



Jeremiah: Torn Down to Build Up

A Bible Study with the Francis Asbury Society

SESSION 5

Jeremiah 7–8

Background: When the people tried to use the ark of the covenant as a magic talisman against the Philistines (1 Sam 4:1–22), God allowed the Philistines to capture it and defeat the Israelites. Although Samuel doesn't say so, Jeremiah 7:12 suggests that the Mosaic Tabernacle was destroyed at that time.

- The Hinnom valley (Jer 7:31) was at the south end of Jerusalem. It seems to have been used as the town dump for most of the city's existence. Why it was the place of child sacrifice is not clear. It came to symbolize Hell. The Greek for "Valley of Hinnom" is *ge-henna*.
 - Jeremiah 7:30–8:3 describes the situation after the final defeat of Jerusalem in 586. There will be so many dead that mass graves in the valley cannot contain them. In addition, as a way of desecration, the Babylonians will go into the tombs and get the bone boxes and dump them out.
1. What is the people's concept of religious behavior (Jer 7:4, 10–11, 21–22)? How would that translate into our behavior?
 2. What is God's concept of religious behavior (Jer :5–6, 23)? How does that translate into our behavior?
 3. If the answers to questions 1 and 2 are correct, why did God command the building of the tabernacle and the offering of sacrifices (look at 1 Kings 9:1–9)?
 4. What is the point of Jeremiah 8:4–7? How is the behavior of the Judeans described?
 5. How do you think the scribes were misinterpreting the Torah (Jer 8:8).
 6. Notice the repeated word in Jeremiah 8:5 and 10? What is the significance of it here?

7. How is proclaiming “peace, peace” to dress the wounds of the people superficially?

8. Who are the speakers in Jeremiah 8:14–20? Why this apparent confusion? What effect does this have on us, the hearers/readers?