

Character Study: Jeremiah

Part 3 – Inward Struggles

Jeremiah 8-20

What's happening?

- The persecution Jeremiah faced reveals a lot about the nation of Israel at that time, but it also reveals a lot about Jeremiah himself. Jeremiah was very contemplative in his writing, giving a lot of insight into his thoughts and feelings as he endured the many difficulties of his ministry.
- The book of Jeremiah reveals that Jeremiah had a sensitive spirit, a tender heart, and a sympathetic personality:
 - Jeremiah became emotional at times, being brokenhearted over the hardness of the people's hearts toward God (8:18-9:1; 23:9). Because of this, Jeremiah has become known as "The Weeping Prophet" (note 13:17; 14:17).
 - The burden Jeremiah felt was so difficult that at times he wanted to quit (20:7-9).
 - The overwhelming grief he experienced caused him to question why he had even been born (15:10; 20:14-18).
- Despite the inward struggles, Jeremiah found great honor and joy in serving the Lord (15:15-16). He experienced the strength of God that compelled him to keep going (20:9-13). In 20:9, Jeremiah described this passion as a burning fire in his bones that he could not hold in.

What's God doing?

> God knew about Jeremiah's struggles and He gave him the needed encouragement to carry on and remain bold (note 15:20). God was faithful to provide hope to Jeremiah through the inward struggles he faced.

What's to learn?

→ It can be easy to quit when faced with the situations Jeremiah went through, but Jeremiah carried on. He had many painful experiences, but the joy of serving the Lord kept him going. Our mission must burn within us so that nothing slows us down either!

→ Emotions and inner struggles often occur when enduring difficult moments of life. Can you relate to any of the struggles Jeremiah went through? In such moments, do you respond by giving up, or do you allow your faith to grow stronger?