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**APOSTOLIC VERSE BY VERSE BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

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**“A BURNING FIRE SHUT UP IN MY BONES”**

**Jeremiah 20:1-18**

***Jeremiah 20:1 "Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who [was] also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things."***

God had not left the priest out in the accusations He had Jeremiah to bring. In the last lesson, Jeremiah had said, that it would not matter how important in the community a person was, the judgment from God would be the same. Pashur either heard Jeremiah say this directly or got word of it from the others who had met with him. This Pashur was a priest and chief officer of the temple police.

***Jeremiah 20:2 "Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that [were] in the high gate of Benjamin, which [was] by the house of the LORD."***

Jeremiah had been ridiculed and persecuted previously because of his message, but this time it got physical. He was ordered beaten by Pashhur the priest, the chief official in the temple. "Smote", in the verse above, means strike or beat. Pashhur also put Jeremiah in stocks at one of the gates of the temple to publicly humiliate him. He probably had him whipped. To strike a prophet, is a very serious thing. It appears, they actually locked Jeremiah up with leg chains. Pashur was in charge of keeping order in the court of the LORD. This would have given him a great deal of leeway to do as he wished. He, like the priests and others in authority, did not like the message Jeremiah brought. The others had never physically attacked Jeremiah, however.

***Jeremiah 20:3 "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but Magor-missabib."***

Jeremiah was let out the next day, but the flogging didn’t dampen his commitment to share God’s message. He even told Pashhur that the Lord had decided on a new name for him. Pashur is given a name that symbolizes the great terror that will come upon Judah and Jerusalem. The Hebrew Magor-missabib, “Terror on Every Side,” is often used by Jeremiah (6:25; 20:3,10; 46:5; 49:29; Lamentations 2:22). This was a bold thing to say to the person who had authority to put you in chains. The thing that Pashur had done to Jeremiah, was from fear. This is a reference to what this man and his family would experience when God handed Judah over to the king of Babylon. Pashhur and his family would be deported to Babylon and die there, in part because Pashhur had prophesied lies of his own perhaps in an attempt to discredit Jeremiah’s message.

***Jeremiah 20:4 "For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold [it]: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword."***

***Jeremiah 20:5 "Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon."***

This fright of Pashur will turn to terror, when he sees all of his friends falling by the sword. Those that are not killed, will be taken into captivity in Babylon. It appears from this, that Pashur had put a great deal of importance on material things. God will take all of them away from him. All of the things he had been so proud of, would be carried back to Babylon as spoil. We all should greatly admire Jeremiah for being able to stand before this man with much worldly power and prophesy these things to him.

***Jeremiah 20:6 "And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies."***

It appears, that Pashur will live to be taken captive in Babylon and be killed there. He will not even be buried in his native land. He, and all his friends, will die and be buried in Babylon. Jeremiah not only prophesies his doom, but calls him a liar, as well. He had been prophesying that all was well. That was a lie, and Jeremiah tells him so.

***Jeremiah 20:7 "O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me."***

***Jeremiah 20:8 "For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily."***

This is speaking of Jeremiah not wanting to be a prophet in the first place, and the Lord made Jeremiah a prophet anyway. He is feeling sorry for himself because no one likes him. Not only do they not like Jeremiah, but they laugh at him, and say he is not a true prophet. Jeremiah had never been shy about expressing his emotions, and he also complains that God had deceived him by calling him into a ministry in which he experienced so much abuse and emotional pain. Jeremiah often allows the reader to see his inner turmoil in the midst of his continuous persecution. The verb translated deceived is a strong one and can be translated “seduced” (Exodus 22:16; 1 Kings 22:20–22). Regardless however negative the circumstance, the believer must come to trust in God’s abiding presence with him.

***Joshua 1:5 “There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”***

***Hebrews 13:5-6***

***5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.***

***6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.***

Jeremiah complains that God had overpowered him when He called him. But he seems to have forgotten that God had warned him of all that he would face right from the start (1:18) and had reassured His prophet on several occasions (11:18–12: 17; 15: 10–21; 17:7–18). The believer is at times so overcome by circumstances that he says things that on more sober reflection are, at best, inadvisable (Psalm 73:1–22). An important lesson I’ve learned in ministering to God’s people is what Jesus taught His disciples. We must learn to place more emphasis on what believers “do” and not what the “say”.

***Matthew 21:28-31***

***28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.***

***29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.***

***30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.***

***31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.***

***Jeremiah 20:9 "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But [his word] was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not [stay]."***

***Jeremiah 20:10 "For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, [say they], and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, [saying], Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him."***

It appears from this, that Jeremiah tried to stop bringing the prophecies, but God would not let him. They burned in his heart until he had to tell what God had told him. He was compelled to prophesy. He had to do what God called him to do. This was not a message Jeremiah would have chosen to tell. There was great gloom and doom in the message he brought. God put the words in Jeremiah's mouth, and Jeremiah spoke them. Every day was difficult for him, because of the message he brought. They all hated Jeremiah, because of the message. We must remember he was just a youth. It seems everyone thought he was either insane, prideful, or power crazy. They chose not to believe him. They plotted to stop him, anyway they could. They all wanted to get even with him for his terrible prophecies. But Jeremiah is not charging God with being unfair or dishonest. He knew his message was from the Lord, and even when he tried to hold it back, God’s word was like a fire burning in Jeremiah’s heart that couldn’t be contained. He had no choice but to speak what God gave him even though everyone sought vengeance on him.

***Jeremiah 20:11 "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; for they shall not prosper: [their] everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten."***

***Jeremiah 20:12 "But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, [and] seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause."***

Then the prophet looked upward and broke out in praise to the God who was like a violent warrior on his side, able to bring down on the heads of Jeremiah’s enemies the vengeance they had planned for him. At times, there were moments when Jeremiah thought of quitting. He was persecuted on every side. God had promised Jeremiah, from the beginning, that He would protect him. God will fight for Jeremiah. Every word that Jeremiah brought to these people from God will happen. Jeremiah was being persecuted in the service of God. God is a very present help, especially to those who are in His service. God will punish those who persecute Jeremiah. Nothing good will come to them. It is a dangerous thing to persecute those in service for God. Jeremiah has been persecuted so much and for so long, that now he asks God to let him see the punishment He has in store for those who persecuted him. He will see it because he will remain in Jerusalem during the siege of the Babylonians.

***Jeremiah 20:13 "Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers."***

Jeremiah is praising and thanking God ahead of time for the answer to his request. He is speaking as if it has already happened. He is the one delivered from the evildoers. Even though he was probably still in pain from his beating, Jeremiah found his voice to offer a song of praise to the Lord. This calls to mind Paul and Silas praying and singing praises to God in the Philippian jail after being beaten and put in stocks (Acts 16:22-25).

***Jeremiah 20:14 "Cursed [be] the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed."***

***Jeremiah 20:15 "Cursed [be] the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad."***

***Jeremiah 20:16 "And let that man be as the cities which the LORD overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide;"***

***Jeremiah 20:17 "Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb [to be] always great [with me]."***

***Jeremiah 20:18 "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"***

In spite of his song of praise, Jeremiah’s lament here is as strong as anything he wrote even at his worst times. Clearly Jeremiah’s emotions are fluctuating in the midst of his distress as anyone’s would. This is like the prayers of Job who suffered as much as any person ever has. It is almost as if Jeremiah is thinking that his life has been of no good to anyone. This is Jeremiah regretting the day he was born. We remember that his father was a priest. It was a blessing in a Jewish family for a man child to be born. Jeremiah's family, and perhaps the man spoken of here, were not on Jeremiah's side. They did not think him to be a prophet. He wishes he had never been born rather than to witness the destruction around him. We know from the very first lesson on Jeremiah, that he was anointed from his mother's womb. His entire life was dedicated to the work God had called him to do. Jeremiah is lamenting, here, that there had not been joy in his life. His life had been spent in bringing a message of doom to the very people he grew up with. This was not a message that would bring joy, but sorrow. He was shamed by everyone who knew him. No one believed him. They all hated him and wanted to kill him. His life had been one of sorrows. This could be the message from many who serve the LORD. We, like Jeremiah, go on with the task God has set before us. Even though Jeremiah was so sorrowful, he continued serving God.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who was the father of Pashur?  
2. What was Pashur's position?  
3. What had Pashur heard?  
4. Then Pashur \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Jeremiah the prophet.

5. Where did he imprison Jeremiah?

6. Why had Pashur done this to Jeremiah?  
7. What name did Jeremiah tell Pashur God named him?  
8. What did that name mean?  
9. Who would Pashur be a terror to?  
10. What will happen to his friends?  
11. What would the fright of Pashur turn into?  
12. What had Pashur put a great deal of importance on?  
13. What would happen to all of them?  
14. Where will Pashur die?  
15. What did Jeremiah call Pashur?  
16. What is Jeremiah saying in verse 7?  
17. What type of message had been the only message Jeremiah brought?

18. Why could Jeremiah not stop prophesying?  
19. What did everyone think about Jeremiah?  
20. How is the LORD described in verse 11?  
21. Who will punish those who persecute Jeremiah?  
22. Will Jeremiah see them punished?  
23. What is Jeremiah doing in verse 13?  
24. What does Jeremiah say, that lets us know he regrets being born?

25. How did Jeremiah's family feel about him?  
26. Who can, possibly, relate to Jeremiah's sorrow?