

UNDER ATTACK OR UNDER JUDGMENT?



The Chaldean army surrounded Jerusalem and was tightening its grip.

In the palace there was still plenty of food. But all across the city people were starving.

The prophets kept bringing good news to the nobles of the land.

“God will deliver us from this siege! The enemy who is attacking us will soon be turned back!”

But there was one prophet who struck a sour note.

“Jerusalem is under the judgment of God! The Chaldeans will not be turned back. This city is about to be destroyed! Turn your hearts to the Lord! Repent of your vanity and hardness of heart!”

The nobles and religious leaders of Jerusalem were so angered by Jeremiah’s prophecy that they had him sent to the dungeon.



Jeremiah’s prophecy was the only true word from heaven.

**Jerusalem was under the judgment of God.
The people refused to repent, and the city fell.**

"Christianity is under attack!" is the message we hear today.

"Our Christian way of life is threatened by a hostile world."

But another voice can be heard amid the shouting.

"We are not under attack. We are under the judgment of God!"

While we are busy seeking to preserve our traditions the Lord is calling us to...

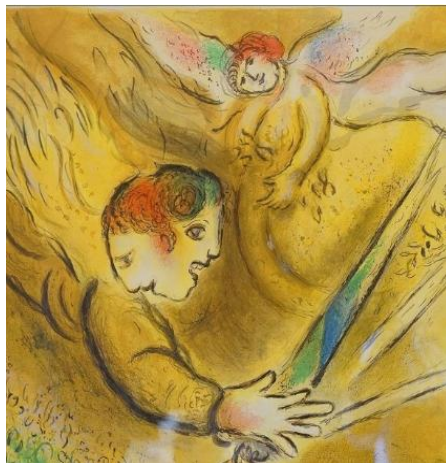
.... search our hearts and repent of our vanity and hardness of heart, our lack of mercy!



And if we refuse to listen and repent?

If we refuse to repent, we may find God dealing with us as he dealt with Jerusalem of old.

For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will do right and entrust their souls to a faithful Creator. (1 Peter 4)



Prayer: Holy Lord, help us to differentiate attacks against us from judgment for our hardness of heart. Forgive us for being more committed to promoting our way of life, our favorite politicians, our security, our values, our us vs. them attitude, over being your disciples and obeying your gospel. Help us to see that our vanity, our nationalist pride, our combativeness, our coldness of heart will not draw your favor upon us, but rather your judgment. Lord help us to weep for the suffering our hardness of heart is unleashing on this world, and to turn to you and do what you ask us to, even if it means the wrath of the religious. Better their judgment than yours. Amen.

Message: Richard E. Bieber 2020
Featured Artist: Marc Chagall

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WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN