

ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS (Jeremiah 6:16)

I. The request.

- A. Jeremiah ask the people to stand in the way and see.
 - 1. It is as if a traveler has come to an intersection with several different paths from which to choose.
 - 2. He needs to stop and see which is the right way.
- B. God wanted His people to find which way was His and travel on it.
- C. God has a way for His people today.
 - 1. Isaiah prophesied of it a long time ago (Isaiah 35:8).
 - 2. Jesus called it the narrow way (Matthew 7:13-14).
- D. To get on this road we must stop and ask how to do so.
 - 1. Everyone we read about in the New Testament had to do some things in order to get on it.
 - 2. Many had to ask, "What must we do?"
 - 3. That question must still be asked today.
- E. The request is still being made (Revelation 22:17).
- F. We must be careful which road we choose because there are many from which to choose.
 - 1. I read just the other day about a tennis player from Serbia who was going to a tournament.
 - 2. He pulled into Carlsbad, NM, 764 miles away from the site of the tournament in Carlsbad, CA.
 - 3. We must be careful which road we choose or we will end up somewhere other than where we want to be.
- G. God requests us to seek His way and there are markings for it.
 - 1. His way has Jesus as the Head (Ephesians 1:22-23).
 - 2. His way has the blood of Jesus as the only source of salvation (Hebrews 13:12; Revelation 1:5).
 - 3. His way has one church (Colossians 1:18).
 - 4. His way attests to the inspiration of the scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16).
 - 5. His way attests to the reality of heaven and hell (John 14:1-3; Matthew 25:41).
- H. These are few of the markings of the way to heaven that cannot be tampered with if one wants to reach the destination of heaven.

II. The reason.

- A. God was looking out for the souls of the Jews, calling them back to His way.
 - 1. This was the way of faith in Him.
 - 2. It had been walked on by Moses, Joshua, David and all the other men and women of faith who were their forefathers.
- B. This was the way of safety for them that would have kept them out of harm's way.
- C. The reason God wants us on His road is that it is the good way where rest for our souls is found.

- D. It is a good way because of the life that is lead on that road.
 - 1. There is no better life than the Christian life.
 - 2. It is a life of peace in the midst of storm, joy in the face of crisis and happiness in the presence of persecution.
 - 3. No other way can make these claims.
- E. Not only that it is the only place where rest for one's soul can be found.
 - 1. The reason for that is it is the only road that leads to Jesus
 - 2. Matthew 11:28-30.
- F. God's commands are all for our good.
 - 1. We lead better lives when living for Him.
 - 2. If there was no heaven to gain or hell to shun, this life would still be the best life there is.
- G. When we walk on the road laid out by God there is aid from Him.
 - 1. Hebrews 13:5.
 - 2. 1 Peter 5:7.

III. The response.

- A. Sadly, the Jews responded, "We will not walk therein."
- B. They refused to walk in the old paths but continued on their way of idolatry, murder and covetousness.
- C. In our day, there are those Christians who refuse to hold to the "old Jerusalem gospel."
 - 1. This is the message that came forth out of Jerusalem about a saving Christ whose blood washes away sins and allows people entrance into His church.
 - 2. That exclusive message is not wanted by many because it keeps people out who refuse to obey it.
 - 3. It is a restrictive message that requires faithful obedience that many do not want to give.
- D. There are Christians today who say we will not walk in that way and the church of our Lord is hurting in many areas because of it.

IV. The result.

- A. For the Jews, the result was physical oppression and captivity.
 - 1. 6:22-23.
 - 2. This is exactly what happened (2 Chronicles 36:16-20).
- B. For the Christian it will result in loss of spiritual life and eternal separation from God (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
- C. This is easily avoided by simply following the old paths that lead one to the church of Christ through being washed by the blood of Jesus in baptism.