

Heralds of the King

The Promise to Jeremiah: Faithfulness and Forgiveness

INTRO

We are nearing the end of our Christmas sermon series, Heralds of The King in which we have been looking at the first testament promises of the messiah.

Review

Eve - Hope in the shadow of death

Abraham - Blessing despite our pain and suffering

David - The Forever King

Jeremiah - **Faithfulness and forgiveness**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Context

Before we start talking about this text, we gotta realize where the original hearers were. **Babylon.**

Imagine the position they found themselves in. Everything that they’ve hoped for for generations, the promised land, the promised messiah, seems lost. And there’s no one to blame but themselves.



But God is much bigger than our problems.

When we come to the Bible, what we find is so much better than advice. Rather than being about us, it's all about a Savior who is much bigger than our problems. A God who is able to take the worst evil, the most confusing life circumstance, and use it for the greatest good.

This God is on your side. And he's not done yet.

This morning I want to take a look at the story of how we got here.

In doing so, we'll learn three things **not** to do.

1 DON'T WINDOW-SHOP FOR GOD'S PROMISES.

You know what I mean by window shopping. We all do it. (Browser shopping today.) When you're bored at work, just killing time, "If only I could afford that..."

How many of you play the "If I had a billion dollars game"? Why do we do that? Because we can't afford it all. We don't have a billion dollars. I have a mortgage, bills, groceries...

Too often, we window shop through the pages of scripture.

We see a great example of this. The young nation of Israel had a great promise...

Jeremiah 2

[4] Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the clans of the house of Israel. [5] Thus says the LORD:

“What wrong did your fathers find in me
that they went far from me,
and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?

[6] They did not say, 'Where is the LORD
who brought us up from the land of Egypt,
who led us in the wilderness,
in a land of deserts and pits,
in a land of drought and deep darkness,
in a land that none passes through,
where no man dwells?

Background

Why were they in the wilderness? They were window shopping. (Giants in the land!)

Maybe you're in the wilderness right now. Maybe your suffering is because you have failed to take what God wanted to give you. You need to know something. Something the nation of Israel had forgotten.

Yes and Amen

1 Corinthians 20 tells us that "all the promises of God find their Yes in... in what?

In your ability? Don't stand a chance.

In your effort? You'll get burned out.

In your holiness? We'd never see it.

No. The promises of God don't rest on your shoulders. "*For all the promises of God find their Yes in Him. That is why it is through Him that we utter our Amen to God...*"

We window shop because we can't afford it. But on the cross, our account was paid in full. In Christ we use his infinite account, not our bankrupt record. Let's go shopping.

- Luke 11: Ask and the Holy Spirit will be given / he was talking to you.
- Romans 10: Believe, confess, you will be saved / he meant you. No matter your past
- Phil. 4: I can do all things / he meant all things. No matter how dark the night.

The promises of God are yes in Christ, and for you. God keeps his promises.

2 DON'T LOSE THE PROMISES IN YOUR PROBLEMS

Continuing in our story of the Ancient Israelites,

Jeremiah 2

[7] And I brought you into a plentiful land
to enjoy its fruits and its good things.

But when you came in, you defiled my land
and made my heritage an abomination.

[8] The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?'
Those who handle the law did not know me;
the shepherds transgressed against me;
the prophets prophesied by Baal
and went after things that do not profit.

After finally taking hold of the long awaited promise... they blow it. (expand - exile to Babylon)

Warnings of judgement

Now Jeremiah was the guy who warned them every step of the way. Read his book, it's one warning of coming judgement after another.

Jeremiah was ignored and scorned every step of the way.

In **chapter 29** we read his letter to those who ignored him, and are now captives in Babylon.

I told you so.

That's what they were all expecting. But instead, God says to the exiles in Babylon, *Jeremiah 29:10,11* "I will keep my promise to you. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the lord, plans for good, and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

I know what I'm doing, and I'm not done yet.

During their guilt and despair, God says, I know what I'm doing. And I'm not done yet. Maybe you're in Babylon right now. You've heard God's promises but they seem like a distant memory

- You've screwed up, because of your sin you feel like God can't use you, you've lost your chance... (Say to you, **I know what I'm doing, and I'm not done yet.**)
- Or it's no fault of your own. Someone sinned against you. Unjustly fired you, slandered and ruined your reputation, and God's purpose seems so ruined by it... **He knows what he's doing, and he's not done yet.**
- You're stuck at a job you hate, with no end in sight and you feel trapped. You feel like you're not living the life God meant for you... **He knows what he's doing, and he's not done yet.**
- If you feel like you've wasted you life, spent so many years chasing the wrong things and not getting anywhere... **God knows what he's doing, and he's not done with you yet!**

Even if you don't see God working around you, you can be sure he's working in you. (*Promises/ All things work together*) He know's what he's doing. He's not done yet.

Write it down.

It's easy to lose sight of his promises when you're in the midst of your problems though. Maybe you've moved into despair, the thinking that "It's never gonna change. This is the way it will always be."

Remember the last thing you really believed God spoke to you. Write it down. (we're gonna come back to this.)

3 DON'T STOP NOW

Jeremiah 29

[4] "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: [5] Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. [6] Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. [7] But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

God begins his statement to the exiles by telling them, "Don't stop living." Even though times are confusing, you don't **how** God will work this out for good, keep living the life he called you to.

Keep serving him at that Job you hate.

Keep being generous even when times are hard.

Keep chasing the promises God has made, even when they seem impossible.

Write it down!

Take that paper, and write under the last thing God spoke to you,

"Don't window-shop, he keeps his promises"

"Don't forget"

"Don't stop now! Because God knows what he's doing, and he's not done yet."

Peter

I love Peter. What an example of today's message.

- Peter walked with Jesus. He knew him, he lived with him.
- Peter knew the prophecies, the promise of a savior, and at ceserea philipi He nailed it.

- All of his hopes and dreams rested in Jesus. He thought they were gonna take over Jerusalem! talk about a church plant, this is the king of kings here.
- Then things went bad. Problems got real thick, pete got scared, and he lost the promises.
- Denied Jesus.
- Wept bitterly
- Went back to fishing.

Then Jesus rose from the dead, and in Mark 16:7, he saw fit to give the message to the women at the tomb, “go tell the disciples that he is risen, **and tell Peter.**”

Peter. I know you're confused, but **I know what I'm doing, and I'm not done with you yet.**

(Acts / beginning of the work)

I don't care what you've done, you can't undo the past, you can't change who you were, you can't change where you've been, Wherever you are today, don't forget his promises, and don't stop now because **God knows what he's doing, and he's not done yet.**

