

**Jeremiah 20-21**  
**When You Don't Think You'll Survive**  
J.D. Farag

Tonight, Jeremiah, Chapters 20 and 21, two chapters. I know I say this all the time, but whatever. I'm just really looking forward to what the Lord has for us tonight, two very interesting chapters, as we're going to see.

So why don't we pray, and we'll ask God to bless our time together in His Word. If you would, join with me.

Father in Heaven, thank You so much. Lord, we are so grateful to You, so thankful. Lord, we're so thankful to You for this time that we have together on a Thursday night and to be able to have those all over the world, literally, joining us online as well.

Lord, this represents for us that night where we can just put aside all the stress and all the cares and the affairs of our busy lives and come to this beautiful place and just open up our Bibles and open up our hearts and open up our eyes and open up our ears and just receive from You.

So Lord, we're just going to posture ourselves before You tonight as a needy people who are hungry and thirsty for You, knowing that only You can satiate that hunger and that thirst that we have.

So Lord fill us afresh, we pray, baptize us anew, pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us, minister to us, Lord, especially those who are hurting and discouraged and weary. Lord, strengthen and encourage. Lord, we ask You for this in Jesus' name. Amen and Amen.

All right, so again, these two chapters are very interesting, and this for a number of reasons, not the least of which is Jeremiah's raw emotions, and namely that of not thinking he would survive the torment and the torture, all because of the call that God had on his life to speak this unpopular truth.

That's actually an understatement. And he couldn't get out of it because this was God's call on his life. Now, as we're about to see, he's going to have a couple of meltdowns, I mean, breakdowns, two of them.

And are you okay with that? But God sees him through. So I hope you're going to be encouraged, as I am. I, today, in preparing to teach these two chapters, was just greatly encouraged by just the honesty, for lack of a better word. I am so glad that God recorded this in the pages of Holy Writ for us all of these generations later to be reading it, hearing it, and taking it to heart.

So you ready? All right, *verse 1*.

**"Now Pashhur the son of Immer, the priest who was also chief governor in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things."**

Apparently, he wasn't there. He just heard about it. What did he hear about? Oh, remember two weeks ago when Jeremiah was told to go to the Potter's House?

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This was just two weeks ago, by the way, in Chapter 19. And he was told to get this clay vessel and take it to the Valley of Hinnom and break it there, and prophesy visually to the people of Judah and say to them, you are this clay vessel, and you will be broken, and God's judgment is coming, and you will be taken captive by the Babylonians.

And so apparently, this guy who, powerful guy, he's not only a priest, he's also the chief governor. That'd be like being a pastor and an elected official at the same time, sort of, but anyway...

So he hears about - I mean, it's all over. I mean, everybody's talking about what Jeremiah just did. Can you believe the nerve of this guy? So what's he going to do?

Well, *verse 2*, **"Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the Lord."**

Okay, when you read verse 2, you really don't get the full picture because first, when it says that he was struck, he was whipped. He was given a lashing, a whipping on the back, some suggest 40 lashes. And then if that weren't bad enough, and again, we have this image in our minds. He was put in the stocks.

Now, if you're anything like me and I suspect that you are, you've got Jeremiah now, you know, those wood... So he's got his hands in the top part and his feet are, you know, in these stocks in the bottom. No, they had this torture mechanism by which they would bind you up and twist you up and stretch you out, and torture you.

Okay, you know how when you get that cramp in your foot? I mean, I have, as you know, I've shared this with you very openly. I have - if I get a hangnail, I'm like crying and praying in my prayer language, and just, you know, crying out to God. I have a hangnail.

When I go to the dentist, he cannot give me enough Novocaine. And he knows: Oh, here's JD, bring out the box. We need the stock and... Because, I mean, even before he starts drilling, I am already in pain. I have no tolerance for pain.

I mean, I'm so sensitive, I'm so sensitive. (Chuckling) I mean, seriously, I'm so sensitive when it comes to physical pain. My wife, on the other hand, the total opposite. Three of our four children she gave birth to naturally, no epidural. I was in pain for her instead of her.

And I get one of these cramps - by the way, I learned the hard way that if you pull your toes up, it goes away. Did you know that? But how painful is it when you pinch a nerve, and you get this cramp in your foot?

Why are you looking at me like that? You get this, right? Well, that's what they would do to them. That's what they did to Jeremiah. They put him in these stocks, and they stretched him and twisted him so that he was in agonizing pain. And then if that weren't bad enough, we have this detail here that it was **"in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the House of the Lord."**

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Now, the reason I'm going into such detail here is because it's going to make some sense when we see what Jeremiah does as a result of this. In other words, you almost can't blame him.

But the positioning of where he was in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the House of the Lord, this was in full public view. So that people are mocking him, spitting on him, ridiculing him, and he's being tortured, probably crying in just, I mean, unbearable pain. And keep in mind, he just got whipped maybe 40 times.

And this is what this Pashur does to him, *verse 3*. **"And it happened on the next day that Pashur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. (Sigh of relief) Then Jeremiah said to him, [I'm so sorry, I won't ever prophesy again] [Please don't do that to me] [No] [This is what Jeremiah says to him after being tortured]**

**"The Lord has not called your name Pashur [Which means peace on every side] but Magor-Missabib [Which means fear on every side]**

**For thus says the Lord [Verse 4]: 'Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends, and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes shall see it. I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon and slay them with the sword.**

**Moreover [Verse 5] I will deliver all the wealth of this city, all its produce, and all its precious things; all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them, and carry them to Babylon.**

**'And you, Pashur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom [Listen] you have prophesied lies.'**

Oh! (Chuckling) All right.

I would venture to say, and I think you would agree, that this is not at all what Pashur was expecting when he released him and took him out of those stocks. He thought for sure he's learned his lesson. And we're going to put an end to this guy taking these clay vessels and these visual prophecies and prophesying doom and gloom.

Oh, he's prophesying lies; no, actually, you're prophesying lies.

Keep in mind, he's a priest. So the message you're preaching, Priest, is false. You're lying to the people.

Ah, it's not going to happen.

Oh, it's going to happen. It's going to happen. I'm speaking the truth. What you're doing is speaking lies.

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Now, *verse 7*, we take a terrible turn. This is Jeremiah now, privately between him and the Lord. **"O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded. You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily. Everyone mocks me.**

**For when I spoke, [*Verse 8*] I cried out; I shouted, "Violence and plunder!" Because the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision [*And here's that word again*] daily."**

[Not weekly, not monthly, not yearly] Daily. Every day, all day, every day, day-in, day-out, nothing but mocking. And now Jeremiah's crying out.

And this is why, again, I wanted to get into the detail of what happened to him because you got to know that he's probably still in a lot of physical pain from what he just went through, but even more so, the emotional pain of what he just went through.

Now, it doesn't excuse it, but it might in some way explain it when he basically says to the Lord, You tricked me. You induced me, You seduced me, and prevailed. And had I known when You called me to this, had I known that this would be my daily lot: Derision daily, mocking daily; if I'd have known that, I wouldn't have agreed.

Like you didn't really have a choice, Jeremiah.

But he's like, You - why didn't You tell me?

Well, I tried. I told you, Chapter 1 that I'm going to put My words in your mouth, and you're going to speak all that I command you to speak. And I kind of already went over the fine print with you and the calling on your life, that it was not going to be received, and that this was going to happen. I kind of forewarned you.

But here's what was happening. He's prophesying, and they're mocking him because the prophecies aren't happening, so they're ridiculing him and mocking him.

And if this sounds a little bit like *2 Peter Chapter 3*, that's because this is like *2 Peter Chapter 3* where the apostle Peter says that in the last days there will be mockers who will scoff and mock and ridicule you.

What are they going to ridicule you about?

Oh, you've been doing these Prophecy Updates for 16 years. And yet, where is He? You've been telling us for 16 years that the rapture's going to happen, but it hasn't happened, and everything just keeps going on as it always has before.

So they're mocking you. Oh, here he comes again. What are you going to prophesy now? Doom and gloom? The end is here? Come on, it's not the end.

And he was on the receiving end daily of this mocking and this derision. And he wants out, and that's what we see next in *verse 9*. **"Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name."**

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**But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones. I was weary of holding it back, and I could not."**

I could not "not." I know that's not proper English probably, but... I could not shut up. I could not hold back. Here's this holy heartburn, this burning.

Yes, this is hard. I can't go on. I'm not going to make it through. I'm not going to survive. But yes, this is hard, but, you know what would be harder? Trying to keep it in and shut it up. I cannot.

And I realize that. Yes, this is hard, but it would be infinitely harder. I just cannot. I cannot shut up. I cannot hold back.

You know what's happening here, right? He's trying to quit. He's like, God, I quit. Here's my resignation. And God's like, really? I didn't know that servants or slaves could resign. I didn't know that you could tenure your resignation.

Nice try, though. Jeremiah, it's okay; I get it. I know that you just went through a very traumatizing and torturing experience, but I've got a calling on your life and the gifts and the callings of God are without repentance.

And when God calls you, you can't not. Well, you could try. You can try, but no, that fire will burn inside of you because of the calling that God has on you, and you won't be able to stop.

And God's going to sustain you because God's callings are God's enablings. God will empower you to do that which He's called you to do. He packages the enabling with the calling. Let me flip that around. God will never call you or command you to do anything that He will not also empower you by the power of the Holy Spirit to do.

He can't. He can't not. That's inconsistent with who He is because if you think about it, then He would be party to our disobedience, and God can't do that. He's always going to create an environment in our lives that is conducive to our obedience.

Because see, God wants us in the middle of His will more than we even ourselves want to be in His will.

So He's always going to direct us, and protect us, and guide us, and provide for us in that direction that He would have us to go. Because He wants us walking according to His will, His ways, and His calling. And you try.

Now, I have to confess something here, and I asked the Lord about this today. Well, I shouldn't say I asked the Lord. Um, I've tried to quit so many times.

Like Sunday: I tried to quit on Sunday. Not this last Sunday, maybe it was maybe a couple of weeks ago.

But no, there's been times where I'm just like, God, I just - I can't. I understand. I mean, it's just, you know, here's an illustration. Bear with me.

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So when you're standing, and somebody is just leaning on you all the time, all day, every day, daily. The thing about daily, it's daily. I know that is deeply profound, but every day someone is just leaning on you.

Now, initially, you're still standing strong. But after a while, you get worn down and you get weary. And that's where Jeremiah's at.

And notice, as we're going to see, God does not fault him for this. God does not rebuke him and "Come on, Jeremiah! What's the matter with you? Buck up, buttercup."

No, there's none of that.

What happened? Whoa! Okay, yes, Lord, speak; your servant is listening. Wow! That was weird. I'm not going to read too much into that. Is that a sign? Keep moving; move on.

Okay, *verse 10*. [*I'm afraid to look*] **"For I heard many mocking: "Fear on every side!"**

Here comes Mr. Fear On Every Side, Mr. Doom and Gloom, Mr. Prophecy Update. What are you going to prophesy now? Come on, let's hear it.

**"Report," they say, "and we will report it!"** [*Mocking*]

And then he says this. This is interesting; he says, **"All my acquaintances..."** [Acquaintances?] Jeremiah has no friends! They're just acquaintances.

**"Watched for my stumbling, saying, "Perhaps he can be induced;"** [*Tricked*]

[Again, there's that same word.]

**then we will prevail against him, and we will take our revenge on him."**

Oh, isn't this interesting? They're waiting for him to stumble, and then they're going to pounce. Let's just wait. We'll watch the livestream. And as soon as he misquotes a verse or he quotes an unauthenticated source, or how about this one? He calls out someone by name.

Oh, by the way, the Apostle Paul did that. And they're just waiting for him to do something like that so they can just pounce on him, prevail against him, mete out revenge on him.

Now, *verse 11* - Buckle up. This is the same Jeremiah that just moments ago wanted to quit, accused God of tricking him into the calling, and now, *verse 11*, he says, **"But the Lord is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.**

**But, O Lord of hosts, [*Verse 12*] You who test the righteous, and see the mind and heart, let me see Your vengeance on them for I have pleaded my cause before You."**

Yeah, Jeremiah, go!

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And then *verse 13*; listen to this. **"Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord!"**

Wait a minute; is this the same guy that just wanted to quit, accused God of tricking him? Praise to the Lord! Sing to the Lord! **"For He has delivered the life of the poor from the hand of evildoers."**

All right, we're good. Oh, how I wish the chapter ended there, but it doesn't. This is going to be short-lived, and for a reason and good reason because what we're going to see next should give every single one of us hope, and I'll explain. Just hang in there with me.

*Verse 14*, **"Cursed be the day in which I was born!"**

What? Wait a minute; can we go back? Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord! Cursed be the day in which I was born.

Come on, I know we laugh. Why? Why do we laugh? Because we do that. We go back and forth. We're up and down.

Praise the Lord!

God, why was I even born? God, just... I want to die.

Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord!

Next verse: I want to die. I quit.

Next verse: Praise the Lord! The Lord is good. Who is like unto the Lord?

Cursed be the day in which was born.

What is going on? He's having another meltdown. I asked, Are you okay with this?

And that's a question. Here's another question maybe better asked.

Why is God letting us in on Jeremiah's private prayer journal?

Man, I'm so thankful. I would never want you to see my prayer journal that I've been keeping for many, many years. There have been some entries - That's all I'm going to say. I'm not going to keep going any more.

But I got many passages in my prayer journal that read like this. Oh, God, I can't go on anymore. This is too hard. Everything is against me. There's - Lord, I quit. Here's my resignation. Cursed be the day in which... It would be better if I was never born. Curse the day that I was born.

**"Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me! Let the man be cursed who brought news to my father, saying, "A male child has been born to you!" Making him very glad."**

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This is a cultural dynamic, by the way. In that day, even modern day in the Middle East, if you've got a boy, see, that's a worker. That's - they carry on the family name. It's a boy! Good news! It's a boy!

And he's saying let that - not the curse on the man, but the curse on the news that I was going to be born. It gets worse.

**“And [Verse 16] let that man be like the cities which the Lord overthrew and did not relent. Let him hear the cry in the morning and the shouting at noon because he did not kill me from the womb, that my mother might have been my grave and her womb always enlarged with me.”**

You know what he's saying? I wish I would have been a miscarriage, or at least I wish I was stillborn.

**"Why [Verse 18] did I come forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"**

Boy, that's - that's rock bottom, isn't it? Cursing the day you were born. Wishing you were never born.

How is this supposed to encourage us?

And again, back to our question before we move to Chapter 21, why do we even have this in our Bibles? Isn't that TMI? I really don't want to know this about Jeremiah.

I kind of liken it to David.

Remember, for those of you that were part of our study through 1 and 2 Samuel in particular? Oh, man, those were - there were some times where I'm just like, man, I don't want to know that about David. That is way TMI.

I don't want to know about his scheming, evil plan and plot to have Uriah killed because he got his wife Bathsheba pregnant. And I don't want to know about - and then he gives Joash, his military commander a - he gives Uriah a letter, a sealed letter to give to the military commander that's basically his death sentence, instructions to have Uriah put out on the front line, then pull back everyone else so he gets killed. And it worked.

And then here comes - Again, I don't want to know this, but God wants us to know this. God wants us to know this about someone like David. God wants us to know this about someone like Jeremiah.

Why?

Because he's like us.

It's not about how bad David was. It's about how good God always is, no matter how bad we are or how bad it is.



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Okay, so Jeremiah's down. He wishes he was never born.

So why do I need to know that, and how can I be encouraged by that?

Because God is going to see him through, as we're going to see next.

And I actually do want to know this about Jeremiah because it makes me feel a little bit better about my own struggles, my own emotional ups and downs. And don't look at me as spiritual because you have them too.

And here's this man mightily used of God, and he's cursing the day he was born.

And God wants us to know that. Not because we can see how down Jeremiah is, but we're going to see how good God always is when we, like Jeremiah, have hit rock bottom.

Have you been there?

I've been there more times than I care to remember, let alone talk about, where I'm just like, God... I'm not going to make it. This...this... this is how it ends, man.

Why don't You just put me out of my misery? You know, it would have been better if I wasn't even born actually.

That's how bad it is.

And God is so patient, God is so loving, God is so merciful, God is so long-suffering. I like that word. You know what long-suffering means? Again, deeply profound; it means he suffers long, long-suffering.

Because again, conspicuously absent from anything in the narrative is any mention whatsoever of God being disappointed or disenchanted with His prophet, whom He called. Not at all.

What's the point?

Here's the point. We, like Jeremiah; Jeremiah, like us, the best among us can have moments like this.

But God. *Chapter 21*. **"The word [Verse 1] which came to Jeremiah from the Lord when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Melchiah..."**

This is a different Pashhur. This is a common name. It was a common name in that time.

**"... and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, saying, [Verse 2] "Please inquire of the Lord for us, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon makes war against us. Perhaps the Lord will deal with us according to all His wonderful works, that the king may go away from us."**

Okay, let me see if I got this straight. So, oh, now you want to hear what I have to say? Oh, now you're coming to me? Oh, now you're calling me? Oh, now you want to know what the Lord would say?

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Well, please inquire of the Lord for us.

Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonians: By the way, keep in mind that the Babylonian captivity and invasion of Judah took place over a period of time in stages. It wasn't just a one-time thing.

So this was ongoing. And here's this king, and he's getting Jeremiah, this prophet?

Wait a minute. When did this happen?

Oh, so glad you asked. You asked, right? 20 years later.

Wait, you mean to tell me that from Chapter 20 to Chapter 21, 20 years have gone by?

Yeah.

Come on, that's messing me up.

Well, Jeremiah is not in chronological order.

So now the question becomes: Why would God package together Chapter 20 in the canon of Scripture, inspired, in the Word of God, why would He package Chapter 21 that takes place 20 years later with Chapter 20, where Jeremiah is having this meltdown, two of them, this breakdown, two of them; why is...it's like that doesn't fit.

Oh, yes, it does. It appears that Jeremiah made it.

And not only did Jeremiah - Jeremiah, wow, so good to see you! Haven't seen you since chapter 20, 20 years ago.

I remember - You remember that, when you were, like wanting God to kill you and cursing the day you were born, and you wanted to quit; you couldn't, but you tried? Ha! Here you are 20 years later! And look at you now!

Wow! Oh, I get it.

You might be here tonight or watching online, and you're still in Chapter 20. I want to encourage you. You know what comes after 20? Again, I know, deeply profound. 21; 21 comes after 20.

And isn't it interesting? I wonder - I just wonder when they call for Jeremiah, could you imagine the email that went out?

Hey, we need to... We need Jeremiah.

No, not Jeremiah. You mean the guy that we put in the stocks and tortured, and spit on and mocked and ridiculed, that was prophesying? And we called him and accused him of being... Yeah, that Jeremiah. You want us to - you want us to get him?

Yeah.

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And you want him to inquire of the Lord?

Yeah.

And you want him to prophesy what the Lord would say?

Yeah.

Oh, I guess Jeremiah did survive. And not only did Jeremiah survive, but here he is 20 years later. And now they're coming to him?

He was going to them.

How many times did God command him go to the gate where the people are because they're apparently not coming to you? You don't have any friends anyway. Nobody's coming to your church. You have acquaintances, but they've all blocked you on social media.

So go to them and proclaim and prophesy this message that they're not going to receive. In fact, not only are they not going to receive it, but they're going to reject it and they're going to ridicule you and mock you for it.

And now they want to talk to him? Now they want him to inquire of the Lord?

And isn't this interesting? Maybe **"He'll deal with us according to all of His wonderful works."**

I wonder if he has in mind what God did when the Assyrians invaded. You remember that? And Hezekiah was king. And 185,000 Assyrians had besieged the city.

And God's like, I'll take care of it.

You will?

Yeah. Don't worry. I'll take care of this.

Okay. When?

Tonight.

What are you going to do?

You'll see.

And He sends a no-named angel. This is an intern, not even an archangel. He just sends a no-named angel, go down, and 185,000 Syrians are killed. I guess God's going to take care of it. You wake up in the morning and look out over the city walls and here's the Assyrians, and they're dead. I think this is what he's hoping will happen again with the Babylonians. Maybe God will do what he did with the Assyrians.

So maybe King Zedekiah is hoping that God will do what He did for King Hezekiah. It's not going to happen.

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**“Then Jeremiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: “Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who besiege you outside the walls, and I will assemble them in the midst of this city.**

**I Myself [Verse 5] will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger and fury and great wrath.”**

Wow! See, I totally wouldn't have said that. I would have said - this is what I would have said. Thus says the Lord: Told you so 20 years ago. But you mocked me and tortured me, and now you come to me? Okay.

No, not Jeremiah. Conspicuously absent from Jeremiah is any mention of him being vindicated. This isn't about him. Remember now, Jeremiah loves these people. He wept over these people. He pleaded with God for these people. He begged God, how many times for these people? He took no delight whatsoever in the judgment that was coming on his people. He's not vindicated. I'm sure he's grieved.

*Verse 6, "I will strike the inhabitants of this city, [Again, this is what the Lord is saying through the Prophet Jeremiah] both man and beast; they shall die of a great pestilence. [That's interesting]*

**“And afterward,” [Verse 7] says the Lord, “I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence and the sword and the famine, [You will?] [Yeah] into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, [Oh] into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life, and he shall strike them with the edge of the sword. He shall not spare them, or have pity or mercy.”**

**"Now you shall say to this people, [Verse 8] ‘Thus says the Lord: “Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.**

**He [Verse 9] who remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but he who goes out and defects [Or surrenders] to the Chaldeans who besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be as a prize to him.”**

Before we go to *verse 10*, I want to just make one comment on this. You want to save your life? You have to lose it. This is the paradox. He's given them a choice.

Do you see this?

If you try to fight and stay in the city and take your stand and fight this fight, you're going to die. But if you go out and you surrender to the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, your life will be spared. That's your choice. It's your choice. I've already made My choice.

Now, this seems really harsh, right?

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Listen to *verse 10*. **"For I have set My face against this city for adversity and not for good," says the Lord. "It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."**

*Romans 8:31*: We love this verse, right? **"If God is for you, who could be against you?"**

It works both ways. If God is against you, who can be for you?

You know what God is saying here is your problem is not the Babylonians. Your problem is Me. You're fighting against Me. And that will not end well.

I don't know how else to say it. Your problem is a God problem. Your problem is not the Babylonians. The Babylonians are the instrument in My hands because you got a God problem. Your problem is God, and when your problem is God, then God becomes the solution to the problem. And that's what he's saying.

Now this is important. Please don't miss this because this is why it is that many people have considerable difficulty with chapters and places like this in God's Word, particularly in the Old Testament. This is why pastors won't touch this with a ten-foot pole.

Because it gives people the impression that God is not just. God is unfair. That this is disproportionate. God is going to have them killed, and He's given them this choice. I mean, it's kind of a lose/lose choice.

So A: I can try to stay and fight, stand my ground, make my city great again.

Sorry. Oops.

And if I make that choice, I'm going to die because I'm going up against God who's already judged. And that's "A."

B: I do have another choice. The other choice is - there's only two choices. The other choice is I could surrender, and I'll be taken captive by the Babylonians.

Is there Door Number 3?

No, it's either Door Number 1 or Door Number 2. It's your choice.

Well, that seems kind of harsh.

Well, wait a minute. My judgments are just. If I recall, if I'm not mistaken. I gave you how many years to repent? I sent My prophet Jeremiah to you, who pleaded with you and wept. And you incarcerated him and tortured him, and beat him and whipped him, and mocked him. I tried. But I'll never force Myself on you. You have free will. And I tried everything, and I stopped at nothing to get you to repent, and you refused.

In fact, do you remember what we read in previous chapters?

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I mean, it was just blatant and brazen. I mean, they told Jeremiah, Stop! We're going to kill you if you keep doing this! You keep prophesying judgment; you keep prophesying about the Babylonians.

We're going to shut you up. How about that? We're going to kill you; they had a plot to take his life. It was from his own family, his hometown.

You did that. I tried. You already sealed your fate. You already hardened your heart. You already stiffened your neck. You already made up your mind. I'm not going to force you.

One last thing, and then we'll bring the chapter to an end. I appreciate your patience with me. This is tough stuff.

I think about the Apostle Paul when he delineates between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow.

The difference?

Worldly sorrow is the sorrow of being caught. This is worldly sorrow. The Babylonians are already there.

Now we want to talk? Now you want to talk? Now you want to hear what I have to say?

That's not genuine. That's not genuine.

See, the genuine godly sorrow, that's sincere and genuine leads to genuine change and repentance. That's the difference. I mean, one might be tempted, for lack of a better word, to think that God would relent at this point.

Well, it looks like it worked. It took 20-plus, 30 years, all that Jeremiah had to go through. I mean, we're fast-forwarding from Chapter 20 to Chapter 21, if for no other reason to give us hope and encourage us like Jeremiah, hey, yeah, you're going to survive this.

Let me just - let's fast-forward, Episode 3, series, you know, Season 2, whatever.

Sorry, I had a - was that Netflix? I don't know, whatever....

Let's fast-forward and let's see what happens 20 years from now. It's like reading the end of the book.

Do you ever do that? I don't.

Do people read books anymore? I don't know.

Let's see how this ends because if Jeremiah knew that in 20 years this was going to happen, maybe it would have made it a little bit easier for him.

No, you're going to make it, Jeremiah. They're going to come to you, but here's the problem. When they do, it's going to be too late because it's not sincere, it's not genuine.

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Oh, they're sorry because the Babylonians are here. That's not genuine, that's not godly sorrow; that's worldly sorrow.

It's kind of like this: When you get pulled over.

Don't worry; I'm not going to share that story again. I'm too ashamed anyway.

But you get pulled over, and the police officer pulls you over. And I mean, I am sorry, Officer.

Really? Are you sorry that I pulled you over, that you got caught?

Yeah. Because if I was genuinely sorry, I would change how I drive. There would be repentance.

Okay, that's all I'm going to say about that. That's - I've confessed enough.

The difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. So don't think that the onus is on God here. It's not on God. This is just, this is righteous, this is fair. God has gone to great extents.

I think about in - it's got to be - is it Genesis or Exodus where He gave the Amorites - I think it was the Amorites - one of the "ites" - 400 years to repent. 400 years He gave them to repent, and they did not repent.

Perhaps I can wrap this up and finish this up this way. There will never be anyone in heaven or hell that will ever be able to honestly say that they got the short end of the stick, as it were. God's judgments are just and they're righteous, and they're true. and they're amen. God is just, and this is just.

And actually from verse 11 on through verse 14 to the end of the chapter, it kind of spills over into Chapter 22, which, Lord willing, we'll get to next week.

And it's really concerning the coming judgment on corrupt leaders. And I have to say that, you know, even Chapter 21, but especially Chapter 22, it could be read today.

And if you want to answer the same question concerning a Chapter 22, which really is a continuation of what we're going to read from verses 11 through 14, if you want to ask the question of: Why do we have that in our Bibles?

It's because it's to encourage God's people. Hey, I'm going to have the final word. All the evil, all the corruption perpetrated on people: Don't think for a second they're going to get away with it.

And that settles me, by the way. That really settles my heart.

I think about the psalmist Asaph in *Psalms 73* who, I mean, you talk about a crisis of faith, not because he didn't have faith in God, but because he had faith in God, but it seemed like God

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was turning a blind eye to the wicked who were prospering in everything they did. And here he is, righteous, "**Have I cleansed my hands in vain?**"

I mean, I'm suffering, I'm being mocked, I'm being ridiculed, I'm being incarcerated, I'm being tortured for your sake, Jesus. I'm being persecuted because of the calling You have on my life. This is my lot, my daily lot.

And I'm looking at my neighbor over here. This guy is as wicked as wicked can be. And he's pulled up in a brand-new Mercedes Benz. What's up with that? My Toyota is still in the shop.

And he's messed up about this. How is it that the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer? That's not just. That's not fair. And then he comes to his senses when he goes to the sanctuary of the Lord, and the Lord shows him a Chapter 21. This is their end.

And he goes from being envious of them to feeling sorry for them because that's how it ends. Oh, man. I'm good. The sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that awaits.

But judgment's coming and God's going to settle the score, so to speak, and God's going to have the final word. And *verse 11*, "**And concerning the house of the king of Judah, say, 'Hear the word of the Lord, O house of David! Thus says the Lord: "Execute judgment in the morning and deliver him who is plundered out of the hand of the oppressor, lest My fury go forth like fire and burn so that no one can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."**"

Listen: Judgment has already come. There's no stopping it. There is, though, something you can do.

Now, here it is again, *verse 13*. "**Behold, I am against you, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain," says the Lord, "Who say, 'Who shall come down against us? Or who shall enter our dwellings?'**"

**But [Verse 14, here's how the chapter ends] I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings," says the Lord; "I will kindle a fire in its forest, and it shall devour all things around it."**

Okay, have a nice evening. Wow!

So okay, this is what Chapter 22 is about?

Yes. So now you have to come next week. If you don't come, we'll know you don't want to hear this. Again, tough stuff.

Why do I need to know this? Why is this in my Bible?

Because this is God's way of saying, Hey, Jeremiah, the Jeremiahs of this world, judgment will come. I'm going to take care of this. You just calm down, and you leave it with Me.



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One last thing: We saw it before, we'll see it again, we saw it tonight. Jeremiah, praised God, mete out vengeance against them.

Oh, is that okay?

Absolutely it is. Because vengeance belongs to the Lord.

Now, sadly, we stop there. Vengeance belongs to the Lord; don't take matters into your own hands. Don't try to mete out vengeance yourself. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. But we leave off the other part of that. **"I will repay."**

All right! Can't wait. Isn't that - is that bad?

No.

That settles me because God is just.

We're going to see that, I think, a little bit on Sunday in the Prophecy Update about how God just settles the hearts of the battle-weary, the Jeremiahs, with this truth that hey, I'm going to take care of this. I know what they're doing to you. I know about all the torture. I know about all the whippings. I know about all the mockings. I know about all the scoffings. I know about all the ridiculings.

I'm going to have the final word. You just leave it to Me.

Okay.

You just keep doing what I've called you to do. I'll sustain you.

And there is a Chapter 21 for you.

I know it doesn't seem like it right now. It doesn't seem like you're going to make it. It does seem like this is how it ends. I'm not going to survive this.

You will. You will. You just wait. You'll see. God's going to get you through. God's going to see you through. He can't not because of who He is and how good He is, and more importantly, how much He loves you.

I was just - okay, this is the last "last thing."

You know how we love our children. Sometimes - I even told this to my son who went back to the mainland for college. And I just - I just was like, Levi, I wish I didn't love you so much. It wouldn't hurt so much.

He's like, really?

It's just - it's getting so hard. I just love him so much, and I miss him so much.

(Crying)

I know, right? I'm such a crybaby, but whatever...

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But here's what the Lord ministered to me.

You know how much you love your children?

And I love my children so much.

It doesn't even come anywhere, it's not even on the same scale to be compared with how much I love you.

Whoa! If I loved them that much, and You love me infinitely more? What was my problem again? What was my - I wanted to - I wanted to quit? I accused You of tricking me? I'm so sorry, Lord. What was I thinking?

You weren't. I love you so much. You'll see; I'm going to see you through. I know it doesn't seem, "seem," which comes from "see," it doesn't "seem" like it, but you'll "see." Just believe, and you'll see.

It's not believing is seeing; it's seeing - we say seeing is believing; it's believing is seeing. It's the other way around.

You just trust Me. You just believe, and you'll see what I'm going to do.

*Psalm 27:13-14.*

Okay, this is the last "last one." You're going to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. You be of good courage.

David says, I would have - I almost gave up. I almost - like Jeremiah - I almost quit. I tried; I was ready to throw in the towel. But I remain confident of this one truth: That God is good. And I will see the goodness of God.

And he kind of talks to himself. This is different than self-talk. He's talking to himself. He's saying to himself, you cheer up. Come on, you're going to see what the Lord's going to do.

So why don't you stand? Kaponu, come on up. Thank you for your patience.

(Deep sigh)

I can testify, by the way. The Lord is good. And He'll see you through that dark passage of the night, that anguish of the soul, that trial that you're in. I mean, it just seems so hopeless.

But God.

Oh, if you only knew what God's going to do.

Father in Heaven, I thank You so much. I thank You for Your Word, and I thank You for these two chapters here in Your Word, and just how they leap off the pages of our Bible and come to life because Your Word is alive, and it is the Word of Life.

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And it gives us new life and new hope. Because I know there's a lot of Jeremiahs who are just so downcast. But, Lord, You are the lifter of our heads. And I pray for anyone who, like Jeremiah, is just at rock bottom. That God, You'll meet them there, reveal Yourself to them in a fresh and new way and lift them up and encourage them.

Thank You, Lord. We love You so much. In Jesus' name. Amen.