

OCTOBER 15

Today you finish 2 Thessalonians and you get a good example of how Jeremiah and the Spirit organized his material topically rather than chronologically. For one reason or the other, treat yourself to something as you read.

Jeremiah 26-27

Jeremiah 26

This message was actually given in chapters 7-10. Now we will see the people's response to the message.

Vs. 1-3 The timing of this was at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, but it is evident from v. 21 that he was already reigning for a while and he was a very "no nonsense" kind of guy. So, Jeremiah was being thrown into harm's way, but God said He would protect Jeremiah.

Vs. 4-6 We are only given a snippet of the entire message here. The people had already slipped back into idolatry, and there was the warning that as God did to Shiloh, He would also do to the temple.

Vs. 7-11 Notice it was the priests and the prophets who are behind this.

Vs. 12-15 Jeremiah was faithful to proclaim God's Word and to warn the people. Remember, the point of these words was to turn the people back to the Lord, not to tickle their ears.

Vs. 16-19 This is referring to the prophet Micah whose book we will be reading. Hezekiah was a godly king and he accepted the rebuke like a godly man.

Vs. 20-23 We know nothing about this prophet, but he accomplished God's will by dying for the truth. When you look at how they disposed of the prophet's body, it is interesting that God said through Jeremiah that Jehoiakim would be buried the same way. I guess this is where that piece of justice originated, except that Jehoiakim wouldn't even make it into a common grave. They would dump his body with the dead donkeys.

V. 24 There were still some good people around. Thank God for *Ahikam the son of Shaphan*. It should be noted that these were good people who had been influenced by Josiah's revival. In fact, the parents of Daniel & Co. were raised during Josiah's reign; and those boys were born toward the end of Josiah's reign. Daniel was from that era, and became one of the most godly men in the Bible.

Jeremiah 27

The Word of the Lord fell on deaf ears during Jehoiakim's reign. Now, in the time of Zedekiah the option was not "obey Me and be saved," but "obey Me and submit to Nebuchadnezzar."

Vs. 1-7 This is a message to all the nations. This prophecy had a visual aid attached to it. There was no email and there were no cameras, but there were probably representatives of those countries who came to Jerusalem and saw Jeremiah and heard the message. As you look at v. 7, it is interesting that that is exactly as long as the Babylonian Empire lasted.

Vs. 8-11 This message is still to all the nations. That is why fortune-tellers and sorcerers are mentioned.

Vs. 12-15 What an interesting message and test to give Zedekiah. Jeremiah will tell him this privately just before Zedekiah is captured. He should have listened.

Vs. 16-22 This was a message for the priests. In listening to the prophets they had the false hope that all the stuff taken into exile from the temple would be returned soon. Actually, God was

going to let Neb take much more. There is hope in what God says here, but I'm sure the priests (remember how much they liked Jeremiah in the last chapter?) were totally not happy.

In the harvest, the truth has to be told so that it can give people the opportunity to know they are wrong and need to turn to God.

2 Thessalonians 3

Vs. 1-5 It is interesting that Paul was writing this from Corinth, asking for their prayers and God's blessing. Corinth is the only city I can think of where Jesus appeared to Paul and told him to hang on. Paul had already faced church-related worry and suffering in other cities, and now Corinth would be added to that burden.

V. 5 Notice how love and steadfastness are interwoven with following Christ in the harvest.

Vs. 6-12 Apparently some people quit their jobs thinking the Lord's coming was around the corner. Paul & Co. had set an example for the Thessalonians in working and caring.

Vs. 13-15 You can find similar warnings in 1 Corinthians, Romans, and 1 Timothy. Notice that this correction is only for believers, to coax them back into following Christ.

Vs. 16-18 A closing of the letter, marked with the proof that this was Paul.

Even in the harvest we need to love one another as Christ loved us by encouraging and correcting one another. There are lots of ways to do this; but when it becomes a necessity, there are the words of the prophets, correcting people so they will return to the Lord.

Psalm 85

We're not sure when this was written. Several occasions suggest themselves. It might have been after the civil war with Absalom when the kingdom was shaken. Or it might have been when the people returned from exile and were struggling to reestablish the nation.

Vs. 1-3 This looks like it could be talking about how God was patient with the people in the wilderness or during the time of the judges.

Vs. 4-7 This is the prayer for restoration. God had shown judgment, and it was difficult to revive the people and begin again. The appeal to God's steadfast and loyal love was made so that the people could rejoice in seeing God's hand at work.

Vs. 8-9 They desired to be led and to hear the voice of the Lord.

Vs. 10-11 If the Lord were to speak, this is what would happen.

Vs. 12-13 This is their confidence in faith that the Lord would hold true to His Word. We can also pray this at many times in our lives. We change; our circumstances change, but God is always the same. He is gracious, forgiving, and full of loving kindness.

Proverbs 25:16

So, to what do you think this should be applied? Is God just against us eating too much honey? It seems to be a caution against all excess. Not only should our needs be under control and restrained; but, if you link this thought to the next verse, v. 17, we shouldn't overuse the kindness of others. Being content with God and the life He has given us seems to be the idea. I immediately think of *Give us this day our daily bread*. That's really all I need. My energy is better spent looking to the Lord in the harvest.