

Return, O Faithless Sons

by Doug Kashorek

In the back seat of my parents' car on a hot day when I was young, I bit off the bottom of my ice cream cone and was enduring a tirade from my dad about how stupid that was when we heard a crunch. My little brother had just bitten off the bottom of his! This is where Judah is on the eve of successive waves of a Babylonian captivity. Just over a century before, God's people had watched the Northern Kingdom fall to Assyria because of their sin and at that time had narrowly escaped destruction in the time of Hezekiah. Yet, they continued to bite off the bottom of their cone.

More serious than melted ice cream on the upholstery of a vehicle without air conditioning, God addresses His people's behavior as unfaithfulness due to sexual sin in the most heinous ways and finds the sin of Judah worse than Israel's because the Southern Kingdom did not learn from what happened to them. So, God has Jeremiah declare "*toward the north*" to a people that are no more, "*Return, faithless Israel.*" If they would repent, God would forgive and restore "*one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion*" (Jeremiah 3).

So few? Yet, isn't that where we are today in the Lord's church? Experiencing tremendous conversion growth in the middle decades of the last century, we've seen a great dropping off in each successive generation since WWII. Though it seems that the church is doing well right now, this is due to the sheer number of Baby Boomers who make up the majority attendance in our assemblies ... and they are aging. Though we've experienced that "*the hills are a delusion, the orgies on the mountains,*" we've not trusted that "*the LORD God is the salvation of Israel*" and bitten off the bottom of our cones instead.

Our forgiving God's message of hope to them and to us in such a similar time is "*Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness.*" Will we? For our hope and future?

AM "Return, O Faithless Sons" from Jeremiah 3:21-23

PM "Make Haste" from Psalm 70:4-5

Kids' Corner

According to 2 Thessalonians 3:10, what should the idle (lazy) not be allowed to do?

- A. work
- B. play
- C. eat
- D. watch TV

Tell the correct answer to Abby Shields (and wish her a happy birthday this week) for a prize.