

Kings and Prophets 16-07-28b

We pick up our study now in Jeremiah, and at the conclusion of our first session tonight I mentioned that there are concomitants to obedience and to connection with God. I am trying to avoid the use of the word relationship, there are two or three words in the English language that are just so overworked that they become fairly meaningless. Relevant is one of them, that's probably the last time you'll hear me use that word.

And relationship, what is the relationship? It's an overworked, overused word and you say well here's a thing and there's some sort of a connection, some sort of effect, influence, whatever, they are linked in some way. But there's got to be a more descriptive and more helpful term than just, well, so how's your relationship? Anyway, that's just one of my personal peeves. But there is a connection between God and God's people, between God and His creation.

And when God is in it, there is life, there is a second element as well, which is righteousness. Here's the problem with choosing to disconnect from God. Not only do you begin, it's like the fading glory in Moses' face, Moses goes up Sinai, he's in God's presence and his face shines and he's got to put a bag over his head when he comes back down to keep from scaring the Israelites.

But it's a fading glory. It was easier to illustrate this back when we had the old cathode ray tube televisions because when you hit off, it didn't go immediately off. The gun would stop oscillating and there would be a bright dot in the middle of your black and white set and then that dot, because there's still cathode rays coming out.

The gun takes a while to quit spitting out those little particles and the coating would fluoresce under the influence of those particles and it would fade, it would just fade out. The earliest PCs, I remember particularly compact lugables, they were like a sewing machine and they had particularly the green screen. Any time you changed screens and it was all text, but there would be an afterglow and if you changed screens very quickly, you could just see this fading effect of the previous screen, it would take a couple of seconds to completely disappear.

This is what it's like when we separate from God, when we choose to go our own way. It's not, you know, people say, well, in the day though, we just serve, they'll surely die and so Eve reaches out and grabs, by the way, well let me finish my thought, then I'll go back to that thought, but I had a fresh thought about this whole fruit of the tree. But she reaches out and as soon as her teeth contact the skin of whatever that is, or by sundown, you'll be dead by sundown, you know, it's a fast acting poison, it's really a poison tree, I didn't tell you, but you know, you eat that one and... In the day that Adam and Eve ate of that fruit, death became inevitable, like this judgment on Judah.

When God pronounces that sentence, it is irrevocable and irreversible and it isn't that God just made it up. What happened when Eve partook of the fruit? What was the nature of that act? Is

picking fruit and eating it a deadly act? It's not like the fruit was a loaded gun and the day that you pick up the gun and aim it at yourself and pull the trigger, you will die. But it's like that in the sense that breaking the connection with God through disobedience, through not trusting Him anymore, I don't understand why He said this, every other tree has fruit and we're able to freely eat of that, for some arbitrary reason, this one we're not allowed to eat of.

Why wasn't the first sin something like, in the day that you kill another human, you will surely die? In the day that you, Adam, in the day that you slap Eve in the mouth, you will surely die? Or in the day that you do some other heinous thing, is there any inherent intrinsic evil in walking up to a tree, picking its fruit and taking a bite? I mean this isn't even, you know, the vegetarians get upset if you kill an animal, this isn't even, in the day that you slay an animal and eat it, you will surely die. There's nothing intrinsically evil about it. It's like the Sabbath, is there anything intrinsically wrong with bearing a burden? It's necessary, God said you got to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, you pick up the burden and sweat, that's life, that's proper.

God sets a seemingly arbitrary standard, six days labor and do all your work, but on this day don't do any work. I'm giving you this command for my own reasons, I rested on the seventh day, you rest on the seventh day. If you'd said the third day, maybe you took a break halfway through creation week, I did, you know, getting the universe cranked up was a big deal, got to rest on the third day and then I'll finish up with the animals and the plants and the, you know, fish and the birds and the mankind, might have to rest again after, might have two rest days.

But it's arbitrary and there's nothing intrinsically evil about it and this is what Satan exploits. Why did Eve fall for Satan's line in the garden? How can you die from picking fruit, taking a bite? No, there's an entirely different arbitrary reason. Let me tell you what God's really thinking when He gives you this command.

It isn't that He wants you to remain connected to Him through faith and trust and obedience so that you will live endlessly and beautifully and blessedly. No, He knows that if you eat this fruit, you'll become as wise as He is. He's petty, He's jealous, He wants to be the top creature and you'll elevate yourself, you'll get closer to Him, you'll be nipping at His heels.

So what do you do? You take the truth of God and convert it to a lie. Oh yes, He doesn't want you to eat the fruit, but here's the real reason. And it hooks something in human nature well, kind of like Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14.

Why can't I rise? Why should I be under? Why should I be less? Why should I be subservient? I will ascend, I will rise, I will establish, as Satan said, my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the Most High. If He's high, why can't I be just that high? That breaches trust, it breaches faith, it breaches that necessary dependence of the creature upon the Creator and recognition that He is not only the source of life, but here's the second thing, He is the source of righteousness.

What is the indictment for Judah in Jeremiah and in Isaiah and in all of the other prophets?

What was the indictment on northern Israel? When they began to disobey God, when they began to disregard God, what else happened? Evil multiplies exponentially. What happened in the days before the flood when people disregarded God? The imagination of His heart was only evil all the time. And how does that evil work itself out? It works itself out in the horizontal plane.

Other people suffer, others expense so that if you're going to rise, you've got to be stepping on somebody. If you're going to climb, you're using other people as a ladder. Oh no, I'm not, I am just as, there's a way that seems right, the ends are ever the ways of death.

The heart is deceitful, we justify ourselves, we vindicate ourselves. This is why scripture says, with the word of God and the spirit of God, examine yourself and see if you're in the faith. Don't examine yourself and see if you like yourself.

Don't examine yourself and see if you find anything that troubles your corrupt conscience. You know, a broken clock is right twice a day, right? And a broken conscience will salve itself and congratulate itself completely not knowing. It's like that boat I described out in the midst of the ocean with no fixed reference point, can't see the stars, can't see the land.

So you judge your progress by the relative motion of the wind and the current and you say, I'm making progress. You can actually be going quickly in the opposite direction. There's a way that seems right, but it always ends in death because seeming right and being right are two different things.

God is the source of life, number one. Secondly, God is the source of righteousness. You cannot be disconnected from God and be righteous.

You cannot be disconnected from God and identify righteousness. You can't see it. We have faulty machinery.

We have a corrupt observational and computational process. What is the nature of the latter days? Men call evil good and good evil. Is that what they wake up in the morning setting out to do? Guy looks in the mirror while he's shaving.

You know what? I'm going to try to find something good and I'm going to blast it and call it evil. Or some lady's putting on her makeup in the morning and doing her hair and getting ready to go out, putting on a little scent and she says, you know what? I'm going to find something really just heinously evil and I'm going to promote it as good. That's what I'll do today.

Nobody sets out to do that, do they? People think good is good and they call it good. People think this is evil and they call it evil. And God says, this is the sign of disconnect.

This is the sign of separation. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God. And because of that, you have no ability to discern absolutes.

What will I base my righteousness on? If I like it. Every man does what is right in his own eyes. You know, it's popular now to have a truth.

I was reading an article about this having to do with comparing to, oh, it had to do with autism. And what they now call, they've lumped everything, all of the different flavors and varieties of autism are categorized together as ASD, autism spectrum disorder. And this is a genuine malady.

There is genuinely something that has gone wrong with the neural network and they're still trying to figure out all of the causes and the effects and what can be done and to what extent to remediate it. But there is a movement within the realm of autistic people and their relatives to say, there's nothing wrong with this. This isn't dysfunctional.

It's just different. This isn't a problem that we could fix, that we would fix even if we could. It's just alternate.

There's a parallel to it and this article made the parallel to deaf culture where there are parents of deaf children who even when there is a surgical alternative or an implant alternative or a way to enhance and augment their ability to communicate with the rest of the world, parents will refuse. We're proud of deaf culture. You act like we need to try to deliver our child out of some deficit or some shortfall or some lack.

Certainly, it's not a handicap. They're just alternately abled. And for you to even suggest that we should teach our child how to read or how to speak and to somehow separate them from the deaf culture into which they were born, there's something wrong with you.

There's nothing wrong with them being deaf. And something wrong with is given a moral value instead of, you know, here's a guy that got his legs blown off or got deafened in Iraq or in Afghanistan. Can we restore his hearing? Oh, no, he's a part of the deaf community now.

We'll embrace him. We'll teach him all of the wonders of being deaf. And we don't look at anything.

We just establish our own standard and we decide this is right. And you'll hear people go to endless lengths justifying and disrespecting and chastising and mocking and abusing anybody who says anything about, well, but, you know, we've got some technology that we can help. We can make this better.

What do you mean better? There's nothing wrong. Are you saying my child's not as good? And it goes downhill from there. Relative righteousness, a floating standard.

It's subjective. It has no anchor. It has no root.

It has no rock and foundation. There is only one source of life, and it's God. And there's only one source of righteousness and a standard of righteousness, and it's God.

Judah, by walking away from the God of covenant, from the God of creation, from the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from the God of their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, not only walks away from life and makes their death inevitable, death as a nation in this case, but they also walk away from His righteousness. Well, what is going to fill that vacuum? We have a need for righteousness. Every culture, however godless it may be, sets up standards for itself, says, well, you can do this, but you can't do that.

Why? Why don't we have hedonistic societies that say, well, you know, he came over and knocked my wife in the head and dragged her over to his hut, but, you know, in our culture, anything goes. You know, he must have needed her really badly, and far be it from me to, you know, disrespect his truth. He needed, you know, I'll go knock somebody else's wife in the head and take her into my cabin and it'll all be well.

But there is a God-given conscience, and Paul talks about those who in the latter days will have their conscience seared with a hot iron. It's not natural to override conscience, but if you do it long enough and with enough enthusiasm, you'll melt that thing. You'll scar it over, and it won't function.

We override our body's natural reaction against things. You know, you drink a lot of alcohol and you get sick. That's your body saying, you know, you shouldn't do that.

You smoke cigarettes or funny cigarettes or whatever else. Your body reacts. You have abnormal perceptions.

You have abnormal responses, and, well, you can override that. You can overcome it. You've got a natural fear of heights.

You can override that and disregard it and overcome it. But God is the source of righteousness. So look now at Jeremiah.

Look at chapter 16. The word of the Lord came also unto me, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place. He's talking to Jeremiah, and he says, You're going to be celibate.

You're not going to be married. Now, remember what we were saying about the Sabbath? Remember what we were saying about don't eat the fruit? God tells Jeremiah, Don't take a wife. Paul makes the argument, Is it not proper and right for me to lead about a wife like the other disciples do, and yet I don't? There are cases where God makes a point of a thing.

What is that point? Is he saying it's not right to take a wife anymore? Would it have been wrong for Jeremiah to disobey this command? God says, Jeremiah, don't get married. Jeremiah says, Well, but, you know, me and my girlfriend, we've already made plans. Sorry, Lord, we're getting hitched.

Why would it be wrong for Jeremiah to take a wife when God tells him not to? Because taking a

wife is intrinsically wrong? God has a bigger purpose. It's something beyond, it might be beyond Jeremiah's comprehension, although I don't think it was, and certainly not beyond ours. Look at this.

Thus saith the Lord concerning the sons and concerning the daughters which are born in this place. Jeremiah, I am lifting you up as an example. I am teaching a point in and through you.

If you love me, you will do this for me. It is sacrificial for you, but it is beneficial for your people, and it is beneficial to my heavenly divine purpose, saith the Lord. If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Jesus said, The one who loves me has my word and keeps it. And if you do without anything in this life, remember what he told the disciples? Whatever you've gone without in this life, it will be restored to you a hundredfold later. Why? It's an investment plan? No, because those who have a heart for the Lord, God will honor.

I will honor those who honor me. And that may involve sacrifice. It may involve loss.

It may involve suffering. It may involve doing without for a time. But our momentary light affliction is working for us an eternal weight of glory.

Suffer for a brief time on this earth because God asks us to, because God has a larger purpose. We may or may not understand. And in the ages to come, we are eternally blessed, eternally rewarded, permanently lifted up.

Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. I don't fully understand it, but I trust him. The just will live by his faith.

God vindicates those who trust him, those who rely on him, those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty, take shelter under his wings. You can't estimate. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard.

It hasn't entered into the heart of man. The things that God has prepared for those who love him. God works all things together for good to those who are called according to his purpose.

You say, I will do what God asks me to do because it's a part of his purpose. And I don't have to fully understand it. Well, Judah has gone to the complete opposite extreme of this.

Look again at chapter 16. Thus says the Lord concerning the sons and concerning the daughters, verse 3, who are born in this place, concerning their mothers who bore them, and concerning the fathers who begot them in this land, they shall die grievous deaths. They shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried, but they shall be as refuse on the face of the earth, and they shall be consumed by the sword and by famine.

And their carcasses shall be food for the fowls of heaven and for the beasts of the earth. For

thus saith the Lord, enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them. For I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the Lord, even loving kindnesses and mercy.

Now, think about that. All of this horrific death and nobody even around to bury the dead, this loss of life, loss of protection, loss of blessing, loss of prosperity. How does it come about? These people remove their hearts far from the Lord, and what happens? God inevitably, necessarily takes away His peace, His loving kindness, and mercy.

Where are we without God's peace, God's loving kindness, and God's mercies? Dead carrion on the ground. God cannot continue to send His peace, His life, His blessing on corruption and on evil. You separate yourself from God, what do you expect? You're going to stamp your tiny foot and demand that God continue to bless and provide and give peace when you've thumbed your nose and spit in His face, and in this age, spit in the face of His Son, diminished and belittled and mocked the work of Christ on the cross, treated it as a profane thing, ridiculous, silly.

Who is this petty God? And yet, you expect this God to continue to work Himself in heaven up into a sweat to keep you provided for and sheltered and blessed and comforted. You should have eternal life. Why should I have to do what He does? Well, A, He made you.

B, He is the only source of life and separated from Him, He doesn't have to do anything. When His peace and His loving kindness and His mercy can no longer be sent in your direction, you will die and you will be miserable and you will suffer. And it's not an active punishment from God, it is a consequence of a stupid choice, of a self-centered, self-seeking, self-important, wisdom of man as foolishness with God choice.

The great and the small, verse 6, will die in this land, they shall not be buried, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them. Notice how degenerate things have gotten in Judah. When somebody dies in Judah now, they are following the practices of the Canaanites.

They cut themselves to show how sorry they are. They shave their heads and make them bald. Remember God said don't do strange things with your hair in Israel.

Don't shave the corners of your beard. Don't disfigure yourself. But that's common practices as well.

They are not going to be doing these Canaanite practices for these dead people. Thou shall not go to the house of feasting to sit with them to eat and drink, verse 8. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes and in your days the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. It shall come to pass when you show this people all these words, they will say to you, why has the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is our sin that we have committed against the Lord our God? Denial, indifference, disrespect, disregard toward

the word of the Lord.

You have just answered your own question. You'll give them the word of the Lord and they'll say, well this is just ridiculous. Then shall you say to them, why? Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods and have served them and have worshipped them and have forsaken me and have not kept my law.

Notice, forsaking God is forsaking his law. What is his law? What did Jesus say? You can sum up the whole law in two statements. Love the Lord your God with all your soul, all your heart, all your strength.

And what? Love your neighbor as yourself. When you forsake God, you forsake his law. And what do you inevitably do? You corrupt your way and you harm others.

You disadvantage others. You are deceitful. You are dependent.

You are sycophantic. You are parasitic. You are living off the crumbling remnants of what was built by people who did love the Lord.

You don't build anything yourself. You don't move forward. You don't have an independent life.

You don't have an independent righteousness. It corrupts, folds in on itself, feeds on itself, and ultimately dissolves in a pool of fetid corruption. Your fathers have forsaken me.

Verse 12, you have done worse than your fathers. You walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart and not hearken unto me. God isn't put out because, well, I told him to do a thing and they didn't do it.

I just want everybody to do what I say. This is the Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens construction of the Old Testament. Well, God is just a misogynistic, misanthropic, petty, jealous, vindictive God who just stamps his little foot up in heaven and says, everybody has to do everything my way.

I don't want to be anywhere near those people and that blasphemy on the day of judgment, nor do I want to enter into any part of it myself. But honestly, for believers to disregard the word of the Lord, you're basically saying the same thing. God isn't worthy to be praised.

He's not any more righteous than I am. In fact, I disagree with a lot of his standards of righteousness. I think I've got a better idea myself.

Let me take my inheritance and go to a far land. I'll show you what a good life is. You have done worse than your fathers, not hearkening, and inevitably you foment misery.

You create and participate in evil. Therefore, verse 13, I will cast you out of this land into a land that you know not, nor your fathers, and you'll serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor. And the days are coming that it shall not any more be said, The Lord lives who

brought up the children out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord lives who brought up the children from the land of the north and from the lands where He had driven them, and I will bring them again into the land I gave them and their fathers.

I will send forth many fishers, saith the Lord, they will fish them, and afterward I will send forth many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain. This is a picture ultimately not only of the near-term fulfillment, the restoration in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah where they were brought back, but really and more ultimately and fully, it is the resurrection at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. Everywhere that the Jews have fallen, everywhere that they were driven, everywhere that they have been scattered in death and the sea and the grave, they will be raised, they will be brought back to the land.

As it says, and I quoted it earlier, many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. Turn now quickly to chapter 19, Thus saith the Lord, we saw this earthen flask, we saw the breaking of the flask, that's the beginning of that chapter. And in verse 11, Thus saith the Lord, I will break this people and this city as one breaks a vessel, that they cannot be made whole again.

They will bury them in Topheth till there be no place to bury. I will do to this place and this inhabitants, I will make it like Topheth. Then in verse 14, Jeremiah comes from there where the Lord had sent him to prophesy.

And he stood in the court of the Lord's house and said to all the people, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I will bring upon this city, upon its towns, all of the evil I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words. So in chapter 20 now, Pasher hears all of this. He is the son of Emer the priest, chief governor in the house of the Lord.

He heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. So he struck Jeremiah and put him in stocks in the gate of Benjamin. He locks him up.

He abuses him for these words. And so Jeremiah says to him in verse 4, Thus saith the Lord, I will make you, Pasher, a terror to yourself and to all your friends. They will fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes will behold it.

I will give Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon. In other words, you are going to see the fulfillment of Jeremiah's words. But look at, this is what I want to get to here in 20 verse 7. So after this, he tells Pasher this, but of course Pasher is still top dog in the house of the Lord.

He is still the governor. And Jeremiah is still in the stocks. It isn't an immediate vindication.

It's not an immediate deliverance. An angel doesn't come and kick Jeremiah like he does Peter and say, Come up, all of the gates are open and the chains have fallen off and you're a free man. There is this prediction.

It is a future hope. It is future vindication. But for now, he is still in the stocks.

So look at Jeremiah in verse 7. Lord, you have deceived me and I was deceived. You are stronger than I am and have prevailed. I am in derision daily.

Everyone mocks me. Since I spoke, I cried out. I cried violence and spoil, because the word of the Lord was made a reproach to me and a derision daily.

I said I will not make mention of him. I'll stop. I'll blend.

I'll stop making an issue out of the word of the Lord. But his word was in my heart like a burning fire shot up in my bones. Anybody with a communication gift knows exactly what he is talking about.

If God has given you that assignment, you can't not do it. It's like trying to... I've heard and seen stories of guys that were caught smoking and they didn't have time to put it out and they just stuck it in their pocket and the thing lit their pocket on fire and pretty soon their pants are on fire. You know, you can't conceal a fire.

I heard this defaming in verse 10 and I understand of many on every side. Verse 11, But the Lord is with me as a mighty, terrible one. Therefore my persecutors shall stumble and they shall not prevail.

They shall be greatly ashamed. They shall not prosper. Their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

It's all future. What is Jeremiah comforting himself with? There's two points to draw from this and there are several other examples. But this one will serve.

It's okay to get depressed when you suffer. Look down at verse 12. O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous.

You see the heart and the mind. Let me see your vengeance on them. Unto you I have opened my cause.

Sing to the Lord, praise the Lord. He has delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers. That's what Jeremiah knows.

At the same time, in the same breath, look at the next verse. Cursed be the day on which I was born. Let not the day on which my mother bore me be blessed.

Does it remind you of Job chapter 3 and Job chapter 10? Job says almost this identical same thing. Is Job vindicated at the end of the book? Does God tell Eliphaz, the Temanite, and Bildad, and the whole crowd, does He tell them, the only guy that has spoken rightly of me is Job? And before you can get right, you better get Job to offer a sacrifice for you. He's the only one that has represented me.

In nothing did Job sin with his lips. His wife tells him, curse God and die. In nothing did Job sin

with his lips.

That's what the book of Job says. And yet Job says this very same thing. There ought to be a curse on the day I was born.

I wish the sun hadn't shone on it. I should have never come forth. I should have been buried in the heart of the earth and never seen the light of day.

Jeremiah says, Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, a male child is born to you, making him very glad. Let that man be like the cities that the Lord has overthrown and devastated and made to no longer exist. This is a pretty severe outcry on Jeremiah's part, right? Is Jeremiah wrong here? Does God ever charge him with evil? Here's the principle.

It's okay to be down. The Lord Jesus wept when He looked over Jerusalem. And there He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

Jesus wept on that occasion. He wept in John 11 when people couldn't figure out the resurrection. He knows even when He raises Lazarus from the dead, all it's going to do is exacerbate the problem, and it's going to put a sharp point on the plot to kill Him.

And by the way, they're going to try to kill Lazarus. And Jesus weeps over that. It's okay.

We sometimes think, Well, I'm committing some kind of sin if I'm concerned, if I'm down, if I say, Boy, I'm not sure I understand why I'm even here. You get older, lots of elderly people. Why am I even still here? Why doesn't God just take me home? What's the point of my life? I'm small.

I'm insignificant. Nobody sees me. I'm just suffering along, clinging to my faith with a death grip.

That's okay. Look at Job. Look at Jeremiah.

Look at the Lord Jesus. Look at the Apostle Paul in chains. He reviews his sufferings.

But he says, I'm not ashamed. I'm going to stick. I'm going to stay.

I'm going to trust God. He's the source of life. He's the source of blessing.

This momentary light affliction works for us an eternal weight of glory. There is a purpose in it. There is a reason for it.

And we don't have to understand it. Any more than a small child understands. I've been thinking about this with the dogs.

I've been taking care of the dogs solo for a week. They don't understand why I go away and leave them alone. They don't understand why they can't get a walk on a 105 degree day.

It's for their good. But from their perspective, well, this is terrible. I have a bad master.

He doesn't take me on walks. He doesn't spend time with me. He doesn't do the things I think ought to be done.

They're alive and they're healthy because I'm smarter than they are. And I can't explain to them. They're not at my level.

They just have to trust me. And they do. Dogs are wonderfully forgiving in that regard.

We need to be that way with the Lord God in heaven. The fact that we can't understand what he's doing doesn't mean that, well, therefore, it can't be right. The just shall live by his faith.

Life comes from pursuing our relationship with God. Relationship. Connection.

Righteousness comes from our connection and our relationship with God. It's the only objective rock by which we can guide our lives. It is the light that shines on our path.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path. Thy word have I hid in my heart. Why? My heart's deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

But your word, hidden in my heart, keeps me from sinning against you. Well, this is the message of Jeremiah. And what does Jeremiah get for delivering it? He is imprisoned time after time after time.

He's put in the stocks. He's thrown into the cistern, and he's up to his shoulders in mud. That's what he gets for representing God.

What do you think Jeremiah's eternal inheritance is going to be? You think Jeremiah's going to say, you know, everything on balance. I wouldn't have delivered that word hardly. It is never a bad idea to trust the God who is our creator, who is the source of our life and our righteousness.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the assurance that we have that trust in you is never a mistake. It will be vindicated.

The Lord Jesus, for the joy that you set before him, endured the cross, despised that shame, and now he is seated at your right hand. He is our example. He is our hope.

His resurrection assures us of our own. We thank you for him and for his example, and we pray that we can reflect that example in our lives on this earth as we anxiously await his return for us, either at the rapture or at the point of our own death. We thank you for your word.

We thank you for the manna for our souls that sustains us and energizes us and motivates us and illuminates our souls and our path. And we ask your blessing on the truth of your word we've seen this evening. May it be a source of blessing and challenge to each one of us.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.