

Protection in Times of Uncertainty Jeremiah 39-45

Introduction

- During WW II, a young congressman named Lyndon Johnson volunteered for the Naval Reserves.
 - He was sent to the South Pacific to assess the situation, and report back to Washington
 - While there, Johnson chose to fly a mission with the bomber planes
 - These were risky endeavors, not something that Johnson was expected to participate in
 - He boarded the Wabash Cannonball, and while waiting to take off, he had to go to the restroom.
 - He got off the plane to relieve himself, and boarded another bomber
 - The last second decision saved his life.
 - While under heavy fire, the Wabash Cannonball was shot down over the Pacific, killing all on board.
 - The plane Johnson boarded after going to the restroom also encountered heavy fire, but survived.
 - And as they say, the rest is history—however history could have been a lot different had Johnson not gone to the restroom.¹
- Perseverance in Times of Uncertainty
 - Study of the Prophet Jeremiah
 - Two visions of uncertainty
 - Give you a word that I will fulfill
 - The people will not listen to the word you deliver and they will be destroyed.
 - God's Word becomes true
 - The people didn't listen
 - Exile to Babylon occurred and Jerusalem was destroyed
 - What about, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11
 - Jeremiah is faced with a critical decision that will change the course of his life
 - Not only does Jeremiah have an important decision to make, but so does a small remnant of Jews still left in Judah. despite the current state of destruction God's mercy is still available.
 - In the midst of uncertainty, can they choose faith over comfort?
- Life is not without uncertainty
 - We have to make decisions everyday that whether we realize it or not impact more than just one moment, but they direct the course of our life.

¹ "10 Fascinating Facts about President Lyndon B. Johnson." www.constitutioncenter.org. Accessed March 2, 2019.

- There are many decisions that we make that we have no idea what is ahead, but we try to make the best decision given the information we have in the present.
- As we seek guidance from God, there are many decisions that we will have to make by faith with only the promise of God's provision for our life.
- The uncertainty can be difficult. In the moment it can seem easier to choose a more predictable path, yet in times of uncertainty, faith over comfort is what is required to persevere in times of uncertainty.

Our Faith Must Be Consistent with Our Calling

- The armies of Babylon breach the city gates of Jerusalem
 - Purge the city of its people and value
 - They leave only the poor behind
- Jeremiah is taken captive, and begins the journey to Babylon
 - While on the way to Babylon, the travel van is stopped
 - The captain of the guard came to Jeremiah
 - **Jeremiah 40:4**
 - This had to be the moment that Jeremiah had waited for
 - Finally, someone recognized the credibility of his ministry
 - Justice would be served
 - Jeremiah would be spared of the hardship
 - **Jeremiah 40:6**
 - Instead of going to Babylon, Jeremiah chose to go back to the deserted land of Judea
 - Only the poor existed there
 - The city had been ransacked
 - Why would Jeremiah choose to return, when he could have had his needs provided for in Babylon?
 - It's one of those defining life decisions
- Jeremiah's calling
 - God's promise was the only certainty that Jeremiah had
 - Affirmation would not come from the people he was called to serve
 - Jeremiah had been appointed to serve the people before he was ever born
 - It was God putting the Word into Jeremiah's mouth that qualified Jeremiah for the job, not his eloquent speech
 - Despite Jeremiah's doubt and hardships, he never forgot his calling
 - Jeremiah's decision is not a decision of comfort, but a decision of faith
 - Jeremiah's faith is consistent with his calling
 - Babylon, despite the comfort it might provide, is not consistent with Jeremiah's calling to the people
 - Jeremiah is called to serve. His reward will not come at the hand of the Babylonians, but at the hand of God!
- Our Faith Must Be Consistent with Our Calling

- It's critical that as we make decisions, that we evaluate our decisions based on our calling
- Two errors we make when we choose comfort over faith
 - Sin- pleasure over faith, God would rather me be happy, than persevere
 - Settle for Less- fall short of what we could be-never experiencing God's best
- Being comfortable isn't always the answer
- God chooses to protect us from ourselves by showing his power through faith

God's Promises Are Consistent With His Message

- Remnant in Judah are tempted to go to Egypt for protection from Babylonians- a better life
- **Jeremiah 42:2-6**
 - Prayer is key to discerning God's will "which way we should go, and what we should do"
 - Truth and Faithfulness
 - Obey the voice of God
- **Jeremiah 42:9-12**
 - Stay in the Land
 - God Promises
 - Build and Plant (key to God's promise of renewal)
 - God will show mercy despite their sin- relent of the disaster
 - No fear- God will deliver
 - Regain land
 - God's promises are consistent with God's message
 - God's message has not changed
 - In fact, God continues to offer mercy despite destruction
 - It is God's desire to protect us and provide for us!
 - Our faith must be consistent with our calling, because God's promises are consistent with his message
- **Jeremiah 42:2-4**
 - Jeremiah is accused of being a liar
 - Two errors we make when we choose comfort over faith
 - Sin- pleasure over faith, God would rather me be happy, than persevere
 - Settle for Less- fall short of what we could be-never experiencing God's best
 - Irony of Egypt being desired destination
 - **Exodus 2:23-25**
 - The cry of the people to be delivered from slavery
 - God responded
 - **Exodus 16:2-3**
 - Wilderness-deliverance was not comfortable

- Would rather settle for comfort than God's promises
 - Egypt provided stability
 - certain expectations
 - Comfort
 - Faith was not necessary
- **Jeremiah 43:8-11**
 - Egypt will be destroyed
 - Security will not be found aside from faith
 - Egypt was not consistent with Judah's calling, therefore faith was absent
- God's promises are consistent with God's message
 - Being comfortable is not always the answer
 - God chooses to protect us from ourselves by showing his power through our faith
 - Our faith must be consistent with our calling, because God's promises are consistent with his message.

Our Best Comes From God's Best

- **Jeremiah 45:2-5**
 - Baruch is weary from the fight of faith
 - He is Jeremiah's scribe, and he has not been implicated by the people as the problem along with Jeremiah
 - Baruch is struggling to persevere in uncertainty
 - Important question that we all must ask ourselves
 - "Do you seek great things for yourself
 - "Do not seek them"
 - "I will give you your life as a prize of war in all the places to which you may go."
 - God's promise is consistent with his message
 - Our faith must be consistent with our calling
 - Our best comes from God's best
 - God's best is realized through faith, and not from comfort
 - Don't seek greatness for ourself
 - See God's will through faith

Conclusion

- Fitting that communion is today
 - The Passover Meal, which we call communion, first represented God's deliverance of the Israelites out of their bondage of Egypt
 - The Last Supper, the Passover Meal, that Jesus celebrated with his disciples became an eternity changing decision- deliverance from the bondage of sin
- The cross seemed foolish
 - "Let this cup pass from me"
 - "Your will be done, not mine"

- It is the cross, faith over comfort, that is our answer to uncertainty in our lives
- Don't seek greatness for yourself
 - Our Faith must be consistent with your calling
 - God's promises are consistent with his message
 - Our best comes from God's best
- **Hebrews 11:1, 32-35; 12:1-2**
 - Faith over comfort always leads to God's best
 - Because, God's promises are always consistent with his message
 - Let's run with perseverance the race that is set before us
 - its our calling and in it
 - Its an eternity changing decision
 - In it we will find our true reward