

Through the Bible

JEREMIAH

Zac Poonen



Illustrations by Vinay Kuruville

COPYRIGHT : ZAC POONEN AND VINAY KURUVILLA

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

69 PARADISE ENCLAVE, BELAHALLI
KANNUR POST, BANGALORE - 562 149
INDIA



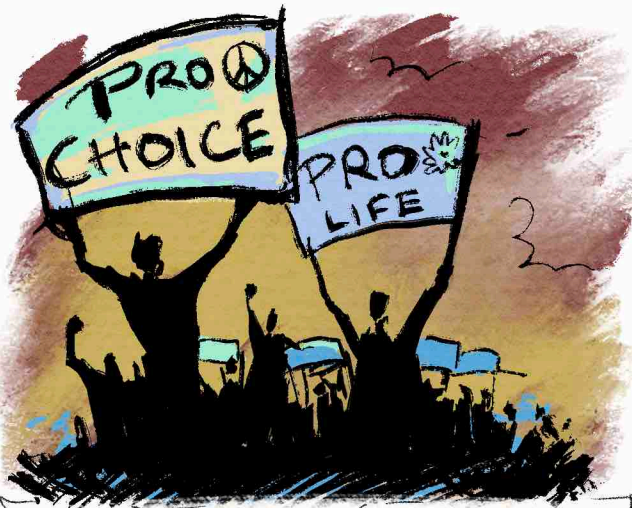
Jeremiah

WAS THE LAST
PROPHET GOD SENT TO
SAVE JUDAH FROM
BEING SENT INTO
CAPTIVITY. JEREMIAH
TRIED HIS BEST TO
TURN JUDAH BACK
FROM THEIR **SINS** AND
FROM FACING THE
JUDGEMENT OF GOD.
BUT HE DID NOT
SUCCEED.

JEREMIAH WAS NOT A HARD MAN EVEN THOUGH HE SPOKE VERY STRONGLY. HE WEPT SECRETLY FOR JUDAH'S SINS. HE FELT VERY DEEPLY ABOUT THE BACKSLIDING OF GOD'S PEOPLE. HE WAS A VERY SIMPLE MAN AND HE STARTED PROPHECY-ING WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG. HE WAS VERY SENSITIVE IN HIS SPIRIT, AND AT THE SAME TIME VERY STRONG.

ONCE WHEN JESUS ASKED THE PEOPLE, "WHO DO PEOPLE SAY THAT I AM?" THEY REPLIED SAYING, "SOME SAY YOU ARE JEREMIAH COME BACK AGAIN" (MATTHEW 16:13, 14). WHY DID THEY SAY THAT? BECAUSE THERE WAS SO MUCH SIMILARITY BETWEEN JESUS AND JEREMIAH. THAT IS A TREMENDOUS COMPLIMENT TO JEREMIAH -- THAT PEOPLE MISTOOK JESUS FOR HIM!! JESUS WEPT AND SUFFERED BECAUSE GOD WEPT AND SUFFERED. JEREMIAH ALSO WEPT AND SUFFERED FOR THE SAME REASON.

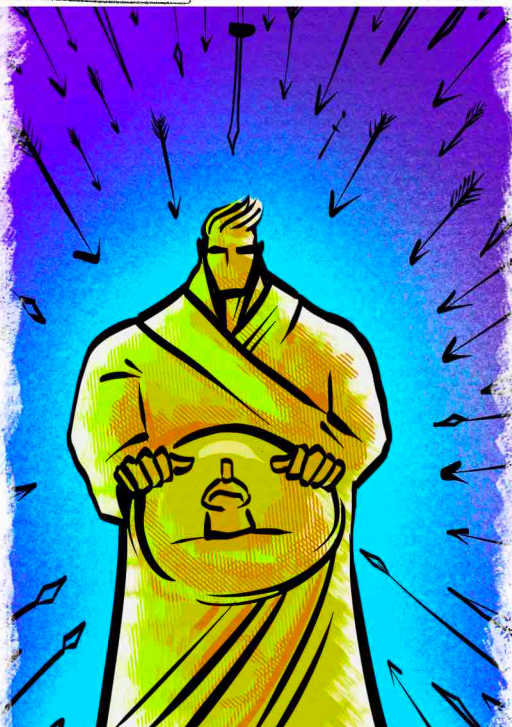




THE LORD CALLED JEREMIAH WHEN HE WAS A **YOUNG MAN** (1:5, 6) AND SAID TO HIM, "BEFORE I FORMED YOU IN THE WOMB I KNEW YOU. BEFORE YOU WERE BORN I **CONSECRATED** YOU AND **APPOINTED** YOU A PROPHET TO THE NATIONS." GOD KNEW JEREMIAH EVEN **BEFORE** HIS BODY WAS FORMED IN HIS MOTHER'S **WOMB**. THERE IS A LOT OF **DISPUTE** NOWADAYS ABOUT WHETHER AN **EMBRYO** IS A **HUMAN BEING** OR NOT. HERE IS A VERSE THAT SHOULD **CLEAR** THAT DOUBT FOREVER. JUST IMAGINE, WHEN JEREMIAH WENT THROUGH ALL THOSE DIFFICULTIES, HOW THIS MUST HAVE **ENCOURAGED** HIM



THEN JEREMIAH SAID, "LORD, I **DON'T KNOW** HOW TO SPEAK." IT IS AMAZING HOW GOD PICKS UP PEOPLE TO BE PROPHETS WHO ARE NOT GOOD AT PUBLIC SPEAKING. MOSES WAS LIKE THAT. HE ALSO SAID, "LORD, I AM UNABLE TO SPEAK **PUBLICLY**." I WANT TO ENCOURAGE ALL OF YOU. DON'T THINK THAT GOD CANNOT USE YOU TO PREACH HIS WORD JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE THE ABILITY TO SPEAK OR THE **BOLDNESS** TO STAND BEFORE PEOPLE. THE LORD SAID TO MOSES, "I **MADE** MAN'S MOUTH. CAN'T I THEN MAKE YOU SPEAK?" (EXODUS 4:10, 11). IF YOU ALLOW GOD TO **BREAK** YOU AND TO **FILL** YOU WITH HIS **HOLY SPIRIT**, HE CAN MAKE YOU ALSO HIS **SPOKESMAN**. IT ALL DEPENDS ON YOUR WALK WITH GOD.

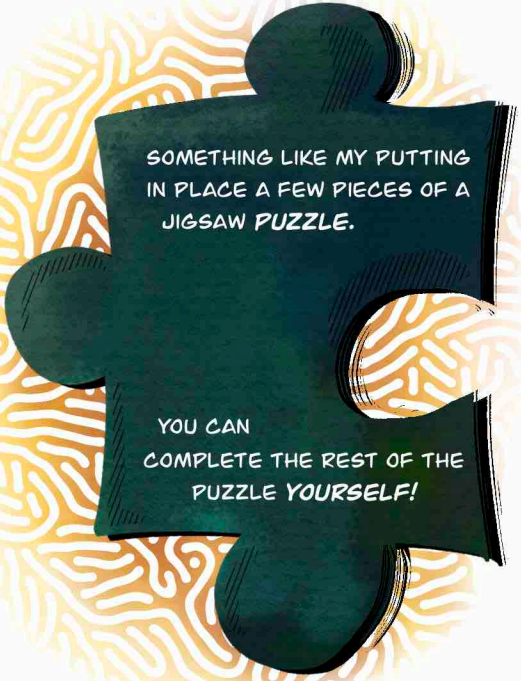


"DON'T BE AFRAID, BECAUSE I AM WITH YOU TO DELIVER YOU" (1:8). THIS WAS THE **BIG ADVANTAGE** THAT ALL THE TRUE PROPHETS HAD -- THE LORD WAS WITH THEM. THEREFORE THEY WERE **NOT AFRAID** OF ANY MAN. THAT IS THE WAY WE NEED TO SERVE THE LORD IN INDIA TODAY AS WELL. WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE LORD IS **WITH** US.




SIX ACTIVITIES ARE MENTIONED HERE -- **PLUCKING UP, BREAKING DOWN, DESTROYING, OVERTHROWING, BUILDING AND PLANTING** (1:10). FOUR OF THESE WERE **NEGATIVE** AND TWO -- BUILDING AND PLANTING -- WERE POSITIVE. JEREMIAH HAD TO TEAR DOWN THE OLD STRUCTURE FIRST AND THEN PUT UP GOD'S STRUCTURE. THAT IS **NOT** AN EASY THING TO DO. IT IS MUCH EASIER TO BUILD A BUILDING ON AN **EMPTY** PLOT OF LAND. **CHRISTENDOM** TODAY IS IN VERY **SIMILAR** CONDITION TO WHAT **JUDAH** WAS IN THOSE DAYS. THERE ARE HUGE **RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES** IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY THAT ARE CONTRARY TO THE WORD OF GOD. A PROPHET WHO COMES WITH GOD'S WORD TO SUCH A SITUATION WILL HAVE TO FIRST **PLUCK UP, BREAK DOWN, DESTROY AND OVERTHROW** MANY THINGS BEFORE HE CAN BUILD AND PLANT SOMETHING OF **ETERNAL** VALUE.

IN CHAPTERS 2 TO 45, WE FIND A NUMBER OF PROPHECIES ADDRESSED TO JUDAH. THEN IN CHAPTERS 46 TO 52, WE FIND MANY PROPHECIES ADDRESSED TO OTHER NATIONS. WE WILL LOOK AT THESE ONLY **BRIEFLY** --




SOMETHING LIKE MY PUTTING
IN PLACE A FEW PIECES OF A
JIGSAW PUZZLE.

YOU CAN
COMPLETE THE REST OF THE
PUZZLE **YOURSELF!**



IT IS THIS INITIAL WORK WITH THE **BULLDOZER** THAT MANY PREACHERS ARE UNWILLING TO DO. THEY SEEK TO "STITCH A PATCH OF **NEW** CLOTH ON AN **OLD** GARMENT". BUT THE LORD SAYS, "NO. YOU HAVE TO **THROW AWAY THE OLD GARMENT**. YOU HAVE TO **DESTROY THE OLD STRUCTURE COMPLETELY** AND **START AFRESH** WITH SOMETHING COMPLETELY **NEW**" (MATTHEW 9:16). IF YOU DON'T DO THAT, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BUILD WHAT **GOD** WANTS YOU TO BUILD.

JEREMIAH SPEAKS ABOUT ADULTEROUS JUDAH AND BACKSLIPPEN ISRAEL. ISRAEL WAS THE NORTHERN KINGDOM THAT HAD GONE INTO CAPTIVITY 100 YEARS EARLIER. THE MAIN BURDEN THAT JEREMIAH AND THE OTHER PROPHETS OF HIS TIME SOUGHT TO COMMUNICATE TO THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH WAS THIS: "YOUR SISTER ISRAEL DID NOT LISTEN TO THEIR PROPHETS AND SO GOD SENT THEM INTO CAPTIVITY. HAVE YOU LEARNED A LESSON FROM THAT?"



JUDAH DID NOT LEARN A
LESSON FROM THAT. THEY
KEPT SAYING,
"WE ARE NOT LIKE
THEM. WE ARE
BETTER. THAT WON'T
HAPPEN TO US."

CHAPTER 2:13: "MY PEOPLE HAVE COMMITTED **TWO EVILS**." THE TWO EVILS GOD CHARGED THEM WITH WERE: FIRST OF ALL, THEY **LEFT** THEIR GOD, THE **FOUNTAIN OF WATERS**. AND SECONDLY, THEY MADE **VESSELS** -- **IDOLS** -- THAT HAD **HOLES** IN THEM AND COULD HOLD **NO** WATER AT ALL.

PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY IS DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS MAINLY. ONE IS THE REGULAR, MAINLINE, **DENOMINATIONAL** CHURCHES. WE COULD LIKEN THEM TO THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL. THEN WE HAVE SMALL **NON-CONFORMIST** GROUPS THAT CALL THEMSELVES "**SEPARATED ASSEMBLIES**".



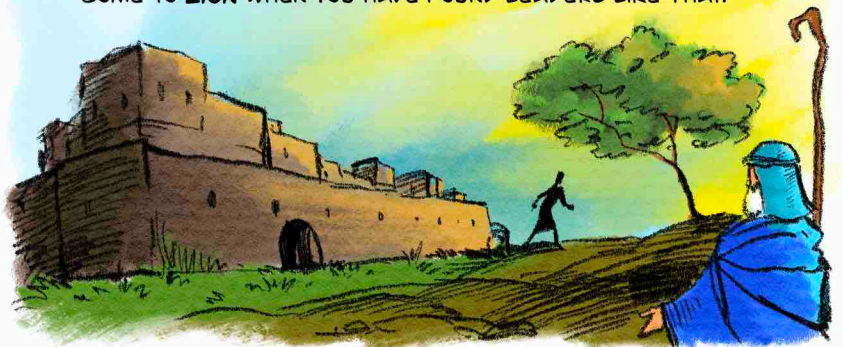
WHEN THESE GROUPS **SEPARATED** THEMSELVES INITIALLY THEY DID SO WITH A GOOD MOTIVE -- TO BE SEPARATE FROM **COMPROMISE** AND **WORLDLINESS** AND TO BE A **PURE TESTIMONY** FOR THE LORD. BUT DID THEY **LEARN** FROM THE FAILURES OF THE MAINLINE DENOMINATIONS?

NO.



CHAPTER 3:16, 17: "THEY WILL **NEVER** SAY AGAIN, 'THE ARK OF THE LORD,' BUT THEY WILL TALK ABOUT THE **THRONE** OF THE LORD." IN OTHER WORDS, IN ZION, THEY TALK ABOUT THE REALITY AND NOT THE SYMBOLS. THIS IS THE **LAST** TIME IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THAT THE **ARK** OF THE LORD IS MENTIONED. THE **BABYLONIAN** PEOPLE TOOK THE ARK AWAY, AND NOBODY HAS EVER SEEN IT SINCE.

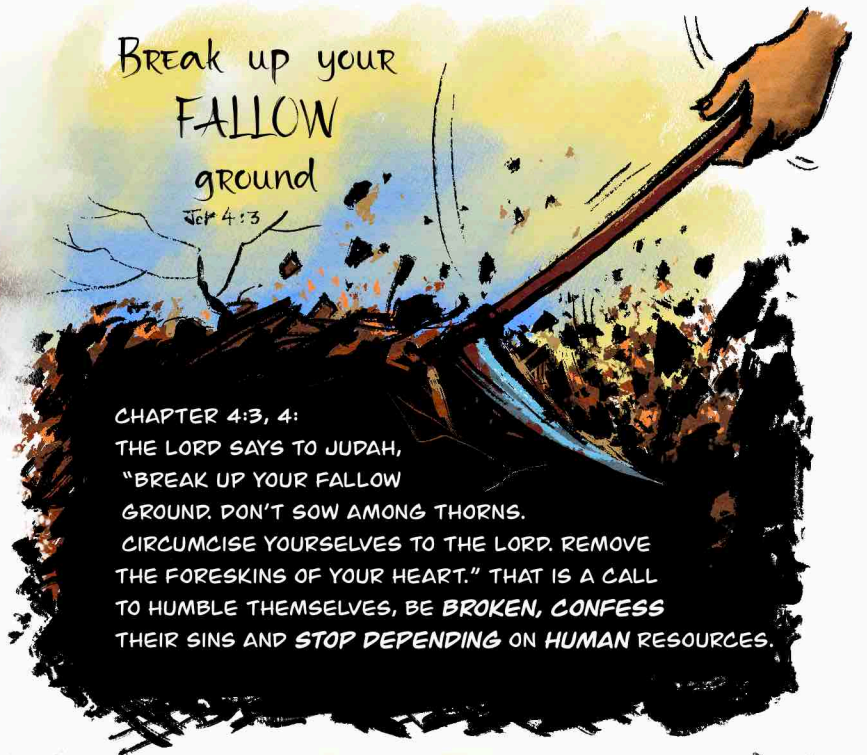
BUT THE LORD SAID, "I WILL BRING A **REMNANT** BACK HERE." THAT WAS ANOTHER BURDEN THAT THESE PROPHETS COMMUNICATED: "A **REMNANT** WILL RETURN FROM BABYLON". THE **REMNANT** WOULD BE THOSE WHO "**ACKNOWLEDGE** THEIR INIQUITY" (3:13). THE LORD SAID, "I WILL TAKE YOU ONE FROM A CITY AND TWO FROM A FAMILY, AND I WILL BRING YOU TO ZION" (3:14). ZION HERE IS A TYPE OF THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD. ONE MARK OF THAT CHURCH IS THAT THEY HAVE LEADERS WHO ARE "**SHEPHERDS** AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART" WHO FEED GOD'S PEOPLE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND WITH AN **UNDERSTANDING** OF HIS WAYS (3:15). YOU CAN KNOW THAT YOU HAVE COME TO ZION WHEN YOU HAVE FOUND LEADERS LIKE THAT.



AND YOU CAN BE SURE THAT YOU HAVEN'T FOUND ZION WHEN YOUR CHURCH LEADERS ARE NOT LIKE THAT. GODLY LEADERS DO **NOT** MAJOR ON **INTELLIGENCE**, BUT ON **COMPASSION** AND **LOVE** FOR GOD'S PEOPLE. THEY DO NOT EXPLOIT GOD'S PEOPLE, THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN PEOPLE'S OFFERINGS BUT IN THEIR **WALK** WITH THE LORD.

Break up your
FALLOW
ground

Jer 4:3



CHAPTER 4:3, 4:

THE LORD SAYS TO JUDAH,

"BREAK UP YOUR **FALLOW**

GROUND. DON'T SOW AMONG THORNS.

CIRCUMCISE YOURSELVES TO THE LORD. REMOVE THE FORESKINS OF YOUR HEART." THAT IS A CALL TO HUMBLE THEMSELVES, BE **BROKEN**, **CONFESS** THEIR SINS AND **STOP DEPENDING** ON **HUMAN RESOURCES**.

CHAPTER 4:19: "MY SOUL, MY SOUL, I AM IN **ANGUISH**.

MY HEART IS POUNDING BECAUSE I HAVE HEARD THE SOUND

OF THE TRUMPET. THE ALARM OF WAR." JEREMIAH SENSED THAT THE

ARMIES OF **BABYLON** WERE COMING SOON TO TAKE JUDAH **CAPTIVE** AND THAT

DISTURBED HIM GREATLY. JEREMIAH HAD A GREAT **BURDEN** IN HIS HEART BECAUSE HE **LOVED**

THE **PEOPLE**. THAT'S WHY GOD MADE HIM A **PROPHET**. IT IS NOT ENOUGH THAT GOD TOUCHES

OUR **MOUThS** TO BE HIS SPOKESMEN TO HIS PEOPLE. HE MUST ALSO TOUCH OUR **HEART** SO THAT WE **LOVE** THEM.

GOD THEN TOLD JEREMIAH SOMETHING SIMILAR TO WHAT HE TOLD ABRAHAM WHEN SODOM WAS TO BE DESTROYED.

**"STAND BY THE WAYS
AND ASK FOR THE
ANCIENT PATHS, WHERE
THE GOOD WAY IS"**

JER 6:16

ABRAHAM HAD PLEADED SAYING, "IF THERE ARE TEN PEOPLE IN SODOM WILL YOU SPARE THE CITY?" GOD SAID, "YES. IF THERE ARE TEN RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE IN SODOM, I'LL SPARE THAT CITY" (GENESIS 18:32).

AND HERE THE LORD SAID TO JEREMIAH, "IF YOU FIND ONE **RIGHTEOUS** PERSON (NOT TEN BUT **ONE**) ANYWHERE IN JERUSALEM, I WILL PARDON HER." BUT JEREMIAH COULD NOT FIND EVEN ONE. CAN YOU IMAGINE THE CONDITION OF A CITY THAT DOES NOT HAVE EVEN **ONE** RIGHTEOUS PERSON IN IT!

DO YOU KNOW THAT ONE RIGHTEOUS MAN IN A CHURCH CAN BRING THE BLESSING OF GOD UPON THAT CHURCH?

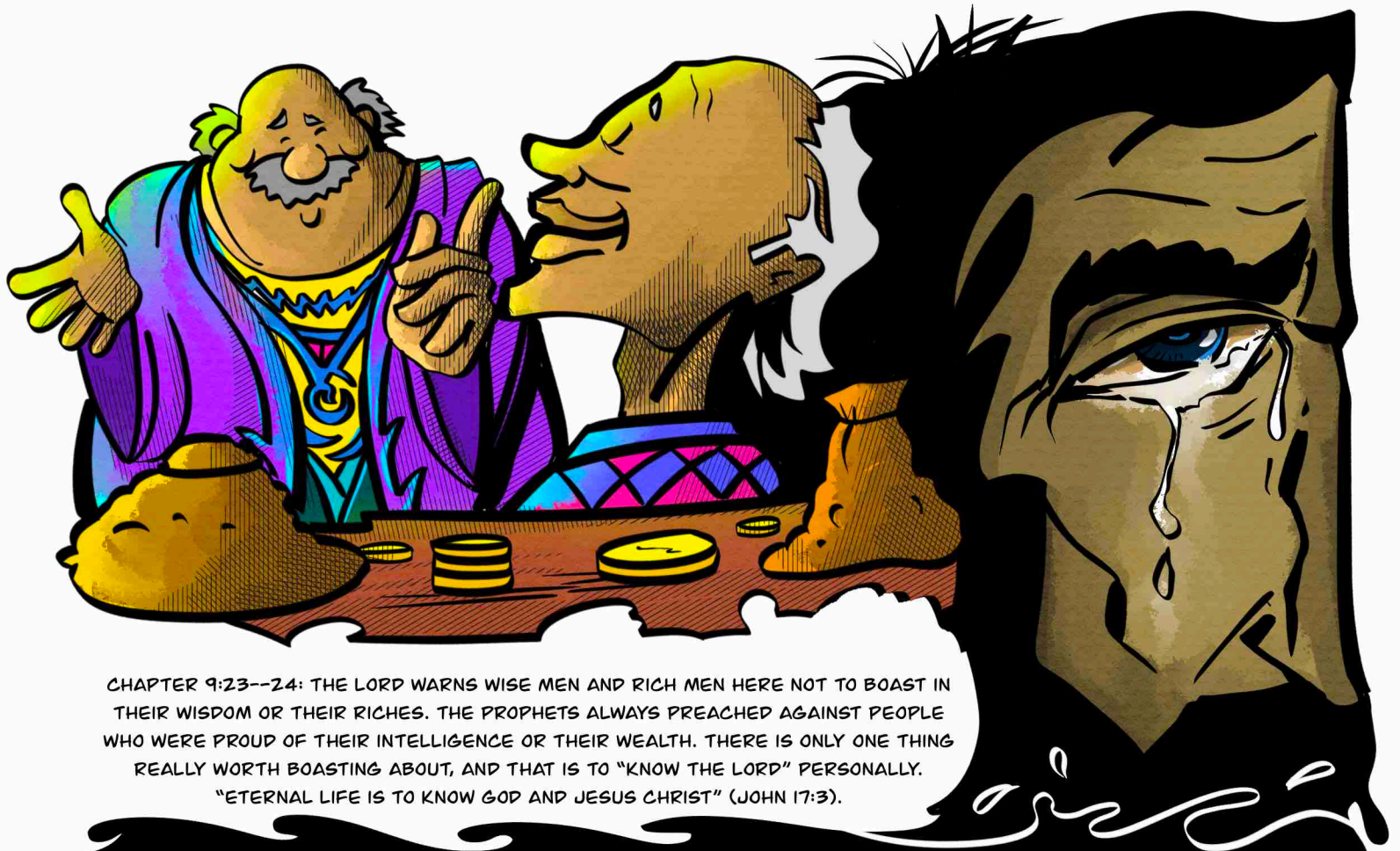
CHAPTER 6:16: THE LORD SAID, "**STAND BY THE WAYS AND ASK FOR THE ANCIENT PATHS, WHERE THE GOOD WAY IS**". THIS IS WHAT THE LORD IS ASKING US TO DO EVEN **TODAY**. WE MUST SEEK FOR THE WAY THAT THE **APOSTLES** WALKED **IMMEDIATELY** AFTER THE DAY OF PENTECOST. THAT IS "THE GOOD WAY." BUT THE MEN OF **JUDAH** SAID THEY WOULD **NOT** WALK IN IT.



THERE HAD BEEN A **SO-CALLED** REVIVAL UNDER KING JOSIAH, JUST BEFORE JEREMIAH APPEARED ON THE SCENE. BUT IT WAS A **SUPERFICIAL** REVIVAL. THE LORD TOLD JEREMIAH, TO STAND AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE TEMPLE AND TO TELL THE PEOPLE, "**CHANGE YOUR WAYS** AND DON'T TRUST IN **DECEPTIVE** WORDS SAYING, 'THIS IS THE **TEMPLE** OF THE LORD' " (VERSE 4). IN OTHER WORDS, "GOD IS **NOT IMPRESSED** WITH YOUR **RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE**, IF THERE IS NO **CHANGE** IN YOUR **WAYS**. IF YOU STEAL, MURDER, COMMIT **ADULTERY**, TELL **LIES** AND WORSHIP **IDOLS** AND THEN COME AND STAND BEFORE THE LORD IN HIS HOUSE, AND SAY, 'WE ARE **SAVED**,' IS IT TO DO ALL THESE ABOMINATIONS?" (VERSES 9, 10). JESUS QUOTED VERSE 11 SAYING: "HAS THIS HOUSE WHICH IS CALLED BY MY NAME BECOME A DEN OF **ROBBERS**?" (MATTHEW 21:13). NOW, 2000 YEARS LATER, GOD NEEDS PROPHETS WHO WILL STAND IN THE CHURCH AND SAY THE SAME THING: "ARE YOU GOING TO LIVE IN SIN IN YOUR **PRIVATE** LIFE, BE **UNRIGHTEOUS** IN **FINANCIAL** MATTERS, AND THEN COME INTO GOD'S HOUSE AND SAY, 'WE ARE SAVED, WE ARE ETERNALLY SECURE AS GOD'S CHILDREN?'" THAT IS **HYPOCRISY**. THE CONDITION OF GOD'S PEOPLE **TODAY** IS THE SAME AS IN **JEREMIAH'S DAY**.



SEE HOW JEREMIAH **WEPT** WHEN HE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS: CHAPTER 9:1: "O THAT MY HEAD WERE WATERS AND MY EYES A FOUNTAIN OF TEARS THAT I MIGHT WEEP DAY AND NIGHT FOR THE SLAIN OF THE DAUGHTER OF MY PEOPLE." THOUGH JEREMIAH PREACHED SUCH **HARD WORDS** IN **PUBLIC**, HE **WEPT** IN **PRIVATE**. ALL **TRUE** PROPHETS **WEEP** IN **SECRET** FOR THE **SINS** OF GOD'S PEOPLE.



CHAPTER 9:23--24: THE LORD WARNS WISE MEN AND RICH MEN HERE NOT TO BOAST IN THEIR WISDOM OR THEIR RICHES. THE PROPHETS ALWAYS PREACHED AGAINST PEOPLE WHO WERE PROUD OF THEIR INTELLIGENCE OR THEIR WEALTH. THERE IS ONLY ONE THING REALLY WORTH BOASTING ABOUT, AND THAT IS TO "KNOW THE LORD" PERSONALLY. "ETERNAL LIFE IS TO KNOW GOD AND JESUS CHRIST" (JOHN 17:3).

CHAPTER 13:17: AGAIN JEREMIAH WEEPS. HE SAYS, "IF YOU WILL NOT LISTEN TO MY PREACHING, MY SOUL WILL WEEP IN SECRET FOR YOUR PRIDE. MY EYES WILL BITTERLY WEEP AND FLOW DOWN WITH TEARS...." JEREMIAH IS CALLED "THE WEeping PROPHET". HE WAS A STRONG, BOLD MAN IN PUBLIC; BUT IN SECRET, HE WEPT JUST LIKE JESUS WEPT OVER JERUSALEM WHEN THE PEOPLE THERE DID NOT REPENT. JESUS NEVER WEPT IN PUBLIC EXCEPT AT THE TOMB OF LAZARUS. BUT HE WEPT IN SECRET. PEOPLE WEEP ONLY WHEN THEY HAVE A BURDEN. IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY CONCERN FOR GOD'S PEOPLE YOU WON'T WEEP. YOU WON'T WEEP WHEN SOMEBODY ELSE'S CHILD IS DYING. YOU CRY ONLY WHEN YOUR OWN CHILD IS DYING. WEeping ARISES OUT OF CONCERN AND GENUINE LOVE.



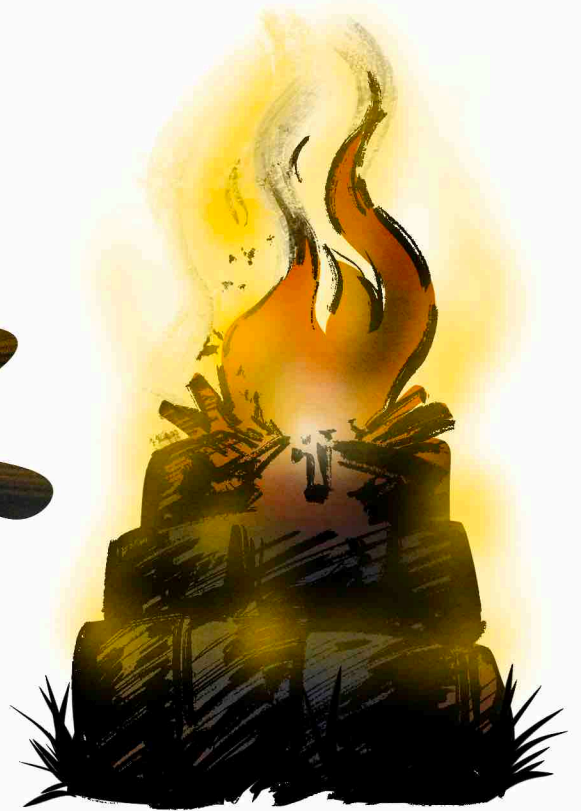
CHAPTER 15:16--21: WE SEE THREE CONDITIONS HERE TO BE A SPOKESMAN FOR GOD.

- *First* of all: "LORD, I FOUND YOUR WORDS, AND YOUR WORD HAS BECOME FOR ME THE JOY AND DELIGHT OF MY HEART" (VERSE 16). GOD'S WORD MUST BE THE JOY AND DELIGHT OF YOUR HEART. MANY WANT TO BE PREACHERS TODAY, WHO DO NOT SPEND TIME DIGGING INTO GOD'S WORD.
- *Secondly*: "I DID NOT SIT IN THE CIRCLE OF MERRYMAKERS" (VERSE 17). WHEN OTHER PEOPLE IN JUDAH WERE PARTYING AND HAVING FUN, JEREMIAH WENT AWAY BY HIMSELF TO BE ALONE WITH GOD. IF YOU DON'T DISCIPLINE YOURSELF TO STAY AWAY FROM THE JOKERS OF THIS WORLD, YOU CAN NEVER BE A SPOKESMAN FOR GOD. I AM NOT SAYING THAT HUMOUR AND CLEAN JOKES ARE WRONG. BUT MANY CHRISTIANS DON'T KNOW WHERE TO STOP.
- *Thirdly*: JEREMIAH MADE A COMPLAINT TO GOD IN VERSE 18 SAYING, "LORD, WHY HAVE YOU LET ME DOWN? YOU HAVE BEEN TO ME LIKE A DECEPTIVE STREAM, LIKE UNRELIABLE WATER. I COME TO THE STREAM THINKING THERE IS WATER THERE AND THERE IS NONE. YOU HAVE LET ME DOWN." THE LORD SAID, "DON'T EVER SAY THINGS LIKE THAT TO ME." THE LORD REBUKED JEREMIAH FOR SPEAKING WORDS OF UNBELIEF (VERSE 19). GOD NEVER LETS US DOWN.



THEN THE LORD TOLD JEREMIAH: "YOU MUST **NEVER** GO BACK TO THEM. YOU MUST INFLUENCE THEM. DON'T LET THEM EVER INFLUENCE YOU" (15:19 - LIVING).

DON'T LET THE **WORLD** INFLUENCE YOU; AND DON'T LET **CORRUPT CHRISTENDOM** INFLUENCE YOU. DON'T LET **BACKSLIPPEN PASTORS** AND **MONEY-LOVING** PREACHERS INFLUENCE YOU. LET **GOD** INFLUENCE YOU -- AND THEN INFLUENCE **OTHERS** TOWARDS **GODLINESS**. GOD'S PROMISE IS THAT HE WILL MAKE US "A **FORTIFIED WALL OF BRONZE** SUCH THAT PEOPLE WILL **NOT** BE ABLE TO **PREVAIL** OVER US" (15:20).



THERE IS A **HEAVY** PRICE TO BE PAID TO BE **GOD'S** SERVANT. IN JEREMIAH'S CASE, PART OF THAT PRICE WAS THAT HE WAS TO REMAIN UNMARRIED ALL HIS LIFE.

CHAPTER 17:5--8 IS A VERY **BLESSED** PASSAGE THAT TELLS US ABOUT TRUSTING IN THE **LORD** AND TRUSTING IN **MEN**.



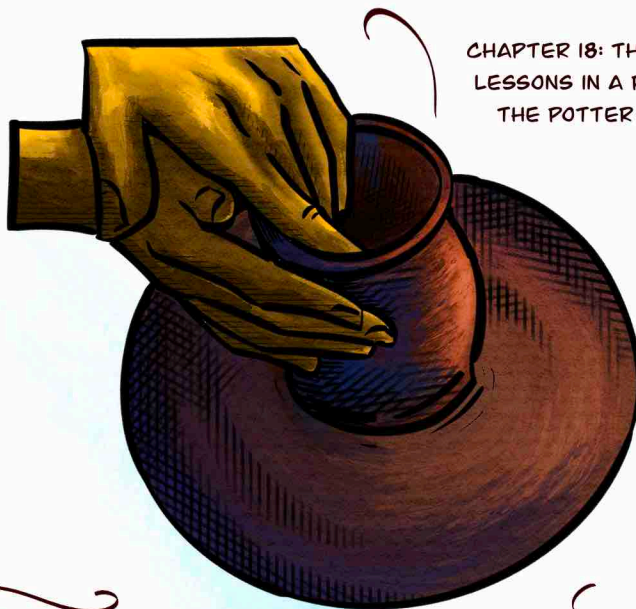
Cursed is the man who leans upon the arm of **flesh**.

Jer 17:5-8

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. He will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

TO **TRUST** IN THE LORD MEANS TO **DEPEND** ON THE LORD **FULLY**, TO **LEAN** UPON HIM, AND NOT TO TRUST IN OUR **OWN ABILITIES** OR IN ANY **HUMAN** SOURCE FOR HELP. GOD OFTEN USES MEN TO HELP US BUT HE WANTS US TO **DEPEND** ONLY ON **HIM**. SUCH A MAN OF **FAITH** WILL ALWAYS PRODUCE **FRUIT** IN HIS LIFE. HE WILL **NEVER** BE DRY. HE WILL ALWAYS BE **FRESH**, ANY TIME YOU MEET HIM, BECAUSE HIS **INNER** LIFE IS **DRAWING** WATER FROM THE **RIVER** OF THE **HOLY SPIRIT**.

CHAPTER 18: THE LORD TAUGHT JEREMIAH SOME LESSONS IN A POTTER'S HOUSE, FROM THE WAY THE POTTER MADE A VESSEL OUT OF CLAY.



WHEN THE VESSEL WAS SPOILT, HE MADE **ANOTHER** VESSEL WITH THE CLAY. THIS WAS A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO JUDAH. THE LORD COULD DO THAT WITH THEM, EVEN WHEN THEY HAD **BACKSLIPPEN**. AND THE LORD CAN DO THAT FOR YOU TOO. MAYBE YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN SPOILT BECAUSE YOU DID NOT RESPOND TO THE LORD. DO YOU FEEL THERE IS NO **HOPE** FOR YOU? READ JEREMIAH 18.

IN CHAPTER 17:21--24, JEREMIAH REBUKES THOSE **GREEDY** PEOPLE WHO WORKED ON THE SABBATH DAY IN ORDER TO MAKE MORE **MONEY**.

THERE IS **HOPE** FOR YOU. THE LORD CAN STILL MAKE YOU A VESSEL FOR HIS **GLORY**, IF HE CAN SUCCEED IN **HUMBLING** YOU. WHY WAS THAT VESSEL SPOILT IN THE POTTER'S HOUSE? BECAUSE THERE WERE SOME HARD LUMPS OF CLAY THERE THAT WOULDN'T ALLOW THE POTTER TO CRUSH IT. IF WE ALLOW GOD TO BREAK OUR **HARDNESS** AND **PRIDE**, HE CAN **STILL** MAKE US A VESSEL FOR HIS GLORY.

CHAPTER 20:7--11:
HERE JEREMIAH COMPLAINS SAYING, "LORD, YOU HAVE NEVER ALLOWED ME TO SPEAK A **KIND** WORD TO THESE PEOPLE. IT IS ALWAYS **JUDGMENT, JUDGMENT**" (LIVING).



MANY LIKE TO GET A REPUTATION AS BEING BALANCED IN THEIR PREACHING. THAT MAY BE ALL RIGHT FOR TEACHERS. BUT NO PROPHET WAS EVER BALANCED. THE PROPHETS WERE ALL IMBALANCED IN THEIR MINISTRY. THEY HAD A MESSAGE FROM GOD AND THEY KEPT ON PREACHING THE SAME MESSAGE FOREVER. JEREMIAH PREACHED THE SAME MESSAGE OF **JUDGEMENT** FOR 40 YEARS. IN THE BODY OF CHRIST TOO, GOD **RAISES UP** PROPHETS WHO HAVE A **PARTICULAR** BURDEN. OTHER CHRISTIANS MAY NOT HAVE THAT BURDEN. BUT THE LORD GIVES A PROPHET VERY OFTEN A SINGLE BURDEN. THEN HE MUST BE TRUE TO THAT IF HE WANTS TO REMAIN THE LORD'S PROPHET, AND NOT ALLOW OTHER **WELL-MEANING** CHRISTIANS TO **DIVERT** HIM INTO A MORE "BALANCED" MINISTRY. THE DAY HE **SUCCUMBS** TO THAT **PRESSURE** AND BECOMES "BALANCED", HE WILL CEASE TO BE GOD'S PROPHET TO HIS GENERATION. GOD GAVE JEREMIAH A **SINGLE** MESSAGE OF JUDGEMENT WITHOUT ONE KIND WORD TO THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH. AND FOR 40 YEARS HE FAITHFULLY STUCK TO THAT TASK -- AND HE WAS GOD'S SPOKESMAN UNTIL THE END.

MANY PEOPLE TRIED TO DESTROY HIM AND DENOUNCED HIM (20:10). EVEN HIS CLOSE FRIENDS WAITED FOR HIS DOWNFALL. BUT JEREMIAH WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE LORD WOULD STAND WITH HIM AS A **GREAT WARRIOR** AND THAT HIS PERSECUTORS WOULD THEREFORE STUMBLE AND FALL AND WOULD **NOT** PREVAIL AGAINST HIM AND WOULD END UP IN EVERLASTING DISGRACE (20:11). THE LORD STOOD BY JEREMIAH ACCORDING TO HIS **FAITH** AND THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED. THAT IS HOW THE LORD PROTECTS HIS PROPHETS.

CHAPTER 23:5, 6: HERE WE SEE JEREMIAH PROPHECYING ABOUT THE COMING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WHO IS CALLED HERE 'THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH' AND 'THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'



THIS TITLE REFERS TO THE LORD AS THE ONE WHO **JUSTIFIES** US BY **IMPUTING** HIS **RIGHTEOUSNESS** TO US. IT IS A **NEW-COVENANT** TITLE



FALSE PROPHETS ARE **EXPOSED** AND **DENOUNCED** NEXT. THEY INVENTED THEIR OWN MESSAGES AND SPOKE THEM SAYING "THUS SAYS THE LORD". BUT THE LORD HADN'T SPOKEN TO THEM. THERE ARE NUMEROUS PEOPLE **CARELESSLY** USING THAT PHRASE EVEN TODAY. IT IS VERY DANGEROUS TO GET UP AND SAY, "THUS SAYS THE LORD", WHEN YOU ARE NOT **SURE** WHETHER GOD HAS REALLY SPOKEN. PAUL INSTEAD SAID, "I THINK I HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD"

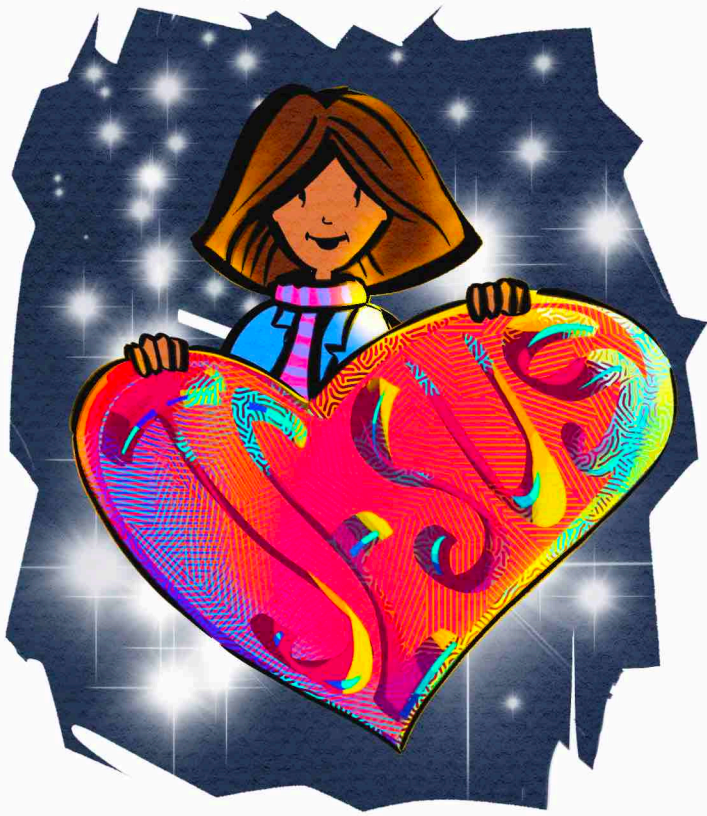


GOD SAYS THAT HIS **WORD** IS LIKE A **FIRE** AND A **HAMMER** (23:29). WHY ARE THE WORDS OF SO MANY PREACHERS UNABLE TO BREAK THE **HARD** HEARTS OF PEOPLE AND SET THEM ON **FIRE**? BECAUSE THEIR WORDS DID NOT COME FROM THE **LORD**.



IN CHAPTER 26:20--24, WE SEE SOMETHING OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. THERE WAS ANOTHER PROPHET NAMED **URIAH** AT THAT TIME, WHO WAS NOT SO WELL KNOWN. HE ALSO PROPHECIED THE SAME MESSAGE AS JEREMIAH DID. WHEN THE KING HEARD OF IT, HE TRIED TO KILL THAT MAN (VERSE 21). **URIAH** HEARD OF THIS AND RAN OFF TO EGYPT. BUT KING **JEHOIAKIM** SENT PEOPLE TO GET HIM FROM EGYPT AND THEY CAUGHT **URIAH** AND BROUGHT HIM BEFORE THE KING -- AND THE KING **KILLED** HIM. BUT GOD **SOVEREIGNLY** PROTECTED JEREMIAH. "AHIKAM, THE KING'S SECRETARY STOOD WITH JEREMIAH AND PERSUADED THE COURT NOT TO TURN HIM OVER TO THE MOB TO KILL HIM." (26:24 - LIVING). BOTH THESE PROPHETS WERE PREACHING THE SAME MESSAGE **FAITHFULLY**. ONE WAS KILLED AND THE OTHER ESCAPED. THIS IS SOMETHING LIKE WHAT HAPPENED TO **JAMES** AND **PETER**. **JAMES** WAS **KILLED** BUT **PETER** WAS **FREED**

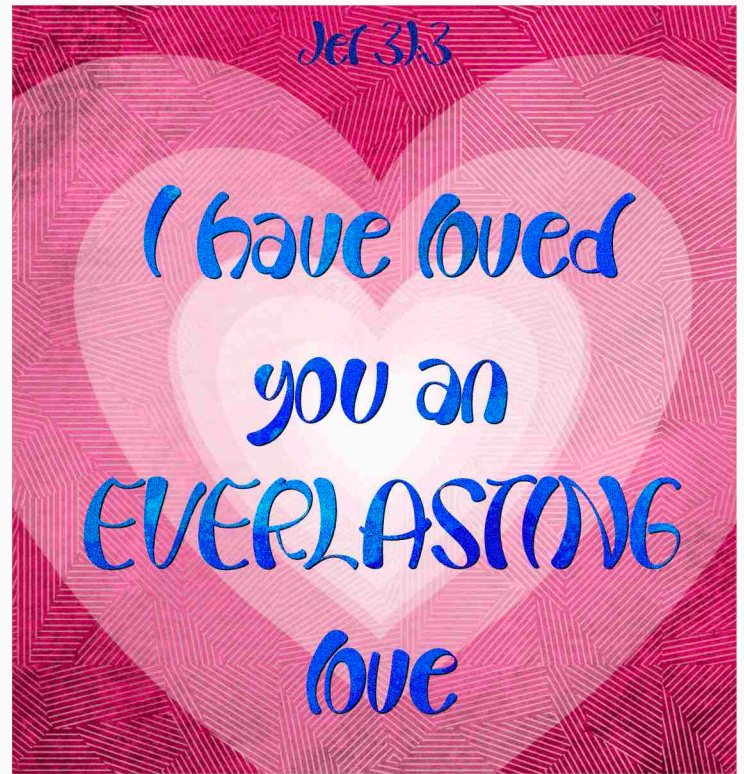
CHAPTER 25:3: THIS IS MIDWAY THROUGH JEREMIAH'S MINISTRY. HE SAYS THAT FOR 23 YEARS HE HAD PROPHECIED, BUT THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH HAD NOT LISTENED. BUT HE STILL CONTINUED TO PROPHESEY FAITHFULLY THAT JUDAH WOULD GO INTO CAPTIVITY FOR 70 YEARS -- AND THEY DID.



THE LORD SAID, "YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN YOU SEARCH FOR ME WITH **ALL YOUR HEART**" (VERSE 13). THE MOVEMENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE FROM BABYLON TO JERUSALEM BEGAN WHEN GOD FOUND A MAN WHO SOUGHT HIM WITH ALL HIS HEART (DANIEL). AND THE MOVEMENT OF GOD'S PEOPLE TODAY FROM **SPIRITUAL BABYLON** TO THE SPIRITUAL JERUSALEM (THE TRUE CHURCH) WILL ALSO BEGIN WHEN GOD FINDS PEOPLE WHO SEEK HIM WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS.



CHAPTER 32: HERE WE READ OF JEREMIAH BEING IMPRISONED BY THE ORDER OF KING ZEDEKIAH. WHILE HE WAS IN JAIL, THE LORD TOLD JEREMIAH TO BUY A PLOT OF **LAND** IN HIS HOMETOWN. THIS WAS AN ACT TO DEMONSTRATE HIS **FAITH** IN WHAT THE LORD HAD PROPHESIED THROUGH HIM. HUMANLY SPEAKING, IT IS THE MOST **FOOLISH** THING TO DO TO BUY A PLOT OF LAND WHEN A WAR IS ABOUT TO START AND YOU KNOW THAT THE **ENEMY** IS GOING TO OCCUPY THE WHOLE LAND. BUT JEREMIAH BOUGHT THIS LAND WITH HIS OWN MONEY TO PROVE TO THE PEOPLE THAT **70 YEARS LATER** GOD'S PEOPLE WOULD COME BACK AND IN THAT DAY HIS RELATIVES WOULD BE ABLE TO OCCUPY THIS BIT OF LAND. HE PUT HIS MONEY DOWN ON SOMETHING THAT WOULD LAST **AFTER** THE PERIOD OF JUDGEMENT WAS OVER. THIS IS SIMILAR TO OUR PUTTING OUR LIVES AND OUR MONEY DOWN FOR GOD'S WORK WHEN WE GAIN **NOTHING** IN THIS WORLD BY DOING SO. HUMANLY SPEAKING, THAT IS **FOOLISH**. NO SHREWD BUSINESSMAN WILL PUT HIS MONEY DOWN FOR SOMETHING THAT DOES NOT GIVE HIM SOME **EARTHLY GAIN**. BUT WE DO SO, BELIEVING THAT WE ARE GOING TO REAP **ETERNAL** RETURNS FROM OUR ACTIONS.



CHAPTER 31:3: HERE IS A BEAUTIFUL WORD FROM THE LORD TO ENCOURAGE US: "I HAVE LOVED YOU WITH AN EVERLASTING LOVE. THEREFORE I HAVE DRAWN YOU WITH **LOVING-KINDNESS**." HE DRAWS US TO HIMSELF NOT BECAUSE WE DESERVE ANYTHING, BUT ONLY BECAUSE OF HIS **EVERLASTING**, UNCHANGING LOVE FOR US.

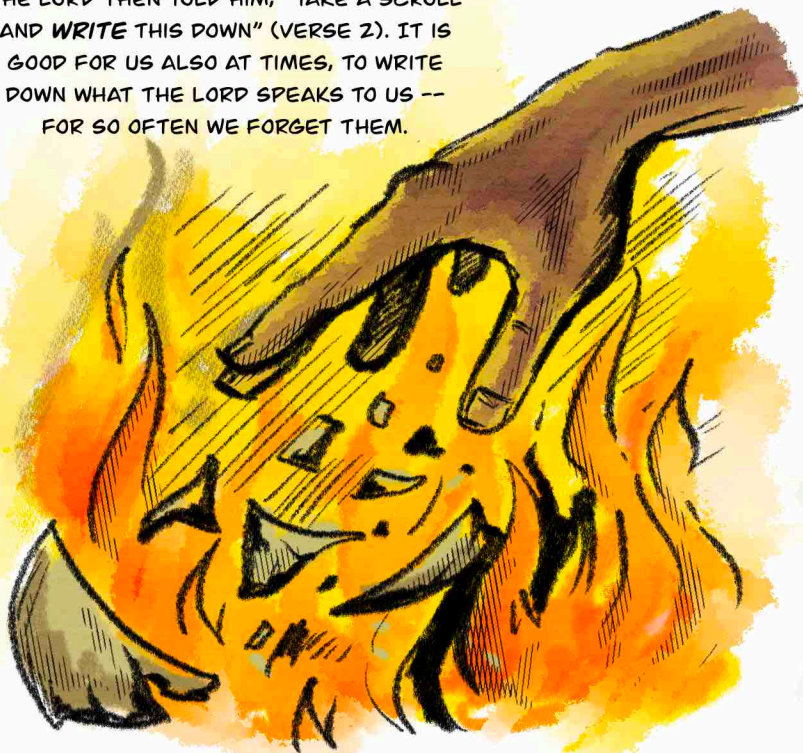


JEREMIAH EXPRESSED THAT FAITH IN THESE WORDS, "LORD, **NOTHING** IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU" (32:17). HE SAID THAT IN RELATION TO THE PURCHASE OF THIS PROPERTY. AND THE LORD ANSWERED HIM SAYING, "I AM THE LORD, GOD OF ALL FLESH. IS ANYTHING TOO **DIFFICULT** FOR ME?"



CHAPTER 33:3, WE SEE ANOTHER WONDERFUL PROMISE OF GOD:
 "CALL UNTO ME AND I WILL ANSWER YOU. I WILL SHOW YOU
 GREAT AND **MIGHTY** THINGS THAT YOU DON'T **KNOW** OF." WHAT
 AN INVITATION! WE HAVE TO CALL UPON GOD, IF WE ARE TO
EXPERIENCE THE MIRACLES THAT THESE PROPHETS
 EXPERIENCED.

THE LORD THEN TOLD HIM, "TAKE A SCROLL
 AND **WRITE** THIS DOWN" (VERSE 2). IT IS
 GOOD FOR US ALSO AT TIMES, TO WRITE
 DOWN WHAT THE LORD SPEAKS TO US --
 FOR SO OFTEN WE FORGET THEM.



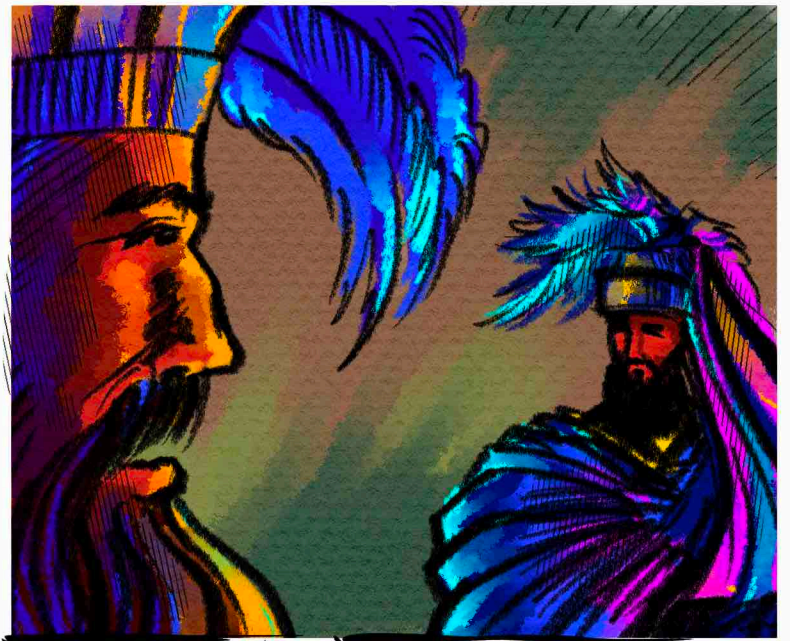
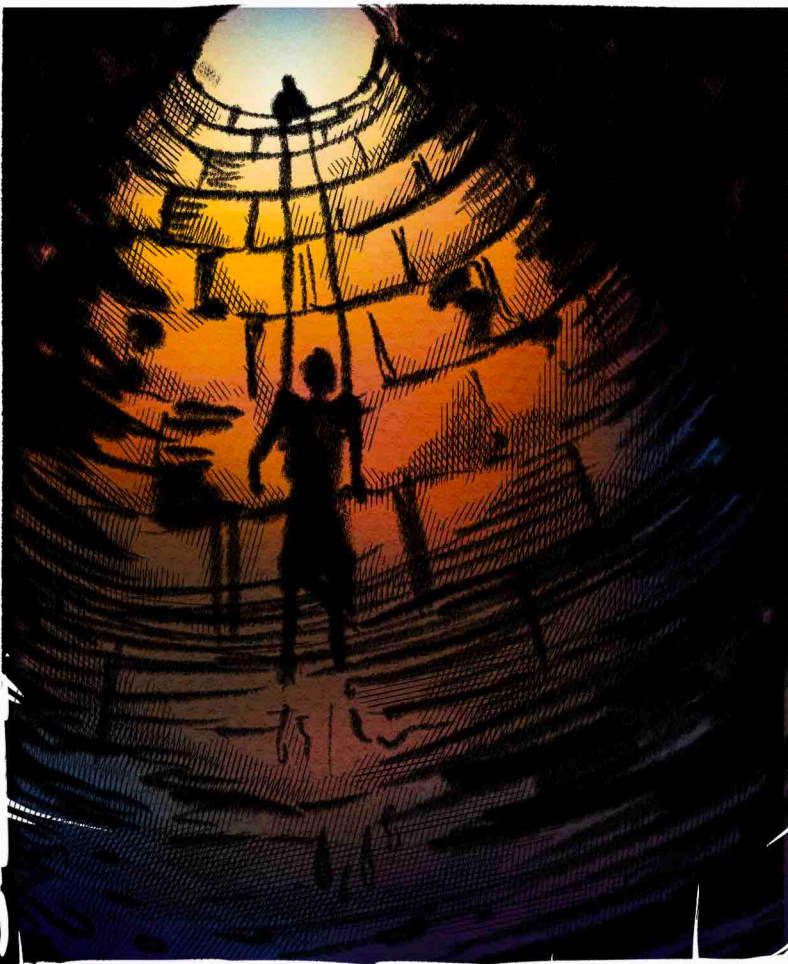
WHEN THE KING HEARD ABOUT THAT SCROLL, HE ORDERED IT BROUGHT TO
 HIM. AS SOON AS HE HEARD A SMALL PORTION OF IT, HE GOT **ANGRY** AND
 CUT IT INTO PIECES AND THREW IT IN THE FIRE (36:22, 23). WHAT DID
 JEREMIAH DO THEN? (REMEMBER THAT WHAT THE KING DESTROYED WAS
 THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH THAT WE HAVE IN THE BIBLE TODAY.) "THEN
 JEREMIAH TOOK **ANOTHER** SCROLL AND DICTATED AGAIN TO BARUCH ALL HE
 HAD WRITTEN BEFORE, ONLY THIS TIME THE LORD **ADDED** A LOT MORE"!!
 (36:32 - LIVING). THAT IS WHY WE HAVE 52 CHAPTERS IN JEREMIAH!



THE LORD TOLD JEREMIAH TO CALL THE
RECHABITE FAMILY INTO THE TEMPLE AND TO
 OFFER THEM WINE TO DRINK. WHEN HE DID THAT,
 THESE RECHABITES SAID THAT THEY WOULD NOT
 DRINK IT!! THEY SAID THAT FOR GENERATIONS THEIR
 FOREFATHERS HAD TOLD THEIR FAMILY NEVER TO
 DRINK WINE AND THEY HAD OBEYED THAT COMMAND
 FOR 200 YEARS. WHAT **AMAZING** OBEEDIENCE! THE
 LORD THEN SAID TO JEREMIAH, "HERE IS A FAMILY
 THAT IS **FAITHFUL** TO THEIR FATHERS IN OBEYING
 THEIR WORD. BUT JUDAH DOES NOT LISTEN TO ME."

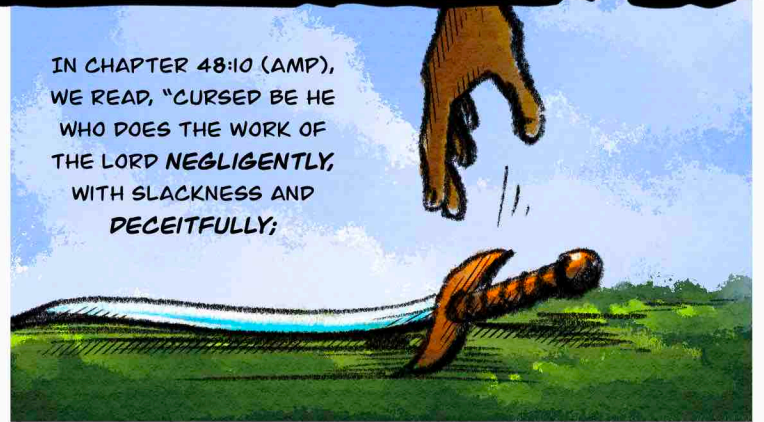
THE LORD THEN PROMISED THE FAMILY OF THE
 RECHABITES THAT THEY WOULD ALWAYS HAVE THE
 PRIVILEGE OF STANDING BEFORE HIM (35:19). EVEN
 TODAY, IN THE MIDST OF MANY BACKSLIDERS IN
 CHRISTENDOM, YOU WILL FIND ONE FAMILY LIKE
 THAT STANDING TRUE TO GOD. PRAISE GOD FOR
 SUCH FAMILIES THAT HAVE BEEN BROUGHT UP IN
 GODLY WAYS BY THEIR PARENTS.





CHAPTER 39:11--14: WHEN **NEBUCHADNEZZAR** CAME TO JERUSALEM, HE HEARD ABOUT JEREMIAH AND GAVE ORDERS TO HIS CAPTAIN TO LOOK AFTER HIM, AND NOT TO HARM HIM IN ANY WAY, BUT TO DO FOR HIM "**WHATEVER HE WANTS**". IT IS **AMAZING** TO SEE HOW GOD GAVE HIS SERVANT FAVOUR EVEN BEFORE THE WORLD'S MOST **POWERFUL** RULER OF THAT TIME. GOD IS THE **SAME** TODAY AND HE WILL DO THE SAME FOR HIS SERVANTS TODAY AS WELL.

IN CHAPTER 38, WE READ OF JEREMIAH BEING THROWN INTO A WELL FULL OF **QUICKSAND**, BECAUSE HE WAS PREACHING THAT BABYLON WOULD COME AND CAPTURE JUDAH -- AND THE KING AND HIS OFFICIALS DID NOT LIKE TO **HEAR** THAT. JEREMIAH SANK INTO THE MUD AND WOULD HAVE DIED SOON. BUT AGAIN WE SEE THE **SOVEREIGNTY** OF GOD PRESERVING THE LIFE OF HIS SERVANT. AN AFRICAN MAN NAMED **EBED-MELECH** WENT AND SPOKE TO THE KING AND ASKED FOR PERMISSION TO PULL JEREMIAH OUT OF THE PIT AND PULLED HIM OUT AND SAVED HIS **LIFE** (38:6--13). GOD HAS HIS AGENTS IN THE MOST UNLIKELY PLACES WHOM HE USES TO SERVE HIS **FAITHFUL** SERVANTS. AND BECAUSE EBED-MELECH HELPED JEREMIAH, GOD PROMISED HIM THAT WHEN THE PEOPLE WERE CAPTURED, HE WOULD **ESCAPE** (39:16--18). GOD WILL **NOT FORGET** EVEN A CUP OF COLD WATER GIVEN TO HELP HIS SERVANTS.



IN CHAPTER 48:10 (AMP), WE READ, "CURSED BE HE WHO DOES THE WORK OF THE LORD **NEGLIGENTLY**, WITH SLACKNESS AND **DECEITFULLY**;

LATER ON, WHEN THEY WERE PLANNING TO GO TO EGYPT THEY TOLD JEREMIAH TO FIND OUT GOD'S **WILL** FOR THEM, PROMISING TO OBEY WHATEVER GOD SAID. WHEN JEREMIAH TOLD THEM THAT THE LORD WANTED THEM TO **STAY** IN JUDAH AND NOT TO GO TO EGYPT, THEY DIDN'T **LISTEN**

AND CURSED BE HE WHO KEEPS BACK HIS **SWORD** (TONGUE) FROM EXECUTING (PROCLAIMING) THE JUDGMENT **PRONOUNCED** BY THE LORD". THAT IS A WARNING THAT ALL OF US SHOULD TAKE HEED TO.



FINALLY, IN CHAPTER 52, WE READ ABOUT THE **FALL** OF JERUSALEM. THUS ENDS THIS MARVELLOUS BOOK OF A PROPHET WHO FAITHFULLY PREACHED AN **UNPOPULAR** MESSAGE TO GOD'S PEOPLE WITHOUT EVER WAVERING FOR 40 YEARS. HE WAS A **FAILURE** IN **MAN'S** EYES BUT A TREMENDOUS **SUCCESS** IN **GOD'S** EYES. MAY THE **LORD RAISE** UP MANY MEN LIKE JEREMIAH **TODAY**.