

CbC to Nov 7

November 1 Su Reading B305 — Jeremiah 15 — Woe Is Me!

Audio: [Jeremiah 15 \(ESV\)](#)

Sufficient Grace — This chapter has a series of God's promises of judgment for Judah and Jeremiah's pleas for personal protection. It begins with statements of God giving up on Judah: "...*my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them out of my sight, and let them go!*" (v. 1). The main reason was because of Manasseh's terrible spiritual leadership (v. 4) and because of Judah's rejection of God (v. 6) and refusing to repent (v. 7). Then comes Jeremiah's personal "*Woe is me...!*" plea because of opposition from his own people (v. 10). The Lord comforted him (v. 11) and then went back to sentence Judah to "*serve your enemies*" (v. 14) because of their sins (v. 13). Next, Jeremiah returned to his plea for help from his persecutors (v. 15), arguing that he had cherished God's Word and was called by His name (v. 16), refusing to participate in the sinful parties of others (v. 17). God then ends this chapter by promising Jeremiah that his oppressors "*shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you*" (v. 20). It was tough for righteous Jeremiah to be caught in the middle of God's punishment for the nation of Judah. We are not promised freedom from trouble either, but God does promise that "*I am with you.*" That should be enough. "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness*" (2 Cor. 12:9).

November 2 M Reading B306 — Jeremiah 16 — They Shall Know

Audio: [Jeremiah 16 \(ESV\)](#)

Bringing Good Out of Bad — Somewhat like Hosea having to marry a wayward wife, Jeremiah is not allowed to marry at all in order to spare his family the suffering of being killed or exiled (v. 2). God would use the Babylonians to silence the mirth of Judah through punishment (v. 9). They would be so duped by their sin that they would ask why God was punishing them: "*What is our iniquity?*" (v. 10). The Lord's answer is two-fold: It was because of their idolatry and their refusing to listen to Him (vv. 11-12). God then projected far ahead when He would perform a miracle greater than bringing His people from Egypt to the Promised Land: He would bring them back to that land from Babylon and other countries to which they were taken (vv. 14-15). Beyond that miracle, God would cause other nations to come to Israel to recognize and serve the one true God, Yahweh (vv. 19, 21). God is famous for bringing good out of bad circumstances, and He continues to do that today. People are coming to know Him through the example of Christians and through the message of salvation that is spreading around the world.

November 3 Tu Reading B307 — Jeremiah 17 — Blessed Trust in God

Audio: [Jeremiah 17 \(ESV\)](#)

Take Care! — Judgment was coming to Judah, and God reminded them of their sins: worshiping false gods on hills and under trees that God made (v. 2), trusting in man rather than in God (v. 5), forsaking the Lord (v. 13), not keeping the Sabbath day holy (v. 21), and not listening to God's commands (vv. 21, 27). God had been speaking to them through His prophet, Jeremiah, but they were persecuting him (v. 18), while saying, "*Where is the word of the LORD?*" (v. 15). God's word was not what they wanted to hear because it didn't coincide with how they wanted to live. We also need to be careful about dismissing a NT command to us because it seems too difficult, too foreign to the culture around us, or too restrictive. God's commands are not just rules that are good to aim for. They are desperately important for our well-being. They have life-or-death consequences: "*Take care for the sake of your lives*" (v. 21).

Doing What is Right — God used the reworking creativity and ability of a potter to show the ease with which He can change nations like Judah. Many of God's decisions about a nation are based on their response to His commands. If God pronounced judgment against a nation and they repented, turning from evil, God would remove His plans for their destruction (vv. 7-8), like He did for Nineveh in Jonah's day. On the other hand, if God promised blessings for a nation and they turned away from Him, He would remove that promise (vv. 9-10), like He did for Israel. In Jeremiah's time, God was predicting disaster for Judah. Would they turn to Him? No, they considered their own plans to be better than God's ways (v. 12), a decision God declared to be "*a very horrible thing*" (v. 13). Since Jeremiah was God's spokesman, urging them to follow the Lord, they devised plots against the prophet (vv. 18, 20, 22-23). They preferred to hear the more positive words from their own misled priests, wise men, and prophets (v. 18). Sometimes, God's ways and commands don't seem right to us as well. We are also influenced by our peers and by our selfish emotions. If we determine in advance, however, that God's Word is our standard, then when the unpleasant challenges come our way, we will continue to follow what God has said.

Broken People — God sent Jeremiah back to the potter's house, this time to buy an earthenware flask to be used in a symbolic demonstration to leaders of the people. First, he gave them the warning that disaster was coming to Jerusalem because they had forsaken God to worship false gods (v. 4). As a result, they would fall by the sword (v. 7) and eat their own children while the city was under siege (v. 9). Then, Jeremiah broke the symbolic flask, representing what God would do to Jerusalem (vv. 10-11). After that, Jeremiah took the same message of disaster to the people at the temple, stating the reason in God's words: "...*because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear my words*" (v. 15). God made the cause for His future action very clear to them. Although God is "*not wishing that any should perish*" (2 Peter 3:9), He will eventually judge all sin. It would be very painful for Judah, but these broken people would come away from it much later with a very different attitude toward being faithful to God.

Painful Ministry — Jeremiah was prophesying the truth that Judah would be conquered by Babylon for their sins. The powerful priest, Pashhur, was offended by his words, however, and beat Jeremiah, imprisoning him overnight in stocks. The following poetry in this chapter reflects the feelings of God's prophet as he suffered through that long night. He even blamed God, feeling deceived by Him (v. 7) because God had given him a ministry to perform (v. 9) that resulted in pain and rejection. Jeremiah cursed the day he was born (v. 14). Do you know that the pastor of your church sometimes feels that way? God has called him into a ministry that is not always pleasant, but he feels compelled to perform it. Feel for him and pray for him! Finally, it was time for the persecuting priest to be punished. He would be exiled to Babylon and, without any power or ministry, he would die there because he had "*prophesied falsely*" (v. 6). Jeremiah's suffering was administered by Pashhur, but Pashhur's penalty was delivered by God.

Choose Your Way — Zedekiah was Judah's last king, and he was evil. He knew, however, the good things that God had done for His people in the past, so he sent messengers to Jeremiah for him to

ask God for help. With weak faith the king said, "*Inquire of the LORD for us ... Perhaps the LORD will ... make [Nebuchadnezzar] withdraw from us*" (v. 2). It didn't work, however, and God responded with, "*I myself will fight against you*" (v. 5). To the people in general, God gave a clear choice of "*the way of life and the way of death*" (v. 8). If they surrendered to Babylon, they would live, but if they stayed in Jerusalem, they would die (v. 9). A similar choice is being offered to the whole world today through the Christian message: surrender to Christ and live eternally, or stay in your sin and die, only to end up in hell. Even in the face of judgment, God called for Judah's leaders to execute justice and deliver the victims of fraud (v. 12). His desire was to rescue them, but they remained rebellious.