

A call to backsliders
Jeremiah 3-4
By Russell Earl

Thesis: I want to show what we can learn from God's warning to backsliders.

Intro: 1. In these chapters we are reminded about God's longsuffering.
2. We are also reminded that God demands repentance and where there is repentance there are spiritual blessings and rewards.

I. Spiritual Adultery (Jer 3:1-4:4)

A. The possibility of repentance (3:1-5)

1. They have committed spiritual adultery (**v.1b-3**)
2. They can cry out and repent (**v.4-5**)

B. The need & call for repentance (3:6-10,11-14)

1. They have gone deeper and deeper into sin and apostasy (**v.6-9**)
2. Their repentance has not be genuine (**v.10**)
3. The call for Israel to repent because God is merciful (**v.11-14**)

C. The blessings, plan & rewards of repentance (3:15-18,19-25;4:1-4)

1. The blessings of repentance for them included having godly leaders and truly seeking the Lord (**v.15-18**).
2. They shall again call God their father (**v.19**)
 - a. They have treated God unfaithfully (**v.20**)
 - b. They must hear, obey and repent (**v.21-25**)
3. They will be rewarded if their turn their hearts back to God (**4:1-4**)

II. Judgment is coming

A. Announcement of coming judgment (4:5-18)

1. The lion (**v.5-10**)

i. Some attribute the "lion" Nebuchadnezzar because of his strength and military techniques.

a. They would be punished for their sin.

i. Peace would come they were told but only if they would repent.

a. No repentance – no peace.

2. The tempest (**v.11-13**)

a. Nations would come quickly and swiftly to plunder them.

i. The winds would be destruction winds.

ii. Some say this type of wind is called "Simoon" - known for its violence and destruction.

3. The keepers (**v.14-18**)

a. They are encouraged not to delay in repenting of their sins.

i. Watchers or keepers – surrounding nations are summoned to survey the coming devastation to Jerusalem. Watchers from a far country (the Chaldeans) targeted the cities of Judah for take-over.

B. Description of the coming judgment (4:19-31)

1. Terrifying judgment (v.19-22)
 - a. Their punishment would be terrifying. (**v.19-21**)
 - b. They only have knowledge to do evil and not good (**v.22**)
2. Devasting judgment (v.23-26)
 - a. Their devasting punishment would crush the land.
3. Inevitable judgment (v.27-31)
 - a. Many will die but not all (**v.27**)
 - b. The punishment will not cease before repentance (**v.28-29**)
 - c. They will cry out but their idols and false gods cannot save them (**v.30-31**).

III. Lessons for us today.

A. God does not overlook sin.

1. God demanded that the people repent (**3:1b-3**)
2. Repentance must be true and not phony (**3:10**)

B. God is longsuffering and merciful

1. Over and over again we are reminded of God's mercy and patience with man (**3:11-14**)
2. God does not desire that man should perish but that he will live spiritually with Him (**2 Pt 3:9**)

Application & Conclusion:

1. Let us be those who will not attempt to justify sin and to simply close our eyes to sin and charge ahead in our arrogance and pride.
2. Sin has consequences but through the blood of Christ we can be made pure and right if we will obey, and this includes repentance.
3. Full Invitation

Non-Christians must:

Hear – James 1:22, Romans 10:15,17

Believe – Jn 12:44, Jn 8:24, Mt 16:16

Repent – Luke 13:2-3

Confess – John 12:42, Romans 10:9

Be Baptized – 1 Pt 3:21, Acts 22:16, Col 2:11, Mk 16:16, Rom 6:3-4

Live faithfully – John 14:15, Rev 2:10

Christians must:

Repent: Acts 17:20, Acts 8:37, Lk 13:3

Pray: James 5:16, 1 Jn 1:9