

Jeremiah 28

Chapters 27- 29 are a unit. Jeremiah tells Zedekiah and the people of Israel that they will be going into Babylonian captivity. Chapter 27 has God clearly stating that He is all-powerful and does as He wills in the affairs of men. Chapter 28 has the (false) prophet Hananiah confronting Jeremiah, in front of the leaders and the people, claiming that his message was from God and Jeremiah was wrong. Hananiah is a great example of what to look for in a false prophet.

- 1 And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying,**
- 2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.**
- 3 Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon:**
- 4 And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.**

Hananiah was the son of Azur, a Benjamite of Gibeon and a false prophet in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah. In the fourth year of his reign, B.C. 595, Hananiah withstood Jeremiah the prophet, and publicly prophesied in the temple that within two years Jeconiah and all his fellow captives with the vessels of the Lord's house, should be brought back to Jerusalem. Hananiah's prophecy was told to Jeremiah and in front of the people. He claimed to be speaking from "the LORD" and was specific in its content.

1. God has broken the power of Babylon.
2. The Temple vessels will be returned within 2 years.
3. Jeconiah will return from Babylon (with all the captives).

- 5 Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,**
- 6 Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.**

Jeremiah, also in public, said to Hananiah that he concurs, the LORD should do exactly what Hananiah spoke.

- 7 Nevertheless hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;**
- 8 The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.**

Jeremiah, knowing that Hananiah was a false prophet, reminds the people that not only he but other prophets had told the people of the coming judgment.

- 9 The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.**

Jeremiah then lays out the most basic of principles to determine which prophet is from God. That is, the prophet whose predictions come to pass is the prophet sent from God. If peace does occur, then Hananiah is the true prophet. But, if evil and pestilence and war occur then Hananiah is a false prophet and he (and others) are the true prophets.

- 10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it.**
- 11 And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.**

Hananiah doubles down on his prophecy, even taking the yoke God told Jeremiah to wear, Jeremiah 27:2, to symbolize the captivity, and broke it. Jeremiah didn't argue with Hananiah and just left.

- 12 Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the prophet, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,**
- 13 Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.**

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

God tells Jeremiah to go back to Hananiah and tell him all he has done is broken a wooden yoke. But he will be making an iron yoke instead for the people through his false prophecies.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD.

17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

Jeremiah confronts Hananiah and in no uncertain terms calls him a false prophet, guilty of making the people trust in his lies, and, as a result of leading the people in rebellion against God, he will die this year.

WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW AND LEARN CONCERNING FALSE PROPHETS?

1. Today, we have false teachers, not false prophets (although these false teachers often refer to themselves as prophets).

2 Peter 2:1 But **there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you**, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

To have a counterfeit there needs to be the true.

Ephesians 2:

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 12:

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

Apostles and Prophets were foundational gifts to the church and not to continue during the course of the church age. Today we have false teachers who:

- 1) Introduce damnable heresies.
- 2) Deny the Lord.
- 3) Lead many astray.
- 4) Truth is spoken of as evil causing many to reject truth.
- 5) Through covetousness they use feigned (artificial) words.
- 6) Their judgment might be prolonged.

2. We are warned about false prophets (the emphasis is on FALSE not prophets).

Jeremiah was warned about false prophets - Jeremiah 14:14

"Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart."

1 John 4:

1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

Today, a false teacher/prophet is primarily identified by his erroneous teaching about Jesus. They don't believe Jesus came in the flesh. What does this mean?

"John's test requires believing in the true deity and humanity of Jesus. "Has come" implies His preexistence as the eternal Son of God. Jesus stated His own preexistence when He told the Jews, "Before Abraham was born, I am" (John 8:58). Or, as John begins his gospel (John 1:1), "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

"When John states (1John 4:2) that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh," he is referring not only to His true deity, but also to His true humanity.

"Implicit in John's warning here is that the content of our theology matters greatly! The difference between a person in a false cult who is going to hell and a true believer in Jesus Christ, who is going to heaven, is largely one of theology." Steven Cole, https://www.preceptaustin.org/1_john_42_commentary

3. False teachers will arise from among us.

Hananiah was among the citizens of Judah.

Acts 20:

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Jude

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. False teachers authoritatively teach and proclaim in the name of the Lord.

Hananiah spoke boldly and publicly more than once proclaiming he was speaking for God.

Matthew 7:

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

2 Timothy 3:

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

5. False teachers shouldn't be argued with.

Jeremiah didn't argue with Hananiah, he left - Jeremiah 28:11.

"And the prophet Jeremiah went his way."

Jeremiah, as well as other prophets, had already given their messages from the LORD about the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity. In this exchange he once again shared his message and stated that we will see which prophet's message comes to pass.

Matthew 7:6

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

"Error is generally insistent and dogmatic - the more so, often, the farther it is removed from the truth. The servant of the Lord makes no reply. He has no reputation to save: he desires not to attach the people to himself by a display of words. He can afford to wait, for he knows he has the mind of the Lord, which will be verified in its own time. We simply read, "And the prophet Jeremiah went his way" (ver. 11)."

Harry Ironside, Notes on the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremiah, chaps. 27-28, 1906

"If someone isn't open to listen to you, there's no reason to continue speaking. Now this needs to be qualified -- most people will initially resist the Gospel, but here Jesus is not speaking of resistance in general but of a vicious attack against you and the Lord and His Gospel (like a swine or dog would do! As described below "dogs" in Jesus' day were not viewed as sweet little puppies!).

Here is the major point of this passage - While followers of Jesus must not be guilty of condemning anyone, we must learn to discriminate in our witness." https://www.preceptaustin.org/matthew_76

Romans 16:

- 17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.
- 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

6. The remedy is the word of God

Jeremiah was told that the answer to false prophets was the word of God - Jeremiah 23:28

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD."

There are no false prophets today, just false teachers. Thus, anyone claiming to be a prophet and having a revelation/message from God should be immediately dismissed and ignored. But, in Jeremiah's time there were false prophets. So God gave some indicators of a true prophet and a false prophet. One of the main requirements is the prophecy had to come to pass.

Deuteronomy 18:

- 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?
- 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

This is why Jeremiah, in verse 6 of this chapter, said: **"Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place."** He said if Hananiah's prophecy is from God it will come to pass. If it is not from God it will not come to pass.

Since there are no prophets today, we don't need the corroboration of a fulfilled prophecy. We need the Bible!

2 Timothy 3:

- 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
- 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Timothy 4:

- 1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;
- 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
- 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
- 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.