**Jeremiah 24:1-25:14**

***“Grace, Grace, God’s Grace”***

Introduction:

1. In Jeremiah 24 and 25 there are two baskets of figs. One is fresh and beautiful, which represents

 some early deportees to Babylon. The second is a rotten stinking basket of figs which represents

 those in Israel not taken into captivity. Only the poorest of people were left in Babylon.

2. Chapter 25 Israel had spoiled for a long time. Jeremiah had prophesied some time before 605 b.c.

 The prophecy appears at this point in the book of Jeremiah because it explains how the bad figs

 spoiled in the first place. It is not because they were not warned. Jeremiah had warned them for

 35 years.

3. Just how amazing is grace? Until we realize how rotten we are, we will never appreciate how

 amazing grace really is!!

4. In Jeremiah 24:1-25:14 we are given lessons from two baskets of figs. One good...One rotten:

Just how amazing is grace? Realize how rotten we are...

**I. THE CHALLENGES FROM THE FIGS 24:3; 25:1-7**

Warnings have been given again and again: *yet ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***A. Do not worship other gods.*** *Yet ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***B. Do not forget your love for the Lord.*** *Yet ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***C.* *Do not fool around with sexual sin.*** *Yet ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***D. Do not love yourself more than you love your children.*** *Yet ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***E. Do not listen to false teaching.*** *Yet, ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***F. Do not boast in your wisdom, your strength or your riches.*** *Yet ye have not hearkened…*

 ***G. Do not dishonor the Lord’s Day.*** *Yet, ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***H. Do not live for things.*** *Yet, ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

 ***I. Do not serve any king but the true King!*** *Yet, ye have not hearkened unto Me.*

***“Yet ye have not hearkened unto me!”***

Just how amazing is grace? Realize how rotten we are...

**II. THE CONSEQUENCES FROM THE FIGS 24:8-10; 25:8-11**

 ***A. Invasion*** The enemy comes roaring in.

 ***B. Humiliation*** The enemy doesn’t care about you. He will use you for his purposes.

 ***C. Ruination*** The enemy will destroy everything you hold dear.

 ***D. Desolation (25-8-11)*** Nothing will matter and in the end you will have nothing!!

Just how amazing is grace? Realize how rotten we are, but how awesome God is!!

**III. THE COMPASSION FROM THE FIGS 24:3-7; 25:12-14**

*I will* is the key…God’s grace! Exile in Babylon was more than a curse. One basket had very

 good figs like those that ripen early. They are beautiful. (2a) By God’s grace…that which is

 rotten can become new. The exiles could become fresh and fruitful figs!

 *Grace, Grace God’s Grace!!!*

 ***A. Producing Grace 7a*** *I will give them a heart to know Me that I am the Lord.*

**1.** This is the best news of all! One needs a personal knowledge of God! *To whom to*

 *Know is life.*

**2.** This is where fresh fruit begins! Do you know Jesus Christ?

 ***B. Painful Grace 5a***

**1.** Before seeing how much there is to know of God, we must realize that such knowledge

 often comes through suffering.

 **2.** Unlike bad figs, the good figs followed God right into suffering. There was no way of

 escape. This suffering was led through Babylon.

 **3.** The good figs were exiles and slaves who had to endure a lifetime in Babylon. The

 journey to heaven isn’t designed for my comfort. The refining fires of suffering

 produces fruit, more fruit and much fruit. This is normal for the Christian life.

 **4.** Suffering brings an increased knowledge of God.

 **5.** Their captivity in Babylon was no accident. It was part of God’s sovereign plan for

 redemption.

 ***C. Purifying Grace 5b*** *Like these good figs, so I will acknowledge…as good.*

**1.** God counts them as ‘good’.

 **2.** Through their suffering, God would see good. This is justification. Through Jesus

 Christ, God declares me righteous.

 **3.** The exiles were not good. They were just as rotten as the rest of the figs. Like the

 others, they were warned. They ignored God’s warnings!

 **4.** God was going to regard them *good* anyway. It was not on the basis of merit, but His

 grace. This is the sheer grace of God that justifies sinners. ***All*** *our righteousnesses*

 *are as filthy rags.* We are not good. We have broken the Law of God. *Not by works*

 *of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us!*

**5.** God regards us as good, because of the work of Jesus Christ. Whoever trusts in Christ

 looks good to God. We are ***declared righteous***…**that’s Grace!**

 ***D. Protecting Grace 6a*** *I will set my eye upon them for good.*

**1.** God watches over His people for ‘good’.

 **2.** God will take care of His people. Even in Babylon He did not abandon His people to

 suffer alone. Daniel: Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah…we know them by their

 Babylonian names: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego. They were tossed into the fiery

 furnace…*Did not I throw three into the furnace, and behold there is four and He is like*

 *unto a son of the gods.* Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den. The Lord shut the mouths

 of the lions. Daniel is a story of God watching over His people for ‘good’.

 **3.** Children were having a catechism class: *Can you see God? “No, I can’t see God, but*

 *He can always see me.”*

 ***E. Preserving Grace 6b; 25:12-14*** *I will bring them back into the land.*

**1.** God was going to bring them home after 70 years.

 **2.** The exiles would know this grace when they would finally see God overcome their

 enemies, deliver them from captivity and bring them home for good.

 **3.** God knows when the exile would end. For Christians, suffering is only temporary.

 For some it may last a life time. *If need be ye suffer a little while (I Pt. 5:10)*

 *No more sickness, death, nor sorrow for all these former things were passed away.*

***One day Jesus will take us home for good!!***

 ***F. Perfecting Grace 7***

God not only counts His people as good, He watches over them for good. He brings

 them home for good. **God makes you good.**

1. If there is one thing we’ve learned from 23 chapters of Jeremiah is God’s people are not very good.
2. Their problem: They did not have good hearts (5:23; 17:9…*the heart is deceitful…desperately wicked who can know it.)*
3. If you have ever looked at the depths of your own heart, you know it’s just as stubborn, evil and deceitful as Jeremiah’s. A bad heart is like rotten figs. It will not get ripe on its own. *Who can cure the heart?* ***If God made you, God can fix you!***
4. **You are more sinful than you can imagine!**
5. God gives you a new heart…not just the exiles from Babylon. It’s for every rotten sinner who turns by faith to Jesus Christ.
6. Returning whole heartedly to God requires more than just a change of heart or turning over a new leaf. **You need a heart transplant!! Whose heart??** When Jesus gives you His heart, you will come to know God in an intimate way. God who made your heart in the first place is waiting to give you a new heart.
7. **Give Him your heart and He’ll give you His!!**

**Grace is Amazing!!**

***From beginning to end, it is all of GRACE!!!***

**God Does It!! You Can’t!!!**