

Jeremiah 12

Read Jeremiah 12:1-4: Jeremiah is conversational with God. He is not praying in the King James, with all kinds of religious phrases. He is just asking questions and making requests. He is seeing the curse upon the earth that impacts every aspect of life. It is not just stickers and snake bites and bad crop yields. It is everything that we endeavor to produce a desired result.

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; for dust you are, And to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3)

The Jews had a good sense of how blessings and curses tracked to obedience. The Law of Moses was not to believers. It is the rule for unbelievers. It is a love substitute. People are required to act the part of minimal love requirements if they do not feel it.

...the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. (1 Timothy 1)

Jeremiah is obedient, and he is observing evil men by comparison. He might see himself very saved...while his neighbor is very unsaved. In reality Jeremiah is barely saved by God alone. Not his good works or obedience. In reality, we need evil men to prosper who contribute to our government and infrastructure and law enforcement. If the world is 95% unsaved men, then they are needed to provide our food and patrol our streets and build our roads. God will deal with them separately. They have to be somewhat successful, just to have a community with services.

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Peter 4)

Many prayers that I hear in church are not these same kinds of question-and-answer conversations with God. They are more like statements and the questions are rhetorical. Prayer is not a speech or a sermon. That is not a conversation. That is a monologue. Too many prayers turn into long *preaching moments*. Who is the pastor talking to? He is not supposed to be talking to us. He is not supposed to be telling God things that he already knows.

Do not be rash with your mouth And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore, let your words be few. (Ecclesiastes 5:2-5)

Jeremiah is frustrated with his people, and he is frustrated with God too. He is asking why God does not *right the ship*; and take care of so many upside-down issues in his nation. “Father; are you really driving the bus”? Don’t you see what I am seeing? “Please take care of it right now”! Respectfully, I think that you are going the wrong way! Life can seem that way at times. This is very similar to Job and Jonah’s conversations with God. Essentially, they both said that they are not in agreement with the way that things are going down. They are questioning God’s management of certain matters.

God just wants absolute transparency and honesty. Of course, this is a very frustrating situation. Can we believe that we are still blessed in our own bubble if Biden gets his way? The answer is yes. There have been moments in my life when I have told God that I know he loves me and cares for me beyond my appreciation or understanding.... but I am not looking forward to working through the issues at hand. I will then ask for his perspective and more faithful and appreciative heart.

The Jews correlated immediate and outward blessings or curses with personal acts of obedience and righteousness. They were *paying it forward* with expectation for immediate confirmations. Perhaps God was showing the Jews that being God’s chosen people comes with a lot more intervention and correction. The melodrama of our life still needs a lot of bit part actors. For some reason we need Snidely Whiplash in our lives.



For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. (Romans 10:2-3)

Read Jeremiah 12:5-6: God is essentially telling Jeremiah that he is freaking out over some low-level resistance. He is worried about his own countrymen. How could he stand against

greater Gentile nations, or spiritual forces or strongholds? After all he was called to stand against nations. He was to be a man of prayer. That is why he is so sad as he intervenes.

“Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.” (Jeremiah 1:9-10)

How could he fight a demonic stronghold? Somehow, we have to live above our circumstances in an increased level of faith. If our mood sweeps up and down with every notion that enters our mind. We are only resting in our own abilities...and not in God. Most of our spiritual warfare takes place in our mind. This explains a lot. We keep getting disturbed over similar things because we still have not gotten victory over it yet. We are still living by sight (not faith).

God has been slowly training me to *man-up* over the years. I would pray with much anxiety over concerns about the issues at hand or the future. I have carried too much anxiety. God has been gradually showing me that faith includes an expectation of a good end result...not a bus crash. Martyrdom is not the norm at all. God continually shows me that he has solutions that I was not seeing. After all, it always works out in the end.

If the fleeting things of this world are just role players to develop our faith, then we should live accordingly. The battle is not just the challenge at hand. It is how we process it and include God in it. We will keep getting fed the same dilemmas until we start to process stuff right.

Putting things in God's hands is unnatural. It's a strange way to live. It almost seems like abdicating responsibility...but it's not. We are still obligated to provide all the physical effort that is called for. Making that level of effort when it seems hopeless is also an act of obedience and faith. I remember so many times making a 100% effort that seemed in vain. Then God would send help from left field to save the day. When I look back, I started out trying to hopelessly fix the problem, until God sent a real fixer.

Read Jeremiah 12: 7-13: Jeremiah is a man without a country. The home team is horrible. They hate him. How can he love on those who hate him? He is not responsible for results. He just puts out the word and prays. The results are with the Holy Spirit.

If the people will not repent, there has to be a paradigm shift to bring in new management. God is inspecting our land; and the audit has not turned out well. Joe Bidens new Transgender Day of celebration and new civil rights will not look good on the report card.

Read Jeremiah 12:14-17: God is going to set things in order. Those who are chasing other options will be removed. Those who want to be in heaven need to start walking towards heaven now...not away from heaven.