,"* you look at ***PERSIA*** and you see its fabulous wealth.

What is God going to say about ***BRITAIN*** (and the ***UNITED STATES***)?? For, whatever he says about it will be our ***DESTINY***. And his ***WORD*** produces the ***RESULT***.

And so let me ***FINISH***. We've learned a great deal as we've looked at this ***SERIOUS PASSAGE***. It's not the kind of passage that is anybody's favorite. I dare say there's not a verse in all four chapters that you could have quoted to me from memory. There are few promises that you cling to. You might have known the words, *"Cursed is he who does the word of the Lord with slackness."* It's often quoted, but the second half of the verse is never added.

***Viewing History Through the Lens of the Bible***

This has been a ***STERN*** passage; it's a ***DEEP*** passage. But I've been giving you ***THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BIBLE ABOUT HISTORY***. You see, when all these nations ***FELL***---when Egypt ***FELL***, when Philistia ***FELL***, when Edom ***FELL***, Amon, Moab, Damascus Kedar, Hazor, Elam---when these ***FELL***, there are ***THREE WAYS*** of looking at history. ***1)*** You can say simply they fell because they were **OVERCOME BY A STRONGER MILITARY POWER**. And that would be true, but it would be only one level of history. ***2)*** You could probe a little deeper and say, even before they fell by military conquest from without, they had already succumbed to ***MORAL CORRUPTION WITHIN***. And that was also true of every one of them. Pride had crept in. ***3)*** You can probe deeper still and say these nations fell because ***GOD IS GOD***. And God is the universal God... and God is the God of all the earth... and God is the judge of all the nations.

Now the ***BIBLE*** is the book that gives you the ***TRUE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY.*** You can read history books... and the kind of history I did at school was all about the ***MILITARY POWERS***. I could draw those little diagrams, the battle of Waterloo with all the little red squares and the blue squares and the arrows... the way they moved. That was the history I learned at school. Just military might. They didn't tell me at school that ***MORAL CORRUPTION PRECEDED MILITARY DEFEAT***. And they certainly didn't tell me that ***GOD WAS A GOD OF WAR,*** and that God was working ***HIS PURPOSE*** out as year succeeds to year. But I'm giving you that history now because we are part of that history and we're living in it.

And so, we need to learn the ***LESSONS OF HISTORY***. And the lesson is that history is ***'HIS-STORY*,'** and God has His hand on the nations. And that's why Jesus said, "*There shall be wars and rumors of wars,"* because He knew that God was in control and that ***WAR*** is God's way of dealing with ***WAYWARD NATIONS***. ***WAR*** is God's way of bringing ***PROUD PEOPLE*** to their knees; but He only sends ***MILITARY DEFEAT*** where there has been ***MORAL DECAY*** first, for God is a moral God and a just God.

There is ***ONE FINAL THING*** that I must say, for I've missed out two vital verses, and we finish with these: verses 27 and 28 of chapter 46. In the middle of all these terrible messages for ***OTHER NATIONS***, there is a little message for God's people, ***ISRAEL***. When all the other prophecies include the word 'terror' or 'panic' or 'fear', the little word to Israel says, *"But* ***FEAR NOT****, O Jacob My servant, nor be dismayed O Israel; for lo, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid.* ***FEAR NOT****. Oh Jacob, my servant,"* says the Lord, *"for I am with you. I will make a* ***FULL END OF ALL THE NATIONS*** *to which I have driven you; but of you,* ***I WILL NOT MAKE A FULL END.*** *I will* ***CHASTEN YOU*** *in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished."* That's a word for God's own people. That literally came ***TRUE***. Part of Israel was taken in captivity to ***ASSYRIA***. Where is ***ASSYRIA*** today? You'll find most of Assyria in the British museum. The rest of Israel was taken to ***BABYLON***. Where is ***BABYLON*** today? Buried under the mud and silt of the Mesopotamian valleys. Where ***ISRAEL*** today? She's back in her land. She does not yet have the quiet and the ease that God has promised here---and she won't until she gets back to her God. ***BUT SHE'S BACK***. God's people are told, *"You need not fear* ***A FULL END****."* And what was true of the ***OLD*** Israel, is true of the ***NEW*** Israel, the church. Britain may disappear. England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland may go the way of all nations, and their names may disappear from the map. But while empires rise and fall, the church of Jesus constant will remain. *"You will* ***REMAIN****, and you will have* ***QUIET*** *and* ***EASE****. You will be brought to your land, the Father's house. And there you will settle down again in quiet and ease. But I will by no means leave you* ***UNPUNISHED****. I will punish you in just measure." "Whom the Lord loves, He chastises."* That is the ***MESSAGE*** for this morning. But it is ***DISCIPLINARY***. It is not destructive. It is not to make a full end. It is to enable you to enjoy the ***FULLEST END***.

And I'm going to close by reading just ***TWO PASSAGES*** from the New Testament. I'll tell you afterwards where they come from, because I want you to listen to these two short passages. ***1)*** The ***FIRST*** is where Paul is talking about the ***FUTURE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL***. And he says this, *"The gifts and the call of God are irrevocable."* That means that having ***CALLED*** Israel, He will ***NEVER*** let that nation go*. "The* ***GIFTS*** *and the* ***CALL*** *of God are* ***IRREVOCABLE****."... "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God. How untouchable are His judgments and how inscrutable are His ways; for who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor, or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid? For* ***FROM HIM****, and* ***THROUGH HIM****, and* ***TO HIM****, are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."* And ***2)*** the ***OTHER*** passage says this, *"For the time has come for* ***JUDGMENT TO BEGIN WITH THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD****. And if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the impious and the sinner appear?"...* *"For* ***FROM HIM****, and* ***THROUGH HIM****, and* ***TO HIM****, are all things. To God be the glory forever. Amen."*

Let's sing that chorus, shall we?