

" . . . and cast it into the fire that was upon the hearth until all the roll was consumed by the fire . . . yet they were not afraid nor rent their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants at these words. Nevertheless Elnathan, Deliah, and Gamariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll but he would not hear them . . . Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah after that the king had burned the roll and the words that ~~the~~ Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying Take thee again another roll and write in it all the former words . . . which Jehoiakim, king of Judah has burned, and thou shalt say unto him, Thus saith the Lord . . . he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David . . . I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity . . . But they hearkened not "

This is a very interesting incident in the latter years of the history of Judah, just a few years before the Babylonians came and took the people off into captivity. Here we have Jeremiah who was God's instrument. Jeremiah whom God had appointed to give the Word of God to the people. He gave them the message which he had received from the Lord.

In those days God spoke directly through his prophets. He did that until the entire Bible was finished. Now we have the complete Word of God and therefore he wants us to study this Book and to get our truth from it. He wants us to apply it to situations as they come up. Rarely if ever does He speak to anyone in this age directly because he has given us here the principles that he wants us to apply in our lives and activities.

But at that time only part of the Bible had been given as yet and so God was still continuing to give portions of it. And this portion he gave through Jeremiah. It was written on this scroll, read to the people, and the nobles heard of it. They listened to it and they thought this was something that something should be done about. We should try to apply these matters to our hearts and lives. So the nobles said, Let's read it to the king. They took it in and read it to the king.

Here was Jehoiakim with this authority, with this opportunity to call upon the people to repent and turn to the Lord and follow the exhortations that God had given through the mouth of Jeremiah. But Jehoiakim took the opposite attitude. Jehoiakim did not repent. He did not turn from his sin. He did not try to bring the nation back to complete loyalty to God. But instead he thought he could destroy the Word of God. So Jehoiakim took the scroll and cut it with a pen knife. As they read he cut off and threw it into the fire! Then he tried to get hold of Jeremiah, Baruch in order to kill them, but he was not able to find them. It wasn't many years before Jehoiakim met his death and God kept Jeremiah for a number of later years to carry on His service.