

PROPHECY SMOOTH THINGS

– *JEREMIAH 26.* – *AUGUST 6.* –

"The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear?"
– **Psa. 27:1.**

OUR LAST STUDY related to the time of King Josiah and his reformation. At about that time the Prophet Jeremiah began to speak in the name of the Lord. Josiah was succeeded by his son, who proved himself another bad son of a good father. And, by the way, we remark here that between the ages of twelve and eighteen would appear to be the time when the majority of boys reach some mental decision respecting the future which has much to do with their after lives. So far as we remember, the majority of notably great men have confessed to the reaching of decision of character during this period. Likewise it is said that the majority of criminals take their start in evil-doing at this early age.

It has been remarked also that the disturbance in Russia leading up to the Douma was largely the work of young people, pupils in the higher schools, male and female. We urge again upon parents and guardians the importance of this period in human life and the wisdom of giving proper care and counsel that the blossoming manhood and womanhood may be directed in proper channels, that they may become a blessing to themselves and all with whom they come in contact.

PROPHECY AGAINST JERUSALEM

Under the evil rule of King Jehoiakim, Jeremiah, under the Lord's guidance, foretold the coming destruction of the city and temple. The effect of such a prophecy should have led the people to self-examination, prayer and fasting, and a full return to loyalty to God. But according to Jeremiah's account it was a time of great moral delinquency. He pictures a terrible condition of the people – a

prevalence of dishonesty, of slander, murder, adultery, false swearing and open licentiousness.

The priests led the people in an angry attack upon the Prophet. He was arrested, charged with speaking evil [R4857 : page 220] of his city, in declaring its forthcoming destruction. How foolish! Could merely the Prophet's declaration bring the thing to pass? And if he were the Lord's Prophet could their assault upon him turn aside the Divine intention? But the spirit of sin is not the spirit of a sound mind, as is the Spirit of the Lord.

It is noteworthy that it was the priests and the false prophets who, on this occasion, called for the death of a true Prophet. And alas! this has not infrequently been the case. Nearly all the persecutions of Jesus and His Apostles and His followers throughout the Age have come from professed servants of God. What heart searching this should bring to everyone of us lest, peradventure, we should be similarly overtaken in a fault and "be found fighting against God," and should bring upon ourselves severe condemnation. No doubt these religious teachers twisted their reasoning faculties to such an extent that they considered their course a just one – possibly they even thought that it was love on their part for the people; or perhaps they persuaded themselves that they were moved in their persecution, not by hatred, envy, malice, but by love for God. At all events their course shows what an easy matter self-deception is, and [R4857 : page 221] their mistake bids us beware and scrutinize carefully our own conduct.

As Jeremiah told them of the time of trouble nearing, so some of God's people today are declaring that the greatest time of trouble ever known in the world's history is probably but a few years off – that it will mean the most terrible anarchy, the only relief from which will be the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom in power and great glory. And there are some today so foolish as to think that the trouble can be put off or avoided altogether by silencing those who call attention to the Word of the Lord. (Daniel 12:1.) Let us not be found fighting against

God. He is mighty and will prevail, and all of His purposes, He assures us, will surely be accomplished.

Jeremiah impressed the jurors – the princes of his people. He reaffirmed every word that he had uttered and declared himself ready to die if need be; but he urged reformation. The princes, more just than the priests and false prophets, acquitted Jeremiah, although his words condemned them. So it has been at various times in the history of the truth. If it had not been for the moderation of the civil power many a reformer would have been put to death. Note, for instance, Martin Luther's protection by the Landgrave of Hesse.

REFORMER ANTHONY COMSTOCK

So today. For years Mr. Anthony Comstock has been fighting valiantly, almost single handed, along the lines of social purity. Realizing to what an extent vice is spread by vile pictures and by vile literature, this man has given much of his life to their suppression. How much good he has accomplished no one in this life may ever know; how many boys and girls have been shielded no one may know; but all the same a noble man has fought a noble fight against impurity. Of course, such a man, or any man who stands for truth and righteousness, is sure to have enemies and malicious slanderers who would gladly see him dead. It is said that Mr. Comstock has effected the destruction of many hundred pounds of vile, moral-poisoning literature and many thousand pounds of electro-plate matter prepared to print more.

All cannot be reformers and prophets of righteousness to the same extent as Jeremiah, Luther and Comstock. Every child of God, however, faithful to his consecration, is a servant of righteousness and, proportionately, should be a foe to sin in its every form. Such must be prepared for the finger of scorn and the lip of sarcasm and slander. Such may take to themselves our text and rejoice saying, "The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; whom shall I fear!"

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