

The Study on the Book of Jeremiah
Week #15: “The Plot on Jeremiah’s Life”
Sunday, February 2, 2025 (PM Service)

1. The Forbidding of Jeremiah (Jer. 11:14-17)

- a. For the second time God told Jeremiah not to pray for his people. (Jer. 7:16)
 - i. They presumptuously believed they could cling to their idols and also receive God’s help whenever they needed it.
- b. Who has the right to be in God’s house?
 - i. Some people think they do the Lord a favor by attending church services instead of seeing worship both as fulfilling the covenant and as a privilege.

2. The Plot Against Jeremiah’s Life

- a. **Chapters 11-20** reveal the inner tension that exists between idealism and reality.
- b. In every case Jeremiah called for vengeance on his enemies.
 - i. Sometimes God responded to the complaint, (Jer. 11; 12) 15), but at other times there is no recorded response.
 - ii. The most likely time when Jeremiah would find himself an object of intense persecution was during the reign of King Jehoiakim, his bitter adversary.
- c. These remind us that even the most dedicated person may at times find it difficult to do God’s will.
 - i. They also show that God uses imperfect people to do his work.
 - ii. He does not wait until we become perfected saints to use us.

3. The Plot Revealed to Jeremiah (Jer. 11:18-19)

- a. The Lord made Jeremiah aware of a plot against his life.
 - i. The discovery made Jeremiah felt like a lamb being led to the slaughter. (Isa. 53:7)
 - ii. No reason is given for the plot, but it probably was a reaction to his denunciation of the people’s sins.
- b. Like the defendant in court who casts himself on the mercy of the judge, Jeremiah appealed to God as one who judges righteously.
 - i. He was confident in his innocence and therefore made his bold appeal.

- ii. He knew that nothing was hidden from God, who tests the “heart and mind” (Literally “kidneys” and “heart”).
- iii. Ancient Israelites believed that the kidneys were the seat of emotions and that the heart was the seat of intellect and will.

4. God’s Assurance of Punishment (Jer. 11:21-23)

- a. The Lord responded to Jeremiah’s plea by assuring him that He was going to punish his persecutors.
 - i. They would die by sword and famine.

5. The Question About the Prosperity of the Wicked (Jer. 12:1-3)

- a. Jeremiah raised a question that has been asked many times: “Why do wicked people seem to prosper?” (Job 21:7; Mal. 2:17)
- b. Jeremiah knew what should be done with his enemies.
 - i. He demanded that the Lord drag them away like sheep to be slaughtered.
 - ii. “Drag” is a word that can be used of ripping up tent cords or a vine from the soil.
- c. Jer. 12:5-6: God did not console Jeremiah as he did in 11:21-23, nor did he answer Jeremiah’s question about the prosperity of the wicked.
 - i. Instead, by means of gentle irony, he warned Jeremiah that if he could not cope with the difficulties he was then experiencing, he should consider what he would do in a really serious situation.

Conclusion:

- The Lord used two analogies to make His point:
 - If a footrace with men would tire Jeremiah, how could he compete (an unusual use of the word “to burnt”) in a race with horses?
 - If he stumbled in safe country (Literally “Land of peace”), how could he manage in the jungle-like thickets that grew along the Jordan River? (Lk. 9:62)