

# Jeremiah - Prophet of the Last Days

by Art Katz

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*Art Katz's sermon highlights the dual nature of persecution faced by prophets, emphasizing the internal struggles of self-condemnation and the necessity of forgiveness and trust in God.*

**Duration:** 1:37:31

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Acts 7:51-52, Ephesians 4:30

**Topics:** "Jeremiah"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the significance of the last days for Israel and their eternal indebtedness to God's deliverance. He emphasizes the importance of examining and interpreting the text together as a community, rather than relying solely on individual theologians. The speaker also highlights the parallel between Jeremiah's life and the events that will occur in the end times. Additionally, the sermon mentions the prophetic school and its connection to Jeremiah as a foreshadowing of the end times.

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## Transcript

Maybe true propheticness can be measured by the kind of adverse reaction that it invokes. If we find ourselves well accepted and popular, and one of the boys were likely in the false place, because the history of prophets is the history of persecution. Jesus spoke about all of the prophets that were stoned, that were sent unto you, and that can it be that a prophet should die in any place other than Jerusalem, that Jerusalem has been the place where the prophets have met their end.

So there's something intrinsic to the prophetic calling that invokes or has to do with persecution, and my concern this morning is a kind of anatomy of persecution, an understanding of it, and what occasions, what form does it take, what is the prophet's response to it when it comes, as being somehow something suggestive and instructive for us. So I want to pray for that, and this morning's devotional material speaks of persecution of another kind that may be more formidable as a problem for saints than that which comes from without, is the persecution that comes from within, which is to say our own opposition to ourselves, being our own worst enemies, and kicking ourselves, and opposing ourselves, in a kind of freedom that we think we can enjoy, where we would never dream to call a brother a jerk, we will call ourselves a jerk, as I've done recently when I hung up the hangers for the rods over my mother's door, upside down, and had to extract the nails and do it over again, and the very next one that I did, I did it again the same way, and so I thought I was fully justified in kicking myself and calling myself a jerk, but that's no more pleasing in

God's sight than if we were called someone else. We are not at liberty to abuse ourselves however much we think it coming, and yet that might be the greatest indoor sport, and the greatest practice of saints, is that they're facing what is formidable, not from outside themselves, but from within themselves.

So before we get to Jeremiah, and the persecution that came to him externally, I want to read a little bit from Oswald Chambers and another devotional source, that just happens on this day to come up, that might be helpful for some of us. So Lord, blessing again we pray. Your blessing is everything.

We can't imagine how anyone can proceed without the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich. So the operation of your spirit Lord, and the bringing of these things to light and to life, may it bring release, may it bring deliverance, may it set free those who have hindered themselves from the fulfillment of their own calling, and give us rich insight Lord, into the experience of Jeremiah in that way Lord, that will likely be our own. Show us the corollary between his time and ours, the forces that opposed him, and how they sought to dispose of him, and how you affected his deliverance.

And we want to learn Lord, an anatomy of persecution, the principles, underlying things Lord, that are universal at all times, and will be likely to be experienced greatly of those of the last days. Thank you my Lord, bless us together now, and be blessed with us, and we thank you and give you praise for yet another privilege in Yeshua's name. Amen.

Well I read every day both my Atmos for his highest, the selection for that day, and another one that I didn't know about until about a year ago called God Calling. And I've mentioned it before, but I'll say it again. God Calling is the daily word that two women received in England.

I don't know when, the 1930s, something like that. They were spinsters, or widows, I'm not sure of their condition. They lived together, and they sought the Lord, and they received from the Lord a daily word in the morning.

And it was such a kind that began to be circulated. People were blessed by it. And then someone came and edited their notes that they took, and compiled this devotional from those daily things received from the Lord.

So, here's today's, it's called Shame and Remorse. And it's God speaking, that's how it came to them. God is talking to these women.

My children, yes, shield from the scorn and cover from the chiding. It's in quotation marks, so it must be either from a church hymn, or something that was familiar to them in their English experience. And then the Lord went on to say to them, according to their report, often I have to shield my disciples from their own scorn and chiding.

You know what it means to chide? To berate yourself. My poor Peter could never have done my work, never have had the courage to live on, or the daring to live for me, but for the tender love with which I enwrapped him. Not from the anger of my father, who was all loved that I need to protect him, not from the scorn of his enemies, nor from the resentment of his friends, no, but from the self-hatred of Peter for himself.

That God's greatest act toward Peter was not to defend him from things that were external, though being an apostle he was going to experience that. His greatest threat was that which came to him from himself. His own self-loathing, his own self-contempt, his own berating of himself and chiding of himself.

And of course there was cause. He betrayed the Lord. After his loud protestation, though all the world deny you, yet will I deny you ever.

Before that, the echo of that even dissipated. He was denying the Lord before the cock crowed three times. I don't know the man.

And with oaths and with cursings. So if any man would be haunted by failure, grievous failure, shameful failure, it would be Peter. And what the Lord is saying here, I'd like to believe that that is the Lord, that that would have disfigured his whole apostolic life.

His own self-hatred for his failure would have kept him from a fulfillment of his own calling. Because it is so cloying, you can't shake it. It gnaws at you.

The thought continually comes to you. The remembrance of your failure. And so the greatest act of love was to keep him from his own destructive tendency, just to muse and to kick himself for that grievous failure.

And to one degree or another, that's the problem of many of us, if not all of us. Someone once wrote that though the cock would crow 10,000 times, we will not forgive ourselves. We will forgive others, but we will not forgive ourselves.

We are our own worst taskmasters. And we sometimes have a standard for ourselves beyond anything that the Lord himself would impose. And so it's a frustration that is calculated to weaken the saint, to rob him, and at its worst form to destroy him and destroy him in his calling.

So before we talk about external persecution, let's look at the one that's right before us, of which we ourselves are the promoters and the worst inflictors. So Peter was his own worst enemy. These are my own thoughts.

And self-condemnation was the thing that was eating at him. And that's not a privilege to which we are entitled. I'm not entitled to call myself a jerk because I hung up the hangers for the curtain rods the wrong way.

No more than I would call someone else who had done it that name. Because it's me does not give me the right to berate myself. I'm still a son of the most high God.

And that when you impugn a son of his, you're impugning him. But we think we have that liberty because we could do anything to ourselves. And somehow we have a greater delight in kicking ourselves than in kicking others.

That's why this writer said that though the cock crow 10,000 times, though we may have forgiven others, we'll not forgive ourselves. There's something perverse about this self-inflicted, morose kind of behavior. It's a form of soul sickness, but it's like a plague and affects more saints than we can know.

And so to my followers today, as then, there come the shame and remorse and contempt for themselves, for their weak selves. They meant to be so strong and brave for me. And then I have to protect them with a shield of love, or they would never have the courage to fight and conquer.

But this facing of the real self has to be shame and remorse that must come because there's grounds for it. The only question is how long do you continue to rue your failure? How long do you continue to steepen

it? Maybe it has something to do with self-pity, or there's a certain kind of perverse delight in ruminating over past failures. It's healthy to acknowledge them, to seek forgiveness for them, to put it under the blood.

But it's abnormal and unhealthy to continue to languish in them. So it talks here about if a butterfly remained earthbound and weighed down with the thought of its contemptible past, how would it be a butterfly? It couldn't take off. So now today I say to you both, to these two women, that you are not to dwell for one moment on your sins and mistakes and faults and bad habits of the past.

What does that mean? That we would be oblivious as if it never happened? And to disregard it, be light about the question of sin? Not at all, no. You could be grave and solemn and stricken for that moment and then give it to the Lord or confess it to a brother. But after that, not to enjoy the luxury of languishing in it.

It will weigh you down. You'll not be a butterfly that can take off. You're not to dwell for one moment on your sins, your mistakes, your faults, your bad habits of the past.

You must be as one who runs a race, stumbles and falls, but rises up again and presses on to the goal. What does it avail if we stay to examine the spot where we fell or weep over the delay or over the short-sightedness that prevented our anticipating and avoiding the obstacles? What value is it to continue to rue something? You know that word? R-U-E. So with you, here's the Lord exhorting these women, I laid on you as a command, do not look back.

I'm not allowing you the luxury of festering over the failures of the past. I'm commanding you, do not look back. Give yourself and all you have to a fresh start from today.

Remember no more your sins and failures, for the remembrance is a fierce current of disappointment that hinders the swimmer. I wrote here that swamps the swimmer. It's a tide that we ourselves are invoking against ourselves, and we don't need it.

There are enough tides of opposition coming externally without our adding to it by continuing to dwell over what should be put under the blood and given to the Lord. For what he forgives, he forgets and casts away from him as far as the east is from the west. Why aren't we then able? If he's willing to do that, why aren't we? What is it about us that's so perverse that we will not forgive what the Lord has forgiven? Isn't that remarkable? Because what he forgives, he forgets, and we continue to hold it about our own failures and maybe the failures of others.

And I'll tell you what, if you're holding the failure of another, you're preventing him from swimming. Something is injected. Something comes into the atmosphere.

There's a valence. Something is operating in the realm of spirit by your holding something against him for which the Lord has forgiven him. And that's why it is that we're fighting against currents and we never break through to reach the goals.

So when I sent my disciples out two by two, no script, no coats, no money, it was an injunction to be carried out literally, not only literally, but figuratively too. On life's journey, throw away all that is not important. Cast aside all the hindrances, the past imperfections of your own and of others.

The sense of failure, the haunting, persistent, gnawing, G-N-A-W-I-N-G, sense of failure, which will keep you from present success in the Lord. Travel unladen with a light heart, freed from that kind of a weight. And then it ends, my children, I love you.

Good? Huh? That's good. Worth recording? Yes. I hope it'll encourage many.

Any thought that that has provoked? Yeah. Simply that kind of indulging in self-pity and constant haranguing of oneself is ultimately yet another form of self-glorification. Because there's a standard that we ourselves have established, not the Lord, that we want to meet, because by that our self-esteem is established.

We have met our own standard. Well, the standard of the Lord is beyond any standard of ours, and it can't be met by any accomplishment of ours. The only way to obtain it is to be in him who has attained it.

The fact that we're still kicking ourselves shows that we're operating on a very different plane, namely, still wanting to be established on the basis of our own standard and our own self-esteem. That's doomed for failure. And we'll always kick ourselves for those failures, and our whole life will be a life of fretful kicking because we've missed the point.

There's no way that we're going to satisfy ourselves by any standard that we can establish or succeed in, but that the Lord himself has given us his accomplished life to live in and to express. And so not the least of it is your thoughts above my thoughts. Filthy rags.

Huh? You know, the kicking against filthy rags of your own. Yeah. If Peter had something for his betrayal that would have crippled his whole apostolic life, what should we say about Paul? He was a murderer, a persecutor of the Church.

That should have weighed on him in such a way that he could never lift his head and never serve God completely. He makes, I think, one reference to it about how undeserving he was of the grace of God that it should come to him having been a persecutor of the Church. But that's all.

Then he goes on. That's his past. It was instructive.

It was needful. It was a sobering thing, but it's not a crippling thing. And in today's Oswald Chambers for the 20th, the scriptures out of Matthew 11, verse 28, and I will give you rest.

Beware of allowing self-consciousness to continue because by slow degrees it will awaken self-pity and self-pity is satanic. The complete life, I'm skipping here, in contrast is a life of a child. When I am consciously conscious, there is something wrong.

The child of God is not conscious of the will of God because he is the will of God. Wow, wow. You know, for us to use language like, if God will help me, which I hear saints saying all the time, implies that there are two entities at stake.

One is God and the other is ourselves. If God will do for me, then I will be able. What Oswald Chambers is saying is that's missing the glory of the faith.

That's operating religiously as if God is only giving us an assistance to our own human endeavor. What he has given us is much more than that. Namely, he's given us himself.

And to live and to be in him is not to say, Lord, what is the will of God for me? But it's to be in that will. And to live with a complete freedom and abandon to that knowledge that unless there's a check, you're continuing to be in that will. We don't continually have to put the question to God.

Am I in your will? Am I not? That's to tie yourself into knots and to make your life nothing but a frustration. That except there be a check, just to have the sublime confidence, you're in the will of God. And Chambers is even more bold than I. He says, you are the will of God.

I mean, how do we know about these days? What we're even speaking this morning. How is that determined? Did I make a calculated survey of different possibilities? It came in this out of this morning's devotion and our prayer time and conversation the same way. So what he's saying is the rest of God is the sublime confidence that you're in the will of God.

It's a childlike confidence and trust that is not continually taking a pulse, measuring, wondering, am I, am I not? It's simply being. To live as Christ. And Paul's great accomplishment as an apostle was not in the least because he was freed from the kinds of considerations that choke and stultify us as self-conscious saints.

If we're self-conscious, the problem is that there's still a self that has not been crucified and loves to be the object of your consideration. Wants you to dwell on it because it doesn't want to give up the ghost. It wants to continue to be the foremost object of your concern.

And it's more deadly in the spiritual realm than ever it was in the secular. Faith is a trust predicated on a knowledge of God, his character, and what he has performed. If we don't know that, then how shall we believe that? So do we really know what was wrought at the cross? And where Jesus says, it is finished.

What is the it? And when he says finished, how thorough is that? Is there anything left over after that that God has not attended? Who has given us all the things that pertain to godliness and to life. So if we're falling short of that, and still living fretful, self-conscious lives, it's either we don't know the provision that has been made, or we have not the faith to believe for it, or perversely, we actually enjoy this self-consciousness and kicking of ourselves and self-pitying. There's a perverse kind of enjoyment.

If you want to see this, talk to my mother. Her whole life is predicated on self-pity. This one failed her, that one failed her, this is wrong, that's wrong.

She enjoys. These Jewish women, these widows, what else do they occupy themselves with? Failed possibilities. My brother Lenny was such a one.

If only he had done this rather than that. If only he had this happen rather than that happen his whole life. He was continually living in the past of unfulfilled or failed occasions.

So to be saved is to be delivered. And Chambers knows this reality and expresses it like no one else that I know. The complete life is the life of a child.

That doesn't mean goo-goo. That means childlike trust and confidence that it is finished. And that we are in the will of God.

And that if we're not His will able to give us a check and in the absence of that check go on with complete abandon and confidence that that is His will. For He is in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. And the God who created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is has not the power to check us if we begin to wander out of them.

Is He that weak that He cannot communicate to us that uh-uh, you know, and you'll feel an inward check or a dis-ease your rest begins to dissipate away, your peace. You know something needs to get back in line. So when there has been the slightest deviation from the will of God we begin to ask what is thy will? A child of God never prays to be conscious that God answers prayer.

He is so restfully certain that God always does answer prayer. If we try to overcome self-consciousness by any common sense method, we will develop it tremendously. Isn't that a remarkable paradox? That in trying to get out of this terrible trap of self-consciousness that the more we labor to get out of it, the more deeply we establish it.

Because we're still contemplating self. Jesus says, come unto me and I will give you rest. Christ consciousness will take the place of self-consciousness.

And wherever Jesus comes He establishes rest. The rest of the perfection of activity that is never conscious of itself. You know that line is so superb that as gifted as Oswald Chambers was, he could not have composed it.

That this is not only a statement about something, it is the statement of something. The statement itself is the proof of what he's saying. This kind of sublime insight and the way it has been so phrased and expressed is itself Christ.

This isn't the self-conscious man garnering his gifts and thinking how to say something cleverly. This is a man beyond. Anything of that self-conscious kind.

This was just quickened and took up his pen and he wrote it. But listen to this last line and say, could any man have composed that? Wherever Jesus comes He establishes rest. The rest of the perfection of activity that is never conscious of itself.

It's not that rest comes from the absence of activity. That's not rest. That's kind of a death.

We're not called to be inactive. We're called not only to activity but to supreme activity because He says, your work shall be greater than mine. So in the last days we'll see an intensification of responsibility and works.

But in that should be the rest of God. It does not come out of our fretful self-conscious concern but out of our childlike trust with the works of God issue. And that's why Jesus could say in his own time when he was being accused of violating the Sabbath because he did some conspicuous things on the Sabbath and I think he did them on the Sabbath only to make this point because the men who accused him were men living on the other plane and they thought that what issued from Jesus were the acts of Jesus.

But he said, no, he said the Sabbath has not been violated. I didn't do anything. It's the Father who doeth the works.

Go take your complaint to him. See what I mean? He was in the rest of God and why is it that Jesus rose early in the morning while it was yet dark and found the place apart to pray? Was it the prayer to load up petitions before the Father? I'm sure there must have been some, but I think more likely and more profoundly a time of communion with the Father, a reunion and the necessity again to have his spiritual batteries charged by being in the presence of God in prayer. Prayer is more than petition.

And in that he would receive the thoughts of the Lord and then when the daylight began to break, the people would submerge on litters and the insane and the demon possessed and the sick and he was swamped and carried on all through the day and he healed them all out of a remarkable energy that was imparted in his union with the Father in prayer. And he would say, the words that I speak are not my words, but the words that my Father has given me. I had the feeling this morning and on some other occasions when we begin 7 a.m. a little bit hung over I want to ask the brethren I said, didn't you have a good night's rest? I'm sure you had more hours of sleep than I did.

Or is it that your sleep is not as restful as it ought because you're a troubled soul and a lot of your energy is being eaten up in self-concern even in the night hours. You're not enjoying the rest and the fatigue that you experience is not from the want of chronological time in bed or in sleep it's for the want of a getting rid of the conflict that is robbing you of your energy and of your life that you carry with you even through the night hours. See what I mean? And I think that and this is my own experience fewer and fewer hours of rest more and more intensive activity and yet we will not come unglued we don't need the eight hours and I think we'll find we don't even need the six hours because we are more properly established in the rest of God.

So Christ's consciousness will take the place of self-consciousness wherever Jesus comes or maybe we come to him he establishes rest the rest of the perfection of activity that is never conscious of itself and even that we are at rest in our activity that's the remarkable thing about it when it's the father who doeth the works there's even an energy that comes from God that is not of ourselves so we haven't shifted gears we're still clunking along at the world's level though we're believers and have not appropriated the full provision of God that would distinguish our life as being different than other than the mode by which men live who are outside the faith I think we should have longer lives chronologically and more fruitful lives and activity rightfully and just like with Moses his

eye was not dimmed right till the moment that our death is not because our body has fallen apart more from fatigue and inward conflict and unresolved tensions and all these things that take their toll on the body but because the purpose for our length of years has been fulfilled we have performed, we have run the course that was set before us and now we go to our reward it's not that we end because the machinery has broken down because of the undue stress I think there are more people dying today from stress and that opens the door to other diseases than probably any other factor the modern life is full of stress anxiety, fear, doubt all those things for which the saints of God should be free and our life is not terminated because our bodies have suffered the consequence of that stress

but because as I've said we have finished the course that we have the days that the Lord has numbered for us we've learned to number our days and we're not even conscious of its activity so let there be an encouragement come to me and I will give you rest so come out of your self consciousness where the enemy would like to keep you because there you're only treading water and come unto me shift that gears, make that transition and that will be your rest, trust the Lord you're in his will he's in you to will and to do of his good pleasure, you're here because he's brought you and if there's any change that needs to be wrought the Lord knows how to effect it maybe in the light of our conversation now neither condemn yourself no man now is there to condemn you but don't remain under the

condemnation by your own self condemnation for neither do I condemn you and if I don't condemn you don't you condemn yourself and so I think that that woman was totally deliberate by that word she's the same one who poured the anointing oil upon Jesus in gratitude for the great deliverance that was effected

so self condemnation is a curse and an unnecessary curse and Jesus did it all and he doesn't condemn us and neither would he though we have reason who is not marked with failure and defect and he doesn't want us to be blithely pass it over pause, be sober bring it before him repent, receive forgiveness but don't remain ruling over that thing and let it become a canker if not a cancer okay or we will never serve in a Jeremiah fashion, can you imagine if Jeremiah was saddled with all of

this terrible self consciousness because the guy was daily barraged as a traitor his word from the lord was contrary to the whole conventional wisdom of the ruling class of his generation who were going to oppose Babylon and fight it out and that was the and God would be with us and he's not going to allow his own city to be taken and destroyed but his counsel was surrender it sounds like cop out and in fact it was considered traitorous and if you did your homework and read up you read where they condemned him for robbing the nation of its ability to fight he was demoralizing those that would resist Babylon by telling them that there's no point in resisting it's not a people that you're laboring against, you're fighting against God it's God who has determined that Babylon will be your

judgment and it's in vain for you to fight against it and if you fight against it it will result in your extinction but if you surrender to it he will preserve your life but it sounds like a subversive message and he's the only one speaking it so if a man had doubt and was anxious and fretful and fearful what a way in which the enemy could have sifted him and left him just as a hulk, incapable of anything should I, shouldn't I is this me, is this God this can't be right and all those guys be wrong this doesn't sound wise this sounds suicidal you don't yield to the enemy remember better red than dead at a time when the Soviet Union was a great threat to peace and the issue was to what degree would nations condescend or infuriate this powerful bear to the point where it would drop its

atomic load on us and we'd be finished and what the phrase came out in those days better red than dead better to surrender to their imperialist and communist design than to oppose them and to be obliterated in a sense that's the kind of prophetic counsel that Jeremiah was giving in his time to his nation it has every ear mark of being traitorous so if I'm just repeating myself but it's worth it if ever the man was not in the peace of God was not confident that when he said thus saith the Lord it was a thus saith the Lord that his counsel was not coined out of his own mind but that it came from God it was understood and tempered in the context of his whole theological understanding of the covenant, failure, curse and judgment then he would have been so rattled as to have been of no earthly

good but we don't see any evidence of that in terms of his own self-doubt, we do hear complaints against God that he's suffering rejection and heartache but because he takes all these things to heart he sees the impending death of his own nation and in great detail does he describe what they're going to pass through to the point where in the siege of Jerusalem they will be eating their own young, they will resort to cannibalism and that came true and the great people Israel reduced to the most animalistic level out of a survival in a siege that they need not have experienced if they had only heeded the voice of the prophet and surrendered and he has to eat that and it's not unusual that we see in the prophets where they have to eat the scroll, eat the word where God touches their lips as

he did with Isaiah and I think with Jeremiah also and gives them his word but the consequence of it the pain of it, the anguish of it they have healed the sickness of my daughter lightly, they say peace, peace, imagine how that felt to that man, the false prophets are saying peace, peace, but he knows that he knows that there's nothing but destruction, devastation ahead and they will not hear him that he alone has the word and it's being rejected and that his very life is threatened because of his insistence on that word that

rightly does talk about the martyrdom of Jeremiah and we don't even know how Jeremiah's natural life ended it took place in Egypt he was likely stoned to death because even in Egypt those that were cast out of Israel in exile in Egypt took up again with the gods of

Baal and all of the deities of the pagan world and he was again reproving them in Egypt for the very thing for which they were cast out of Israel and the legend that we don't know for a fact but the surmise is that he did not die in bed, that these exasperated people had enough of him finally stoned him to death in Egypt, church legend says that Isaiah was sawn in half the prophets so rile up and anger against themselves like no other, so even in revelation where we read about the two witnesses in Jerusalem the prophets who can bring fire out of their mouths to destroy those who oppose them and are finally slain that when they are slain and the people would not allow them to be buried they wanted to luxuriate in seeing them streets of Jerusalem dead for three days, they so despised these

men, they so hated their guts that they loved their death that had come to them and wanted to see their bodies actually fester and decay and would not even give them the privilege and the basic amenity of a burial and God resurrected them right up out of that death but it says that the people began gave gifts to one another because those who had tormented those who dwell on the earth were now dead these prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth to the point where they not only desired but they luxuriated in the death that came to those men and every once in a while, and especially now in more recent years and months I have to stop myself when I'm speaking somewhere before a congregation I say, you know I feel like I'm, am I tormenting you?

I have to stop and ask them your faces seem to indicate that I'm tormenting you am I saying something that is making you patently unhappy? were you expecting another kind of word but you're receiving something that is really chafing you and it's a form of torment so there's something about the prophetic word that is so incongruent, so out of sorts with the temper and mindset and wisdom of their generation that their speaking is the most um give me a word it exacerbates their heroes, they cannot bear to hear them and just like Stephen when he gave in Acts 7 of the history of Israel and then he concluded by saying as your fathers have done always done, you do also you do always grieve the Holy Spirit and they rushed upon them and gnashed upon them with their teeth they put their fingers in

their ears they could not bear to hear the word of God through the man and they had to extinguish him there's the first martyr who died because of his speaking now if he only played his cards right and was more politic and abbreviated his statement and was not so abrasive he could have survived but he spoke the word of God as it was given and it precipitated his own death so also Jeremiah and all the prophets before us and so also the prophets of our own and final generation, your word will kill you because the world doesn't want to hear it and likely not the church either, the people of God so it says that they will kill us and claim they're doing God a service there's a little indication of what we can expect in the last days interrupt me at any time some thought, for those of you who

weren't here in our prayer time I was encouraging our class to engage in corporate exegesis that I don't have any particular insight into the chapter where Jeremiah is cast into the cistern but I'm inviting everyone to wrestle with that text put questions to it examine it, bring forth out of it a corporate exegesis, a corporate understanding that the best theology of the last days will not be through individual geniuses like Carl Bott or Gerhard von Rahn but the exercise of God's people dealing with the text together that's what I'd like to see us do now okay let's look at Jeremiah 38 you mentioned prophetic freedom and Jeremiah's lack of self confidence I was just thinking Stephen speaking the words of the Lord without any politeness

we're so far from that, we're very self conscious and

we don't want to go outside boundaries of what we think is appropriate and we might even compare, we'll go into detail that the Lord gives us that reading with Acts 7 compared to Jeremiah 38 a classic Old Testament martyrdom and the first of the New Testament martyrdoms and just check for the resemblances in any kind of of the New Testament martyrdoms and just check for the resemblances in any kind of principle that would affect both and I think that we would find them but when he spit out that last word, he was giving me a whole history of Israel and how you have always missed it and all of a sudden something breaks in through that statement as your fathers grieved the Holy Spirit, so do you also you have always grieved the Holy Spirit, the law came to you and you did not obey it and

that triggered the rush upon him and his death it was not his own remark it was God himself breaking through a general history of Israel to really spike the point that needed to be made and what was served by that were those men going to be converted by Stephen's tirade and by his statement of the truth of Israel's failure instead it just provoked them to kill him, but there was one man standing there who heard that whole thing and it did not receive the point in the moment but when he saw the consequence of this man's fidelity, what does that mean?

Faithfulness in unswervingly giving the word of God no matter what the consequence to himself and this man was only a busboy who waited on tables and swept the crumbs and fed the noisy widows and this was the supreme candidate for rabbinical honor, the most prized student of the Rabbi Gamaliel what a contrast in the men and their dignity and stature and prominence, but he saw exhibited by this waiter on tables a quality of something beyond any category that he knew religiously so that later on the Lord could say to him, why do you kick against the pricks?

Since the day that you saw my martyr die for the word of God and die graciously whereas the stones thudded into his flesh, you don't hear a word of complaint, you don't hear anything about his own suffering, as if the man is not even feeling them his only thought was, Lord lay not this sin to their charge, there's not even a concern for himself, but those who are afflicting his death this is so transcendent this is how we came in our morning discussion that the word martyr is the same word for witness something was being witnessed to Saul that he could never swallow down and later on was the principal factor for his conversion and that's what a witness is he exhibits something transcendent but where do you exhibit it?

Under normal circumstances of life?

Or do you exhibit it under the most abnormal conditions of duress trial, threat to your own existence, crisis what you exhibit in crisis is what you are crisis reveals people have heard me say it many times crisis reveals an absolute crisis reveals absolutely and when a man is at the point of the extinction of his own life that's absolute crisis now it would be one thing if if Stephen was an old croc like me, 70 years old and he has served his time and has served the Lord and he can go to his reward it's not so tragic but he was a young man and his face shone like an angel and he had enormous potential because already miracles were being worked by his hand that made him the object of concern what would his life have been had it continued would he have been another Paul he would have been

in the front first most rank of the servants of God in that apostolic generation and the Lord allowed his life to be snuffed out in its youth, he was only about 7 years old in the faith according to the estimates that men have made, but what was effected by his death was probably more profound than anything that would have been obtained by the continuation of his life, which is to say that the length of our years and

service is not with us but with God because how many times was Jeremiah saved out of impending death, he was put in the stocks there were earlier chapters where his life was threatened and where they said this man must die for these words and he got out of it how many times were men ready to kill Jesus in Nazareth where he said this day these words are fulfilled in your

hearing, that was blasphemy and they took him to throw him over the brow of the hill but the scripture says he passed through them, I don't know how he did it, it was not the time we need to have the sublime confidence that until the time comes no man can do us in and if we are done in it's because it is serving a purpose in God for which maybe our whole life was preparation for that one time so that the issue of martyrdom is not how you die but how you live it's a mode of living that is confident that when the physical extinction comes God has fought it or else it could not have been performed so that when Pontius Pilate provoked Jesus and said don't you know I've got the power to release you, to deliver you or to execute you he says you could do nothing against me except it were given

you from above every good and perfect thing comes from above and that's true that's why Jesus said no man take my life I lay it down and this is the ultimate witness because you're not terrified with your extinction because your end is not an end it's a beginning right and that's why Paul could say death where is your sting and grave where is your terror of what shall I fear, I've been through death I've been baptized that was my death and the life that I now live is not my life but his life and it's his to possess to yield to do and to perform as he will or to end it when he will Paul died as a martyr he lost his head beheaded in Rome and what would his prolonged life have meant if the Lord had allowed him to live it but he knew even before that that his end was near that's why he called

for the elders of the church at Ephesus to say you will see my face no more I've finished the course he knew it and I'll tell you to know that is joy unspeakable so when the end comes big deal to know that you've finished your course and that you're going to hear the great commendation well done good and faithful servant what difference does it matter how your earthly ten years should be ended there's no reason for its continuation you have fulfilled it and that's not only true for Paul Stephen and Jeremiah it's true also for us and we've got to know it so that we can walk through this life with complete confidence and without fear without trembling and speak the word of God though it is a minority voice that has all the earmarks of being a traitorous statement and yet speak it even if it

will not be acted on which it was not for Jeremiah the nation did not heed his voice and they suffered exactly the penalties that he described including the eating of their own children so he had no gratification that his word was heard or received or enacted it was refused and rejected as he himself was but he obeyed the Lord it was a prophetic faithfulness to what his calling was and that's the name of the game it's not whether we succeed in it, these men were called to failure, they were not called to succeed in the sense that we understand that it's a whole other mode, this prophetic life and it's this mode that infuriates men unbelievably they cannot bear your presence they said the land cannot contain their words, but more over the land could not contain their example, because what

Jeremiah was in himself was the example of the kind of fidelity that God desired and should have obtained from the entire nation, there was only one faithful Israelite in his generation it was Jeremiah he was the covenant keeping obedient son and so his very life was itself an accusation against an apostate nation and some of you may have heard me quote this when I was a very young believer returned to the Oakland Public Schools history teacher and just months old in the Lord naive as all get out and witnessing to my colleagues, particularly the Jewish ones, that one day at the dining room table with this Jewish woman

who had an adulterous affair with another teacher against her own Jewish husband and I don't even know that I even knew that at the time and I was just eating away, not even

saying anything and I could just sense that she was increasingly chafed and irritated and finally she couldn't contain herself, this was a woman living on pills to quiet her guilt she'd turn around, she'd blurt out she said, even when you're silent, she said you're a living accusation because I was unselfconsciously unselfconscious, I don't know and maybe that was the very thing that was a accusation contrary to the self-conscious sinful life that she was living and having to dope herself up with pills in order to live it here's a guy just eating and that's representative of the church that has always occasioned the fury of those around it particularly those who are religious and that's why the Anabaptists, the Hutterites, the Canaanites, and all of the apostolic expressions through

history before the Reformation and after suffered at the hands, not of the world, but of religious bodies.

In David Hunt's book about the woman rides the beast, the beast is the state system but the woman rides it and one of the reasons that I mentioned yesterday, Israel is suggested by Arthur Pink as being the whore, is because she rode the beast to execute Jesus. She employed the Roman system to bring about an execution that she herself was unable to perform, but she saw to it through the system and that's how they will kill us in the last days.

They are the religious factor who have no heart nor desire to live this kind of exemplary prophetic life and are infuriated by those who do. They cannot abide their presence because their presence is a living accusation. Jeremiah died, not only for what he said, but for what he was.

Now you say, Art what do you mean Jeremiah died? The book of Jeremiah doesn't talk of his death and he was delivered out of that pit, yes, but when he was thrown into the pit, he was thrown into the pit unto death. For all effects and purposes, he did not know that a deliverance would come although God had earlier said, I will deliver you and I will be with you as a fortified city. That they will be against you but I will keep you.

Maybe he forgot that he was told that but so far as he knew in that moment, when he was thrown into that pit that was the end. And what an end it was. Picture that.

If there's anything for which my flesh shrinks, it's claustrophobia. You can behead me, you can burn me at the stake, but don't shut me up into a compressed place, particularly one that's dark and without light. I despise going to a restaurant even a gourmet restaurant where you have to read the menu with a miner's helmet and a lantern.

I'm crying out Give us a table with the most light. But the pit into which Jeremiah was cast had no illumination at all. I've had the privilege of seeing the cell that Paul languished in before he was beheaded in Rome.

You can still visit it. It's called the Maritime Prison. I don't know how it got that name but he was lowered into it in the same way that Jeremiah was taken up out.

There's no doorway. You can only go into it by being lowered down and once you're lowered down and they remove those ropes, there you are. Sunk in the mire in dark without water, without food to suffer a slow and excruciating death in that horrible darkness stink and congestion that is apparently hopeless.

So whether he actually physically died or not, there was a very real death. The truth of death is not the issue of physical extinction. That's kid stuff.

Death is when you taste it. Death is when you have to eat it. Death is experiencing the realities of isolation, loneliness, rejection cast into a pit.

That was the death. And he bore that. In fact he made it inevitable by his own faithfulness to God.

He would not recant. He would not compromise his message. The king gave him every opportunity.

Called him again and again for his counsel has God given you another word? Can you soften it even just a little bit? Can you be just a wee bit more accommodating so that we can preserve your life? He never moved an inch away from the word that the Lord gave from the first. This judgment is inevitable. It must come.

God has decreed it. Deuteronomy spoke of it. There's no alternative out of it.

Except the only thing that will save you from complete extinction is to surrender to the rod of God's chastisement. It's not Babylon that is opposing you. It's God himself who has made himself an enemy.

Your sins have brought this on you. He never changed. That word was relentless to the end.

Unto his death. So let's take a little break. If you've not read chapter 38, read it in a few minutes and then we'll come back and try to take it apart verse by verse.

Imaginary thing or some piece of fiction, something that actually took place and point of time and here are the names of the men that were involved in that. And that much is given for Jesus also so that we know at whose administration Pontius Pilate, at what time in the history of Rome that execution took place. We know we're talking about something historical and not fictional.

But beyond that, there's not great detail given. They heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people. Thus says the Lord, those who stay in the city shall die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence.

But those who go out to the Chaldeans shall live. That is those who surrender to them. They shall have their lives as a prize of war and live.

Thus says the Lord, the city shall surely be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon and be taken. Then the official said to the king, this man ought to be put to death because he is discouraging the soldiers who are left in the city and all the people by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people but their harm.

Now this is a classic response to prophetic words. The irony and the paradox is that what is most intended for the good of the people is construed by men in their fleshly minds as being intended for their harm. So you're not going to be patted on the back, you're not going to be chaired to the marketplace, you're going to be looked upon as an enemy and as a traitor.

What God intends for good is construed as harm and what would have been spoken as harm they construe as good. It's a complete inversion of value that makes the prophetic man a real anomaly, a round peg in a square hole. That's a very uncomfortable feeling.

In fact, that feeling is itself martyrdom because it's not a momentary feeling, it's a continual feeling. You're always an oddball, you're always strange even when you're silent. You're never one of the boys, you're never fitted in.

So as I may have mentioned when I asked one of the prominent prophets of today how come I'm not invited to your prophetic get-togethers because my history in this calling goes back far before you ever began. Oh, we know that, Art. The reason you're not invited is you're not an in-house prophet.

What he was saying is you're not one of the boys and your words may not be fit in comfortably with the consensus of the kinds of things that we speak where we reinforce and confirm one another. So this is the isolation, the rejection, the sense of strangeness that is characteristic of true prophets that have to bear as a mild form of suffering. Their martyrdom begins long before their final martyrdom.

That's why the German scholar can say the martyrdom of Jeremiah. He's not speaking about his end, he's speaking about all his days. Anything that you would think about the official said to the king, and King Zedekiah said, here he is, he's in your hands for the king is powerless against you.

What does that say or imply? What pattern? Where have you previously stumbled on something like that elsewhere in the scripture? This is not a once and for all. It's almost a design where a king, the one of ultimate authority, absolves it and defers to the press of men and condescends to them. Though he might himself be personally reluctant.

He still allows the popular opinion to have its way. Can you think of where? John the Baptist lost his head though Herod was fond of him and impressed by him. He did not insist on his royal prerogative to save him.

Where else? Paul with Agrippa. Again, these officials who had an opportunity to exert their authority to preserve the man of God defer to the press of opinion. Pontius Pilate is the most glaring example where he washed his hands before Israel like this is your baby.

You're the one who's doing it. He could have exerted himself in his authority and said no, I'll not condescend to this. It's interesting and raises the question whether this is more than just an accidental thing or rather a pattern of something we can anticipate in the last days, which is to say we'll have no assurance of protection from the authorities that are there, but that the evil of men will win out through the weakness of authority, unwilling to take the responsibility of either affirming or preserving the man of God.

He's in your hands for the king is powerless against you. So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the system of Malachi, the king's son, which was in the court of the god letting Jeremiah down by ropes, the exact same way that Paul was let down into his cell. Now there was no water in the system, but only mud and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

We ought to just try this one day just for the feel of it, to feel yourself sinking like into quicksand. It's a wonder he didn't go down all the way and be asphyxiated in that moment. So it probably was not enough to extinguish him, but to root him in helplessness where he could not extricate himself and sank into it.

What do you think that God would allow this? How would that be experienced? The man of God in the place of helplessness that if something does not come to him externally from outside himself, he's finished. And he's finished by degrees. By slow and excruciating thirst and hunger in darkness, isolation and cold.

Of all the forms in which men of God have had their lives taken, this is probably one of the most excruciating. It's like the missionaries that were buried in anthills and allowed to have the flesh eaten off their bones and I anything about mud? Mud is after all not only uncomfortable oozy and trapping it's also filthy. It's also degrading.

It's also humiliating. So he's tasting death in manifold ways and maybe that's the name of the game. And there's no place for self-esteem or even ending your life in dignity.

You end it shamefully as in fact Jesus himself ended his. The cross was not the most cruel but the most shameful form of execution that in the literature of Rome they said that this is unbecoming to a Roman to die on the cross. This is for criminals or for slaves.

Roman transgressors who broke the law and deserved death drank a cup of poison like Socrates. They died with dignity. But the cross was reserved as a shameful death for non-Romans whose crime was of an ultimate kind.

That not only to experience the excruciating physical aspect but the humiliating aspect because these men died nakedly their clothes were taken from them and so Jesus had to bear the gaze of men seeing him in his nakedness not that long cloth that is always depicted on Jesus but in his nakedness with his arms nailed unable even to cover himself is part of the suffering and the anguish and the humiliation of death. And so to a degree the mud gives a certain parallel that the prophet is not unlike his master and that this is even a little foreshadowing of what is to come for very God himself and beside that the scripture says in all our afflictions he was afflicted. That is to say I will be with you even in your disgraceful end.

God is in the mud so to speak.

It may be that Jeremiah was not conscious of it did not experience the comfort of it but neither did Jesus experience the comfort of the presence of the father but rather the contrary my God my God why hast thou forsaken me but the scripture says God is with us in our afflictions that means God himself is submitted to the same humiliation because Jesus the spirit of Jesus is the prophecy the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy so the Lord himself is in the humiliating mud and in the rejection and he sank in it and how does his rescue come verse 7 Abed Melech the Ethiopian a eunuch in the king's house heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern the king happened to be sitting at the Benjamin gates so Abed Melech left the king's house and spoke to the king my lord king these

men have acted wickedly on all that they did to the prophet Jeremiah by throwing him into the cistern to die there of hunger where there is no bread left in the city then the king commanded Abed Melech the Ethiopian take three men with you from here and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before he dies so Abed Melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king to a wardrobe of the storehouse and took from there old rags and worn out clothes which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes then Abed Melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah just put the rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes Jeremiah did so then they drew Jeremiah up by the ropes and pulled him out of the cistern and Jeremiah remained in the court of the god well what about that what

does Abed Melech mean who is an Ethiopian and a eunuch you know what a eunuch is a eunuch is one who has had his sexual organs so violated surgically that he is incapable of sexual acts why because he is a servant in the king's house and he is entrusted with the king's concubines and kinds of things of that kind and to assure and guarantee that he is not going to violate that trust the axe is laid to the root so who is

Jeremiah's deliverer a black man an Ethiopian and a eunuch and his name is not even his name Abed Melech means the servant of the king it's only his title he doesn't even have the dignity of being allowed his own name but only his function so what about that what's the point of that why is that his salvation and how will that be our salvation you scholars exegetes the

oneness the oneness of the king the servant of the king was able to influence the king and obtain permission to effect Jeremiah's release could god have employed anything lowlier than what he did in a black man who is a servant and a eunuch as being the instrument of Jeremiah's deliverance that there's something in that that god would employ that lowly thing of a man not even entitled to his own name to be that instrument and yet he had a greater consciousness of who Jeremiah is than his own than the Israelite nation and its own king and nobles and officials so that the lowest of the low from every human reckoning had a greater regard for the prophet than the nation itself than the king himself and set in motion by his own initiative Jeremiah's deliverance because god had said I will be

with you to deliver you and of all the ways in which that deliverance could be effected god employed the lowest of the low and the least of the least what kind of prophetic suggestion might that imply for last days you know that we were going to have a seminar for black believers here it didn't come off because of conflict of dates but it was in my heart to gather up our contacts with black believers and have them here at one time without any conscious agenda I had none but something under the general title the implications or the challenge of the last days for black believers and I have a sneaky intuition that there's a place of ultimate use for black believers in the last days as it pertains to god's prophetic people and perhaps to Israel itself when it will be in the mud up to its

neck that it will expire except that it will receive a ministry that comes to it from the lowest of the low those whom the world despises and dismisses with contempt as being no name will be the very instrumentality of god's deliverance in fact there's a black pastor whom I know who had this impression long before me and he showed me in Isaiah it says I have used the life I have given men for you I think that's the way it goes I have given the lives of men for you and then it mentions Ethiopia what's the biblical name for Kush everything that's described in that Isaiah passage refers to black men I have given their life for you and this brother believes that we black believers have as the last days commission a deliverance toward Jews at the cost of our own life and it's not an

accident that the Jewish community with which I have the most significant relationship in Brooklyn New York the Hasidim the ultra orthodox Lubavitcher Hasidim are in the midst of a black ghetto and that there has been friction historically between these Jews and the black people around about them because a race riot was set off when one of the young rabbinical Hasidim killed a black kid through reckless driving and there were three days of riots that were only quelled by the black mayor coming and pleading with the people to desist but not before there were shootings and other retaliations and I've been to that neighborhood now several times and there's a continual tension waiting for the next spark that will break out into violence again what are Jews doing in the midst of a black ghetto

they have moved there because they wanted a place where they could buy houses cheaply or these brownstone apartments in walking distance to their synagogue 777 Eastern Parkway not far from the Brooklyn Museum so on the Shabbat you don't drive to your services in orthodox you walk so that at dusk on a Friday you'll watch people coming out of their brownstone houses basement apartments in their black clothing, black hats and beards with their wives with their wigs and their children on their way to the mikvah the ceremonial bath or to the synagogue walking if you want a picture of community unlike

anything that Christians presently know, go to Brooklyn Eastern Parkway and watch them on a Shabbat night coming out from their dwellings they have left better living accommodations in Long Island

and homes and affluence to enjoy the relationship with each other and the proximity to their synagogue which is the heart of their life it puts us to shame and I can't describe to you what an experience it was for me to come into that synagogue on the Friday night and walk in and come in standing there are a thousand men bowing and dovening the Hebrew word before their God with their talasim their prayer scrolls over their heads facing toward Jerusalem I'll tell you what you've never seen anything like that charismatically speaking but the whole thing is set in a black ghetto because only there were the properties cheap enough for them to buy and they were willing to take the risk of friction with blacks that was inevitable because of the uniqueness of their differences that would

necessarily antagonize and irritate and indeed there have been eruptions over the course of years and even now they live in that threat and how about a guy like Farrakhan do you know about him? this demagogue what is demagogue? demo from people he's a misleader of the people playing upon racial prejudice because Jews have historically owned slum residences in Harlem and in other places they're cheap and they don't have to be maintained you don't have to keep them current and you've got whole families living in one room paying through the nose it's a very profitable thing to own slum property and Jews are prominent in that ownership so they already got their worst foot forward and if they are employers so who has not been skimmed by them or suffered some imagined or real injustice I'm

saying all that briefly to say that the situation is loaded that there are resentments that are historic, there are prejudices that have existed for generations and Jews have put themselves in a place of threat to put, to enjoy the proximity to synagogue in one with another so how long will it be before these demagogues in the heightened issues of the last days, stir the black community against it will it be before these demagogues in the heightened issues of the last days stir the black community against the Jews and I foresee a time I've said this to black believers you will stand between the Jew and your own kinsmen as they seek to do them harm and you will be called whitey and you'll be called a traitor because you're identifying with Jews who are their supposed or real exploiters and

you're standing with Jews rather than with your own people who suffered the injustice and it will cost you are you guys following me? and that's why I felt that there needs to be some kind of a colloquium a seminar, a coming together just to be before God to say Lord, if this is the scenario of the last days, you're going to use the least in society, the black people and the American Indian to be a kind of a buffer between Jews and their oppressors out of the same race and what kind of preparation do these people need to fit them to suffer that monogamy for another so this black man who has not his own name and not even his own sexual possibility becomes the deliverer of God's prophet it's not just a happenstance it's the profoundest pattern of the last days, in my opinion I think I sent

a copy of a message to our sister here on the gospel of Ephesians for the Indian that part of the reason for the degradation of the American Indian today not only their living on welfare and stamps and food stamps but their lack of heroic possibility, the lack of significant life that they've lost the conditions by which they hunted and sustained their life through their own energy and now to be dependent on a check that comes in the box or other kinds of milk sop subsistence robs men of dignity that to be a man you need to have the prospect of distinguished and significant use of your life and that the lord of belief has reserved this not only for the black people but for the American Indian as God will move Jews through the wilderness of the nations so that the aborigines of Australia

and the Maori of New Zealand who are the victims of white domination historically will be called to a last days heroism that will be the difference between Jews sinking in the mire of their time of last days persecution or being pulled out of it that's what I think so I appreciate Abed Melech because he's a servant of the king not Zedekiah but the one who is most high and so where is the sovereign God in all this and I would say sovereignly in everything he has seen to it and prepared even a last day provision from where the Jews who have been riding high and are foremost in society and education and prestige and self esteem will find that in their time of ultimate crisis that their savior is from the lowest of the low and that which the world despises and looks upon with contempt and

disgust is God's provision and in that what a revelation of the Lord himself who is willing himself to sink in the mud in order to affect the salvation of mankind haven't both Indian Native American and black believers suffered already from the accusation that they've adopted white man's religion and that the black man will suffer the slur of being an Uncle Tom that he's condescending to the whites or to the Jews so he's going to need to have a quality of faith and relationship with God like unto Jeremiah himself he's got to be able to stand against this withering indictment that you're a traitor to your own people Jeremiah was put to death for that very reason and his deliverers or the deliverers of Jews will suffer the same kind of accusation and maybe the fiercest thing that will come

against them is not so much the physical threat as the moral threat because to be called or identified as a traitor to your own people as I have to live with and every Jewish believer almost continually is a severe test that you, whether you know that you know that you are accepted in the beloved, that no matter what men say and whatever appearance you give to the contrary, speaking at NYC or City College of New York or university campuses and having Jews come against you and call you traitor because you've given the appearance of being it why else would you be a Christian?

Why else are you there? You're getting paid for this you're a lackey, you're a flunky, you're a a mushumad, you're a traitor and you can't answer them. There's no way it's not a time to give answer and even if there were, they could not hear it or receive it.

You simply have to accept that indictment you have to bear the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. A quotation from Shakespeare Got the idea? So the ebid meleks of the last days are going to have a faith which is to say a relationship with God of the same kind that Jeremiah himself had because they're going to suffer the same kind of accusation as traitor and have to bear up under it and be faithful to the Lord unto death because that accusation of indictment is a death for men who need to have approval and acceptance especially from their own kind You understand why we need a seminar with black believers?

Just for these very things to be communicated and to pray for them and be established.

Yeah, praise the Lord You guys may not be impressed but someone else will be the beneficiary who needs it desperately especially those who have not the slightest anticipation of the profundity of their last days call who are now relegated to inferior places as having no significance in society of God's choice of the most crucial kind to deliver his people from their last days plight What a scenario only God and it's hinted at in the very life and experience of the prophet because the prophet is the message and even in Jeremiah's death God is speaking something for the last days that he could not give us abstractly it could not be given us as a principle well in the last days those who are despised in society will be my instrumentality to say no He gives it to us as a parable as a living

thing that took place in antiquity as a picture of the last days that no man could ever have conceived and for which proud arrogant and self-sufficient Jews will be eternally indebted How about the Jews of Johannesburg and Pretoria who are living comfortably will one day be saved by their own black servants and I have had to say to the black people with whom we are in connection in Kansas City mostly women Pentecostal black women who are domestics in the houses of wealthy Jews that the day will come when you will be putting them on barges and boats and whatever to float them down the Kansas River up to a place where I have already been that was used in the pre-Civil War days to bring slaves to freedom through the stepping stones the underground railway still exists, I've been on it in

properties in Kansas but you can only get to it through water and I said you'll be putting your Jewish employers on boats and barges, you will be the key to their salvation they will have learned to trust you they will see something in you as you clean their houses unto the Lord and the love that you have for them that cannot be explained even if they have exploited you all the more that will be their salvation and this is so in keeping with the wisdom of God who has been his counselor, who has given to him and it shall be given again who has known his mind that in this very thing is revealed the character of God himself who abhors that which men esteem and uses that which is weak and foolish to confound that which purports to be wise and mighty and this is Israel's last days deliverance

for which they will be eternally indebted even as they are instructed about God by the very provision that has saved them out of death and all of that is prefigured in this text how do you know these things are, how do you sense these things how do you tie this together well out of my prophetic life out of my being in Crown Heights, Brooklyn with the Hasidic Jews in a relationship that God gave 25 30 years ago and still has kept alive from my relationship with the Kansas City black community where I'm their darling and they looked upon me as a father of faith and I've been there many times by my fresh and new association with the saints in Mobile, Alabama with Pearl, with just eight miles away from the Cast Lake, Leech Lake Chippewa Nation, of all the places for God to bring us so that

the life of the prophetic man is steeped in the realities from which the elements are brought together as a hermeneutical key of understanding of the scripture which is exactly how Jeremiah understood what he understood contrary to all the false prophets that opposed him the prophetic man is instructed by the very elements of his own life, his own marriage his own situation and that opens a key to the perceiving of scripture in a way that is not given to others teachers are not required to live their message, the prophet is not required to live it, but he is given it through his life his life is a factor as well as the word of God and the coming together of these realities gives him a perception of things that is not afforded to other men and yet he is required to speak from it in a way

that would confound them but only in the authority that he has in God and though it would be rejected as it was for Jeremiah still must it be spoken so who is sufficient for these things? little did Jeremiah know that his own life and the way in which it was except for God's last provision brought to its end was to be a pattern and a picture of those things that pertain to the end and little did I know that when we took out the newspaper ad for these days and we were a footnote on the bottom because the major space was given to the brother who would be the speaker from January 29th we mentioned the prophetic school and labeled it Jeremiah, prophet for the end of times thank you Lord for confirming and vindicating what we could not have known naturally then you're now confirming all the

depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding God for who has known the mind of the Lord who has been his counselor who

has first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again for of him and through him and to him be all things to whom be glory forever thank you Lord this may be our last session on Jeremiah we may turn to something else next week but if this is the end of our examination we appreciate the way that you have concluded it looking back my God not knowing how we began you were the Alpha now you're the Omega and we have to say you've done a pretty good job of it laying it out day by day in a kind of divine logic that brings us to this conclusion and we thank you for that and that it's going

to go out my God beyond the little circle that we are that has drawn the word out of your heart your ways indeed are past finding out who has known your mind so bless my God tapes and give them the circulation that you desire bring it to the attention of your Native American believers and your black people who are feeling like they're on the shelf and whose church is in a decrepit condition has become a kind of a culture and that you have reserved for them a significance beyond anything that could have been imagined that will make their eternal future glorious and have everything to do with the restoration of your people Israel in their own last days plight when they will sink into the mud unto death we bless you Lord seal this we're privileged the way you have brought us through this

morning and for the guests who are with us now and receive our gratitude in Yeshua's holy name for this little circle this table and what is germinated incubated in it and from it to the blessing of many even the Israel who is unconscious of our existence or knows of it and opposes it as a threat to their interest just exactly the way that Jeremiah was himself misunderstood and misconstrued and we count it all privilege in Jesus name amen

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3100.mp3>

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