Thursology 116: Great News…From EXILE?!? God's Amazing Cycle of REDEMPTIVE Judgment (Final, Luke-Warm Church-Pt. 8)

(*Thursology Live!* 10/3/2024)

--The pattern of God's "Prophetic Word" to His people…when they're lukewarm

--Prophetic Word #12: Even if you're *exiled*…do not DESPAIR…because ALL authorities ultimately serve *God*…whether they INTEND to or not.

--Jeremiah 25:9; 27:6: "…*I* will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, *My servant*, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants…Now *I* have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, *My servant*."

--Key Concept: It wasn't God's WEAKNESS that led to Babylon *conquering* His people…it was actually His SOVEREIGNTY*!!!*

--Prophetic Word #13: "When you've been EXILED…make sure you don't try to take a SHORTCUT…because you'll miss God's *perfect* plan for DELIVERANCE*!!!*"

--Key Concept: *Punishment* and *persecution* that lasted *less than* several GENERATIONS…would have been INEFFECTIVE*!!!*

--Prophetic Word #14: The reason I send My people through *exile* and *punishment* is because I _____ them so much…and I still have a *plan* to _____ them*!!!*

--Understanding God's plan to save His people *through* exile:

--A pervasive biblical theme: God's _____ has overarching _____ in His Creation.

--Galatians 6:7: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a person sows, this they will also reap…"

--The scope and reach of God's Law is: _____, _____, and _____*!!!*

--It applies to *believers*…and *non-believers*!!!

--It applies to the *church*…and to the *world*!!!

--It applies to *individuals*…*families*…and *nations*!!!

--The Four-step Process of God's *Redemptive* Judgment:

--Step #1: When a nation repeatedly ignores God's laws…He _____ them over to their own _____

--Romans 1:24, 26, 28, 32: Therefore God *gave them over* in the lusts of their hearts to impurity…For this reason God *gave them over* to degrading passions…And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God *gave them over* to a depraved mind… and although they *know* the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only *do* the same, but also give *hearty approval* to those who practice them.

--Psalm 81:11-12: But My people *did not listen* to My voice, and Israel did not obey Me. So I *gave them over* to the stubbornness of their heart, to *walk in their own devices*."

--Ezekiel 20:39: "'As for you, O house of Israel', thus says the Lord God, 'Go, _____ everyone his _____…'"

--Step #2: _____ comes as direct *consequence* of _____ disobeying God's Law

--Ezekiel 20:23-24: "Thus says the Lord, I swore to them…that I would *scatter them among the nations*…because they…rejected My statutes…and *their eyes were on the idols* of their fathers."

--Jeremiah 44:23: "*Because* you have…sinned against the Lord and not obeyed the voice of the Lord or walked in His law…*therefore* this *calamity* has befallen you…"

--Step #3: The *consequences* of God's _____…lead His people to _____

--Judges 10:6, 9, 13-14: Then the sons of *Israel again did evil* in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals…thus *they forsook the Lord and did not serve Him*…And the sons of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight…so that *Israel was greatly distressed*…The Lord said to the sons of Israel…you have forsaken Me and served other gods; *therefore I will no longer deliver you*. *Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress*."

--Judges 10:15-16: The sons of Israel said to the Lord, "*We have sinned*, do to us *whatever seems good to You*; only please *deliver* us this day." *So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord*; and *He could bear the misery of Israel no longer*.

--Key Concept #1: When God's people live in *rebellion*…the only _____ for them is to come to the point of _____

--Key Concept #2: When God's people _____ rebel…the *only* thing that will bring them to *repentance* is…_____

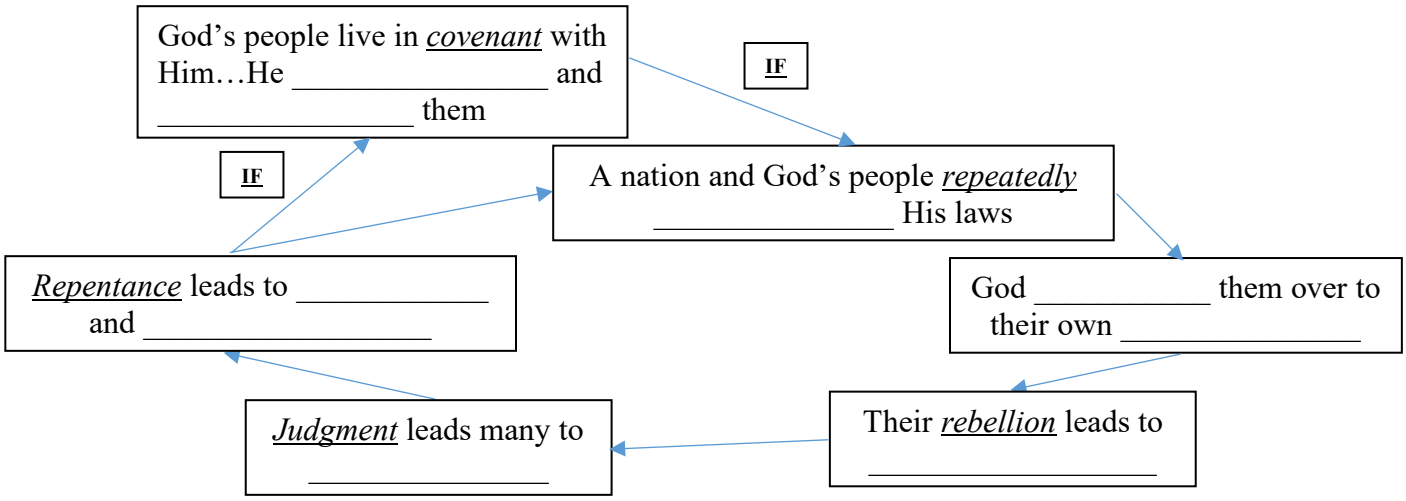
--Key Concept #3: Even though God *hates* bringing _____…if it's the *only* option left…then He'll *inflict* as much _____ as it takes…to _____ His people

--Step #4: Finally…after *repentance*…God _____ them by His mercy…which has been His _____…from the very _____*!!!*

--Ezekiel 18:23, 27-28, 32: "'Do I have any *pleasure* in the *death* of the wicked,' declares the Lord God, 'rather than that he should turn from his ways and *live*?...when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness…and practices righteousness, he will *save* his life…For *I have no pleasure* in the death of anyone who dies,' declares the Lord God. 'Therefore, *repent and live*.'"

--Ezekiel 20:33-42 (Excerpts): "*I will bring you out* from the peoples and gather you *from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand*…*I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant*; and *I will purge from you the rebels* and those who transgress against Me…Thus says the Lord God, "*Go, serve everyone his idols*; *but later you will surely listen to Me*, and My holy name *you will profane no longer*…there *the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve Me* in the land…*I will accept you when I gather you from the lands where you are scattered*; and I will prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations. *And you will know that I am the Lord*, *when I bring you into the land of Israel*…"

The cycle of God's Redemptive Judgment:



--Application: God's *relentless* desire to *save* people explains why the _____ God…can _____ so *different*…at different *times*… and in different *places*!!!

--A Key Question: Why does it look like there's an "_____ Testament God"…and a "_____ Testament God???"

--A foundational understanding: While God *never* _____…people… societies…nations… cultures…and circumstances…*do* _____*!!!*

--Key Concept #1: God's *great purpose* in every *time*…every *age*…every *era*…is to _____*!!!*

--God's unchanging purpose:

--"I have come to seek and to *save* that that which was *lost*."

--"If you have seen ME…you have seen the FATHER."

--Key Concept #2: The *differences* in *the way God dealt with people* in the two Testaments… aren't because _____ changed…but because God adapts _____ He accomplishes His salvation plan…based upon people's _____…and their _____*!!!*

--Romans 2:4: "…the *kindness* of God leads you to *repentance*…"

--The facts about Israel in the Old Testament:

--They were slaves whom God delivered

--The were chosen and blessed by God…despite their stiff necks and hard hearts

--Among all the peoples of the world…God gave *them* His Truth…and His Word

--He showed them stunning miracles…He sent them great leaders and deliverers…He sent them Prophets…again and again…and…He sent them outpourings of His grace and salvation in five sweeping national revivals

--And…after all of this…they rejected their God…*again and again*!!!

--Psalm 30:5: His *anger* lasts only a *moment*, but His *favor* lasts a *lifetime*; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

--The overarching summary of the God of the Bible: Because…at His *essence*…God is *Savior*…whether by grace, mercy, kindness, and compassion…*or*…by discipline, punishment, judgment, and exile…He will do *whatever it takes* to save _____…who is _____ to be _____*!!!*

--A simple question: Will God's _____ lead you to repentance…or…will it take _____???

Thursology 115: God's Absurd Command: *EMBRACE* the Exile…So I Can *SAVE* You*!!!*
(Lukewarm, End-Times Church-Pt 7)
(*Thursology Live!* 9/5/2024)

--The pattern of God's "Prophetic Word" to His people…when they're lukewarm

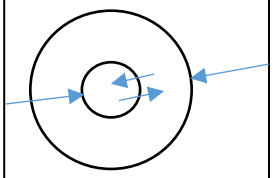
--Prophetic Word #9: "When God's people have intermingled...the VICTORIES that *you* once had over *your enemies*…now become the VICTORIES that *they* have over *you!!!*"

--Prophetic Word #11: "ACCEPT the *punishment* and the *exile* that are coming…because they're *part* of GOD'S ultimate PLAN*!!!*"

--A clear…but very unlikely…biblical precept: When it comes to the point where God can no longer use His PEOPLE to save His WORLD…then He uses His WORLD to save His PEOPLE*!!!*

How God Saves

God's people: When they're FAITHFUL… they SAVE the *world* through the uncompromising GOSPEL*!!!*



The world: The way God SAVES His church when they're WORSE than the world…is through persecution, abuse, and hatred. Then the church is PURGED through *repentance*…and REVIVAL comes…and once again…the church becomes *righteous*, *powerful*, and REDEMPTIVE*!!!*

--**Prophetic Word #12**: Even if you're *exiled*…do not **DESPAIR**…because **ALL** authorities ultimately serve *God*…whether they **INTEND** to or not.

--Jeremiah 25:9; 27:6: "…*I* will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, *My servant*, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants…Now *I* have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, *My servant*."

--Key Concept #1: The *evil* king…who **DEFEATED** God's people…was *unintentionally* acting as God's **SERVANT***!!!*

--Key Concept #2: It wasn't God's **WEAKNESS** that led to Babylon *conquering* His people…it was actually His **SOVEREIGNTY***!!!*

--Key Concept #3: God is *so powerful* that He can even use an *evil* king's **WICKEDNESS**…for His **OWN** purposes*!!!*

--Jeremiah 27:8-10; 14-15 (excerpts): "It will be, that the nation…which will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar…*I* will punish that nation with the sword, with famine and with pestilence," declares the Lord, "until I have destroyed it by *his* hand. But as for you, *do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers or your sorcerers* who speak to you, saying, 'You will *not* serve the king of Babylon.' For *they prophesy a lie to you*…So *do not listen to the words of the prophets*…for I have not sent them," declares the Lord, "but *they prophesy falsely in My name*…"

--The values that have become *insignificant* to the typical person who claims to follow Christ: Radical obedience to God, stewardship, loyalty, submission, accountability, discipline, biblical knowledge, doctrinal purity, holiness, patience, confession of sin, repentance.

--Barna's conclusion: "One of the main reasons Christians have failed to transform our culture is because we're neither grieved nor humbled by our sin…In the last 30 years, evangelical Christians have become the dominant expression of Christian faith in the country and have lost their souls in the process…Today in the church, faith begins with personal felt-needs and ends with convenience and simplicity."

--**Prophetic Word #13**: "When you've been **EXILED**…make sure you don't try to take a **SHORTCUT**…because you'll miss God's *perfect* plan for **DELIVERANCE***!!!*"

--Prophetic Word #4: "I've *turned* My people *over* to their own *devices*!!!"

--Prophetic Word #5: "Stop *praying* for My people…stop *interceding* for them…I do not *hear* you anymore!!!"

--Prophetic Word #6: "Thus says the Lord…go ahead and *worship* your *idols*!!!"

--Prophetic Word #8: "My *people* have become even *more* wicked than the *world*!!!"

--A really strange word from the true prophet: Not only does God **WANT** His people exiled…He even wants them to **EMBRACE** their *exile*!!!

--Jeremiah 29:1; 4-7: Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon…"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, *to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile* from Jerusalem to Babylon, 'Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. *Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare*.'

--The essence of God's commands to His people:

--Command #1: **ACCEPT** your *judgment*!!!

--Command #2: **COOPERATE** with your *oppressors*!!!

--Command #3: Seek the **GOOD** of your *persecutors*!!!

--Key Concept: If you really *trust* Me…you'll **EMBRACE** your *punishment*…because you've finally come to the point where you *acknowledge* and **ABHOR** your sin.

--Jeremiah 28:1-4, 10-17: "…in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah…Hananiah…spoke to me in the house of the Lord in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying, "Thus says the…God of Israel, 'I have *broken the yoke* of the king of Babylon. Within two years I am going to bring back to this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon. I am also going to bring back to this place *all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon*,' declares the Lord, 'for I will *break the yoke* of the king of Babylon.'"…Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet and broke it. Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, "Thus says the Lord, 'Even so will I break *within two full years* the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all the nations.'" Then…the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Go and speak to Hananiah, saying, 'Thus says the Lord, "You have broken the yokes of wood, but you have made instead of them yokes of iron." For thus says…the God of Israel, "*I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they will serve him*…"'" Then Jeremiah the prophet said…"Listen now, Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore, thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the Lord.'" So Hananiah the prophet died in the same year…"

--Key Concept #1: Prophesying words of **COMFORT**…when what's coming is *punishment* and *exile*…is a most serious **OFFENSE** against God…and His people.

--Key Concept #2: When God's people have *intermingled* with the world…be very **SUSPICIOUS** of would-be "prophets"…who continue to say, "Everything is gonna be **FINE***!*"

--Application: The PROLONGED length of the Exile may be directly RELEVANT to the American church*!!!*

--Jeremiah 28:15-16: Then Jeremiah the prophet said…"Listen now, Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore, thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the Lord.'"

--Key Question: *Why* did the Exile need to be *really long*?

--Reason #1: Salvation can only come through God's **PLAN**…and…this *only* occurs in the **FULLNESS** of **TIME***!!!*

--Reason #2: God's people who have repeatedly lived in **COMPROMISE**…can *only* be **SAVED**…through *true*, *deep*, *whole-hearted*, *pervasive* **REPENTANCE***!!!*

--Reason #3: *Punishment* and *persecution* that lasted less than several **GENERATIONS**…would have been **INEFFECTIVE***!!!*

--Ezra 9:1-6; 10; 13: "…the princes approached me, saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations…For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that *the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands*…When I heard about this matter, *I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled*. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and *I sat appalled until the evening offering*. But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation…and *I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands* to the Lord my God; and I said, "O my God, *I am ashamed and embarrassed* to lift up my face to You, my God, for *our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens*…"Now, our God, what shall we say after this? For *we have forsaken Your commandments*…After all that has come upon us for *our evil deeds and our great guilt*…You our God have requited us *less* than our iniquities *deserve*…"

--**Prophetic Word #14**: "The reason I send My people through *exile* and *punishment* and *persecution* is because I **LOVE** them so much…and I still have a *plan* to **SAVE** them*!!!*"

--Jeremiah 29:8-9: For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,' declares the Lord.

--Jeremiah 29:10-14: "For thus says the Lord, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and *fulfill My good word to you*, *to bring you back* to this place. For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, '*plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope*. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and *I will listen to you*. You will *seek Me* and *find Me* when you *search* for Me *with all your heart*. I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and *I will restore your fortunes* and will *gather you from all the nations* and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the Lord, 'and *I will bring you back* to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

--Three great biblical principles:

--Principle #1: While God is in *absolute control*…and He could **FORCE** His people to *obey* Him by *sheer power*…He **RARELY** does*!!!*

--Principle #2: In His *power*…perfectly mixed with *love*…God **DISCIPLINES** His people so that they have the opportunity to **WILLINGLY** return to Him by their own **CHOICE**…after their suffering reveals the hopelessness…and futility…of going their own way.

--Principle #3: Even God's *punishment*…and *judgment*…have the **PURPOSE** of bringing people to His **SAVING** grace!!!

--A remarkable twist: Ironically…the Exile wasn't a *victory* for **SATAN**…it was actually a *victory* for **GOD***!!!*

--The real story of the Exile: Our God is in complete **CONTROL**…our God has a perfect **PLAN**…and our God is absolutely intent on **SAVING** His people*!!!*