

We are surrounded by a world in crisis. Corrupt governments, politicians and dictators, all in pursuit of personal profit, advancement and power. Here and now we know there are those who take shortcuts to popularity, prestige and all kinds of selfish gain. This is sin. Sin has consequences.

'A Jeremiah'. I had heard that expression. I understood it's meaning to be, one who proclaims calamity for today and doom for tomorrow. You may know the bible book of Jeremiah and all it contains.

Recently, I began studying this book, with friends. Jeremiah had an unenviable task as God's prophet, in those desperately difficult times. However, I believe I am getting a very clear and inspiring message about Jeremiah's calling and character. I want to share with you something of what I am discovering.

An only child, here is a man with few friends. Timid by nature. The Lord called him to divine service and gave him reassurance saying; that he would be "strong and courageous."

He was startlingly honest in his feelings towards God. God frequently re-affirmed his commission as his prophet. Jeremiah was fearless in his service to God.

Jeremiah's sad experience was, that his appeals and arguments failed to convince his people of the sinful path they were following, at that time. However, as God's prophet, he never gave up! During these times and events he was unable to persuade them to change their thinking and their actions concerning the calamity they were walking into, and the ensuing consequences.

The situation became worse. God was angry. God had delivered his word through Jeremiah but the people persisted in listening to other voices.

God called on them saying; "Because you have forgotten me and trusted false gods, and I have seen your detestable acts, woe to you, Oh Jerusalem! How long will you be unclean?" 13:27

Jeremiah defends his people once again, speaking to God and saying; 'Ah, Sovereign Lord, these prophets keep telling them.' - They are listening to a different story.

God speaks out: "I have not appointed these prophets with their false vision. I will pour out on them the calamity they deserve."

God continues; "My eyes overflow with tears. My people have received a crushing blow." 14:17

Jeremiah identifies with his people; 'O Lord, we acknowledge our wickedness. We have indeed sinned against you'

'Do the skies send down showers? No, it is you, O Lord our God. Therefore our hope is in you for you are the one who does all this.' 14:20-22

God speaks his instructions: " Send them away. Let them go." 15:11

Jeremiah's name has unfortunately become associated with calamity today and doom tomorrow. Whatever, I am in awe of him. In his absolute trust in God and his commitment to his people. His poetry and passion are powerful. His relationship with God is real, worshipful and heartfelt.

He pleads for his people!

'You are among us, O Lord and we bear your name: do not forsake us.' 15:9

There is no holding back in his understanding and his reasoning with God. Unbelievably, his people, whom he defends, turn against him. 'I have neither lent nor borrowed, but yet everyone curses me.' 15:10

And so his praise to God continues; 'O, Lord my strength and my fortress, my refuge in times of distress.' 16:19

His trust in the Lord is borne out, as God speaks; " Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.

He will be like a tree planted by the water. It does not fear when the heat comes; it 's leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." 17:7

Not 'A Jeremiah', I say, but The Jeremiah!

Thanks be to God.

A Prayer

Thank you to all those we know, who like Jeremiah, are servants of God, of Christ our Saviour and the Holy Spirit. We think of all those soon to be licensed or ordained, this Petertide. We pray for each other who would be your servants, in whatever way you may ask.

As the countryside blossoms and our gardens fill with flowers and fruit we are reminded of your commitment to us, Great and Glorious God, through your selfless love, generous provision and many blessings. Amen