

Jeremiah 12:1-12

INTRODUCTION:

I WOULD LIKE TO USE PROSPERING IN THE SAME LINE WITH SUFFERING. PROSPERITY AND SUFFERING, ARE OFTEN CONSIDERED OPPOSITES, ESPECIALLY IN A CONTEXT OF FINANCIAL OR PERSONAL SUCCESS.

- **TO PROSPER** IMPLIES THRIVING AND FLOURISHING.
- **SUFFERING** REFERS TO EXPERIENCING PAIN, DISTRESS OR HARDSHIP.

JEREMIAH IS CALLING OUT THE HYPOCRITES AND ASKING GOD TO INTERVENE. HE DOES IT IN A HUMBLE SPIRIT, REMINDING THE LORD THAT HE IS ALWAYS JUST WHEN A CASE IS BROUGHT TO HIM.

JEREMIAH WAS CONTRASTING HIS OWN SUFFERING WITH THE APPARENT PROSPERITY OF THOSE AGAINST HIM.

WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER

1. JEREMIAH START BY BRING UP GOD'S CHARACTER.

V1 You are always righteous, O LORD, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice:

- GOD IS ALWAYS RIGHTEOUS
- GOD IS JUST

2. JEREMIAH TELLS GOD WHAT HE OBSERVED ABOUT WICKED PEOPLE.

V1 Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? V2 You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and bear fruit. You are always on their lips but far from their hearts

- GOD YOU PLANTED THEM
- THEY ARE ROOTED
- THEY GROW AND BEAR FRUIT
- YOU'RE ALWAYS ON THEIR LIPS BUT NOT IN THEIR HEARTS

3. JEREMIAH COMPLAINS TO GOD?

V3 Yet you know me, O LORD; you see me and test my thoughts about you. Drag them off like sheep to be butchered! Set them apart for the day of slaughter! V4 How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished. Moreover, the people are saying, "He will not see what happens to us."

- BUT YOU KNOW ME LORD
- YOU SEE ME AND HAVE TESTED ME
- HE IS EVEN TELLING GOD WHAT TO DO

4. GOD DIDN'T GIVE A DOCTRINAL ANSWER, INSTEAD HE GAVE A CHALLENGE

v5 "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan? V6 Your brothers, your own family—even they have betrayed you; they have raised a loud cry against you. Do not trust them, though they speak well of you. V7 "I will forsake my house, abandon my inheritance; I will give the one I love into the hands of her enemies. V8 My inheritance has become to me like a lion in the forest. She roars at me; therefore I hate her. V9 Has not my inheritance become to me like a speckled bird of prey that other birds of prey surround and attack? Go and gather all the wild beasts; bring them to devour. V10 Many shepherds will ruin my vineyard and trample down my field; they will turn my pleasant field into a desolate wasteland. V11 It will be made a wasteland, parched and desolate before me; the whole land will be laid waste because there is no one who cares.

IF JEREMIAH COULDN'T HANDLE THIS HOW WOULD HE HANDLE THE INJUSTICE AHEAD

5. THEIR PROSPERITY IS TEMPORARILY, THEIR TIME WILL COME.

v12 Over all the barren heights in the desert destroyers will swarm, for the sword of the LORD will devour from one end of the land to the other; no one will be safe. v13 They will sow wheat but reap thorns; they will wear themselves out but gain nothing. So bear the shame of your harvest because of the LORD's fierce anger." v14 This is what the LORD says: "As for all my wicked neighbors who seize the inheritance I gave my people Israel, I will uproot them from their lands and I will uproot the house of Judah from among them. v15 But after I uproot them, I will again have compassion and will bring each of them back to his own inheritance and his own country. v16 And if they learn well the ways of my people and swear by my name, saying, 'As surely as the LORD lives'-even as they once taught my people to swear by Baal--then they will be established among my people. v17 But if any nation does not listen, I will completely uproot and destroy it," declares the LORD

- THEY WILL SOW WHEAT BUT REAP THORNS
- THEY WILL WEAR THEMSELVES OUT BUT GAIN NOTHING
- GOD SAYS HE WILL UPROOT THEM IN THEIR LAND
- GOD WILL UPROOT THEM IN THEIR HOUSE

CONCLUSION

WHAT I HAVE LEARNT:

GOD IS PATIENT BECAUSE THERE'S A POTENTIAL FOR REPENTANCE
PROSPERITY MAY BE TEMPORARY

THE ULTIMATE JUDGMENT IS AWAITING FOR THE WICKED

WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE'S NO SECURITY IN PROSPERITY

WE NEED TO REMIND OURSELVES THAT:

OUR JESUS SUFFERED IN THE HANDS OF ROMAN SOLDIERS

JESUS SUFFERED IN THE HANDS OF HIS FRIENDS

JESUS SUFFERED GREATLY TO REDEEM US FROM SIN

CHRIST DEFEATED DEATH AND HE DID IT BY SUFFERING DEATH