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Attitude Adjustment
Series: The Weeping Prophet
The Village Church at Shell Point
Evening Service
November 27, 2022

- I. **Jeremiah's Messages** to...
 - A. **Judah**
 - 1. **Kings**
 - a. Jehoiakim
 - b. Zedekiah
 - 2. **Princes**
 - 3. **Priests**
 - a. Pashhur
 - b. False shepherds
 - 4. **People**
 - 5. **False prophets**
 - a. Hananiah
 - b. Shemaiah
 - 6. **Cities**
 - B. **Jerusalem**
 - 1. Pre-fall
 - 2. Remnant
 - C. **Exiles**
 - D. **Kings and nations**
 - 1. Babylon
 - 2. Egypt
 - 3. Uz
 - 4. Philistines
 - 5. Edom
 - 6. Moab
 - 7. Ammon
 - 8. Tyre
 - 9. Sidon
 - 10. Dedan
 - 11. Tema
 - 12. Buz
 - 13. Arabia
 - 14. Zimri
 - 15. Elam
 - E. **Nomads**
 - 1. Rechabites

2. Kedar
- F. Nature of the messages
 1. Judgment (overwhelming majority)
 2. Encouragement
- II. Jeremiah's Message to Baruch
 - A. Chapter 45
 1. Not about Jeremiah, Judah, Jerusalem, nations, judgment
 2. About Baruch
 3. Only man in OT who has been fingerprinted
 - a. 1975 – archeological purchase of clay document markers from Arab antiquities dealer
 - (1) Bookmarks of the ancient world
 - b. Translated in 1986
 - (1) One bears the seal of Baruch, son of Neriah
 - c. Another subsequently found with Baruch's seal
 - (1) Also a thumbprint – likely of Baruch!
 4. Baruch – a real historical person; flesh and blood like you and me
 - B. Faithful assistant, secretary
 - C. One who helps Jeremiah deliver messages
 - D. 5 verses – message to Baruch
 1. From the Lord
 2. Through Jeremiah
 - E. Why does Baruch get a message?
 1. Needs an attitude adjustment
 - F. Why should this message concern us?
 1. Probably the most applicable message to us
 - a. Not prophets
 - b. Not kings
 - c. Not priests
 - d. Not nations
 - e. Not major power brokers of our day
 - (1) Don't live in Washington, but Fort Myers
 - f. Twists and turns of history don't turn on our individual choices, by and large
 2. We're just ministry assistants
 - a. We have our little sphere of activity and influence
 - b. Small impact on people in the grand scheme of things
 3. Hard to relate to Jeremiah
 - a. Great deeds
 - b. Difficult circumstances
 - c. Bold words
 - d. Courageous positions
 - e. Deep depressions
 - f. Larger than life figure
 4. We're more like Baruch

- a. Attributes and failings are more like ours
 - 5. Sometimes we need our attitudes adjusted
- III. **Chapter 45 – Flashback to Chapter 36**
 - A. Jeremiah dictated his prophecies to Baruch
 - 1. Baruch wrote them in a scroll
 - a. Read them in the temple
 - 2. Jehoiakim destroyed them in his fireplace
 - 3. Another scroll was dictated to Baruch
 - B. During this time, pressure was on Jeremiah and Baruch
 - 1. Had to hide to protect themselves
 - 2. Jehoiakim was out to kill them; couldn't find them
- IV. **Occasion for Chapter 45**
 - A. Something Baruch said
 - B. **Jeremiah 45:1-3** (ESV) —
 - 1. 1 The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah:
 - 2. 2 “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch:
 - 3. 3 You said, ‘Woe is me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.’
 - C. Complaining
 - 1. OT – God hates complaining in his servants!
 - D. Why was Baruch so depressed?
 - 1. Hanging around a perpetually depressed man!
 - 2. Had to run for his life with Jeremiah – physical danger
 - a. Friend constantly in danger
 - b. Baruch along with Jeremiah faced the same things at times
 - 3. Engaged in thankless task – Jeremiah’s prophecies would not be heeded
 - 4. Prophecies were severe – destruction of Jerusalem
 - a. His own city would be destroyed
 - b. Culture would be destroyed
 - c. People would be destroyed
 - (1) Many whom he knew personally would be destroyed
 - d. Unholy trinity of means – sword, famine and plague
 - 5. A lot of work was wasted
 - a. Complaint occurred later, after Jehioakim burned scroll
 - b. His entire manuscript destroyed
 - (1) Days, months of work up in smoke
 - c. No back up copies; no computers, no word processors, no cloud storage
 - 6. Hard work
 - a. Complaint occurred when he was making second copy
 - (1) Just plain exhausted
 - b. Writing then wasn’t what it is now
 - (1) Letter by letter

- (2) Mistakes corrected by scratching out each error with a knife, rewriting the letter
 - c. **Ecclesiastes 12:12** (ESV) — 12 My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.
 - d. “Writing is easy. All I do is sit down at my desk and wait until drops of blood begin to form on my forehead.”
 - e. Physical exhaustion leads to mental and psychological exhaustion
 - (1) Related to depression
- 7. **Jeremiah 45:3** (ESV) —
 - a. 3 You said, ‘Woe is me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.’
- 8. Nature of his complaints
 - a. Covers all those possibilities
 - b. Woe is me – expresses personal condemnation
 - (1) So depressed, just want to end my life
 - c. Sorrow – deep sadness at prospects for his own people, nation
 - d. Pain – physical manifestations
 - e. Weary and no rest – exhaustion
 - f. Groaning – can’t even put into words his feelings, he’s so discouraged, depressed
 - g. Every one of his complaints – we can all identify with at one time or another
 - (1) Physical pain
 - (2) Psychological distress
 - (3) Exhaustion
 - (4) Spiritual depression
 - h. Every one of his complaints – common to all human beings in a fallen world
 - (1) Evidence of the effects of sin in the world
- E. Sufferings are common in the church
 - 1. Need the Sabbath worship
 - a. Come exhausted
 - b. Need refreshing
 - c. Need someone to pray for our pain, sufferings, discouragements
- F. Bible doesn’t skip over these things which are common to man
 - 1. Realistic view of struggles of life
 - 2. It’s what makes the Bible the Word of God
 - a. True, in every dimension
 - b. Not a Pollyannish view of the world
 - c. No rose colored glasses
 - d. Tells it like it is – pulls no punches
 - e. “Doesn’t call a spade a spade; calls it a damn shovel”
 - 3. Bible is relevant because it speaks to every dimension of human existence
 - a. Joys and sorrows

- b. Pains, discouragements, groaning
 - 4. Why Jesus is the fulcrum of history; the person around whom the world revolves
 - a. Man of sorrows
 - b. Acquainted with grief
 - c. Uniquely able to sympathize with our weaknesses
 - d. Went through all our sufferings and more
 - e. Able to minister to use with tender compassion
 - G. Poor Baruch
 - 1. Needs a word from God
 - a. For his poor depressed soul
- V. **God's Word for Baruch**
 - A. How would you counsel Baruch?
 - 1. Listen kindly
 - a. Lend him sympathetic ear
 - 2. Take some time off
 - 3. Encourage him to change ministries to something easier
 - a. Or churches!!!
 - 4. Tell him that God works all things to good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose (**Romans 8.28**)
 - 5. All of those might be useful at one time or another
 - B. Not how God answers Baruch
 - C. **Jeremiah 45:5** (ESV) —
 - 1. 5 “And do you seek great things for yourself?
 - 2. Seek them not, for behold, I am bringing disaster upon all flesh, declares the LORD.
 - 3. But I will give you your life as a prize of war in all places to which you may go.”
 - D. Stop being selfish!
 - 1. Ryken: God looked into his heart and saw how self-centered he was.
 - 2. **Jeremiah 45:3** (ESV) —
 - a. 3 You said, ‘Woe is me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.’
 - b. Emphasis on I or me
 - 3. Hebrew – each item is a first person possessive pronoun
 - a. My woe
 - b. My pain
 - c. My being worn out
 - d. My groaning
 - e. My finding no rest
 - 4. Ryken: However much he may have hated his life, Baruch was still very deeply in love with himself!
 - E. Our encounter with Pastor Miller over ministry altercation
 - F. **Baruch and God**
 - 1. Baruch’s complaint is a complaint about God

- a. “The Lord has added...”
- 2. Spiritual depression is ultimately about disappointment with God
 - a. My circumstances aren’t what I dreamed about
 - (1) God is in charge of my circumstances
 - b. My spouse isn’t what I dreamed of
 - (1) God is sovereign over my marriage partner
 - c. My job is the pits
 - (1) God didn’t give me the job I really want
 - d. My life is filled with losses – family, close friends, my own capacities and faculties
 - (1) God could have prevented those losses
- 3. Ryken: As depression turns against God, it turns inward upon the self... But God cut right to the heart of Baruch’s real problem: He was seeking something for *himself*.

G. **Baruch and his self- seeking**

- 1. Easier life
 - a. Who wouldn’t?
- 2. Wanted a promotion
 - a. From ameneuensis to prophet
- 3. Wanted his earlier prospects to be fulfilled
 - a. Well educated
 - b. Good family
 - (1) Grandfather was a governor
 - (2) Brother was high ranking official
 - c. But he was merely taking dictation

VI. **God’s Perspective**

A. **Jeremiah 45:4** (ESV) —

- 1. 4 “Thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD:
- 2. Behold, what I have built I am breaking down, and what I have planted I am plucking up—that is, the whole land.”

B. You think you’ve got problems, losses

- 1. God: “Everything that I spent hundreds of years establishing – my people, the apple of my eye – I am about to destroy due to their sin and rebellion”
- 2. “In fact, I’m about to do it in the whole world!”

C. Possibilities

- 1. 605 – Battle of Carchemish (Babylonians defeated Egyptians, exerted hegemony over entire region unmercifully)
- 2. 586 – destruction of Jerusalem, exile of Judah
- 3. Final judgment of all the earth

D. All hell is about to break loose on the whole land!

- 1. Foolish time to be selfish
- 2. Want great things for yourself?
 - a. Everyone else around you is about to be destroyed!

E. Ryken: It was inappropriate for Baruch to be so selfish when the world was in such great danger; he was having his own private little pity party. Meanwhile, the

rest of the world was going to Hell. God was going to judge them for their sins. If worldwide disaster is inevitable, why should someone like Baruch worry about his petty concerns?

- F. Ryken: Baruch's rebuke is a reminder to be desperately concerned about the spiritual condition of family and friends. The eternal destiny of every soul hangs in the balance. Either you and your loved ones will spend eternity with God or you will be banished from his presence forever. Compared with that, the rest of life's troubles scarcely deserve mention.

VII. **Baruch's Solution**

- A. **Jeremiah 45:5** (ESV) —

1. 5 "And do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not..."

- B. Don't seek great things for yourself

1. Cf Romans 12

2. **Romans 12:3** (ESV) — 3 ... I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think...

- C. Have high aspirations to be someone great in ministry?

1. Be content with the little things in ministry

a. That's where most of us live

2. Want to be like Luther, Calvin, Edwards, Schaeffer?

a. Discover what they went through

- D. Hudson Taylor: A little thing is just a little thing, but faithfulness in a little thing is a great thing.

1. Ryken: God is glorified greatly by little things done for his glory. Attempt small things for God.

- E. Sanctification

1. Die to self

2. **Romans 6:3-11** (ESV) —

a. 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

b. 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

c. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

d. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

e. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin.

f. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

g. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

h. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

i. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to

God in Christ Jesus.

3. Bonhoeffer: When a person has completely given up the idea of making something of himself... then one throws oneself entirely into the arms of God, then one no longer takes seriously his own suffering.

VIII. **God's Assurance**

- A. Baruch's booty
 1. What are Baruch's prospects in these circumstances?
 2. **Jeremiah 45:5** (ESV) —
 - a. 5 ... But I will give you your life as a prize of war in all places to which you may go.”
 3. God: I'll make sure you're safe wherever you may go (including Egypt as we eventually find out)
 - a. You get your life; that's much better than most
- B. God will save Baruch
- C. Life as booty
 1. Same phrase as used for Ebed-melech (39.18)
 - a. **Jeremiah 39:18** (ESV) — 18 “For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword, but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have put your trust in me, declares the LORD.’ ”
 2. Taking plunder from a battlefield
 - a. We don't think of life as a battlefield
 - b. We would get this issue right if we did
- D. Everyone who trust in Jesus savingly has the same promise as Baruch
 1. You will have your life saved as plunder from the battlefield
 - a. Eternally!

IX. **Baruch's response**

- A. We don't see it
 1. Chapter 45 ends in just 5 verses
- B. Or do we?
 1. After all, he's the author of the book
 2. He finished it
 - a. Carried out the legacy of Jeremiah, probably even after Jeremiah died
 3. He preserved the words of Jeremiah
 4. He included this episode about his own life
 - a. On purpose
- C. I think he got it
 1. Will you get it?