

Jeremiah the Weeping Prophet

by Philip Powell

The sermon emphasizes the importance of standing for truth and justice in the church, and the need for a return to the biblical values of the church.

Duration: 50:07

Scripture: Jeremiah 5:10-29, Amos 3:3-4

Topics: "Prophetic Ministry", "Godly Justice"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses how Jeremiah was supernaturally equipped and commissioned by God to carry out his mission. Jeremiah was sent to root out, pull down, destroy, and throw down the false things that were present in the nations and kingdoms. The preacher draws a parallel to Nehemiah, who was sent to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and had to first deal with the rubbish before finding the truth. The sermon also emphasizes the importance of justice and how a lack of justice can lead to judgment from God. The preacher highlights passages from Jeremiah 5 that depict God's search for justice and the consequences of not fearing Him.

Transcript

Bowen, I shall be speaking on where is the church. They've asked me to address that topic, where is the church now? Where do you see the church now? So I'm going to speak in the first session, which will be about a half an hour or so, on where is the church structurally. Then, God willing, I want to speak on where is the church prophetically, on the Sunday morning.

And then, finally, where is the church in her future, the empowering of the church. And I don't go along with this idea that, you know, we've always got to become relevant. And I just read a statement where Rick Warren actually says that the Bible teaches that an intelligent man keeps his mind open to all new ideas.

Now, I've never read that verse anywhere, myself, but maybe you have in the Bible. Perhaps it's one of these modern perversions, I don't know. But certainly, that's the sort of the general trend of where things are going.

And where people, you know, I think Brian Houston recently said that if the church is the same now as it was in the 90s, then it has become irrelevant. Well, I don't accept that. You know, the church, Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

If you have the time, how can it be the church? That's my big question. I can understand that we have to get the message across and I can understand relevance to that degree. But in the sense of a changing message, one of the things that disturbed me profoundly is what they call this emergent church where people actually lie around on sofas because, you know, you've got to set people's mind at ease and all that sort of thing.

And then they introduce all sorts of things, including yoga and the rest of it. And they say that out of this will come the truth and the true direction of the church. I don't accept that.

And I believe that that becomes an undermining of the truth of the gospel. And so I'd ask you to pray for me. Now, some of the things I'm going to say today will be linked to that, where is the church prophetically? And so we'll start with a text that I want to start with up there, but probably it'll be a bit different.

But it's Jeremiah, chapter 5, verse 30 and 31. Jeremiah, as you know, is the weeping prophet. He's referred to as the weeping prophet.

And I said recently to somebody that I had an interaction with across in America where assemblies of God are facing a crossroads experience. This is generally being accepted right across America that assemblies of God in America are at the crossroads. And they have a big conference coming up soon.

And some of us have been trying to have a bit of input by email and what have you. And I said to a person and I had interaction with, I said, what we need are people who like Jeremiah will cry copiously and yet who will proclaim fearlessly. And that really is what we want.

And we're living at a particular time in history where I think you can see parallels between what happened in the Old Testament. And certainly when you come to the end of an era, for example, the end of a line of kings or where Israel itself or Judah itself are going into captivity, you'll have a parallel with respect to the church in a similar circumstance. And when the church has gone into captivity or there's going to be something of that nature.

Or at the final analysis, when the church goes into grave apostasy, which of course is just prior to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. And you can see parallels with it. Some years ago, as a young pastor, a young preacher, I heard the veteran man who I respected so very, very highly, Martyn Lloyd-Jones preach in England.

And Martyn Lloyd-Jones was always calling for a change. He was always calling for it. He stood on one occasion and called for the people who were in the various denominations to come out of them.

And actually John Stott was the chairman in that meeting. And John Stott got up and contradicted Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in the meeting. Well, you know, they do that sort of thing.

And it was an interesting development. But I think the doctor was right. He was calling for people to come out of the apostate denominations as they were drifting.

And probably if they had listened to him and come out, then something might have might have happened. But I heard him say this, and it was one and only thing that I would have a bit of a problem with what he said. He said, the church at present in Britain is fighting for her very existence.

Now, I agree to the sentiment of it. I believe the church is fighting and we are to fight. But there's one thing I don't think we ever fight for, and that is our existence.

We don't fight for our existence, because we exist. The true church exists. And it exists by virtue of the sovereign and divine statement of the Lord Jesus Christ when he said, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And so with all of this emphasis and this message, we must not be pessimistic. We must be optimistic. We have read the last chapter and we know how it's going to end.

Praise the Lord. And so I want you to bear that in mind in respect of everything that I say today. And I trust that that note of optimism and encouragement will come out.

Jeremiah 5 verse 30 and 31. A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests, they rule by their means.

And my people love to have it so. And you would have thought that he would have ended by saying, and what will they do in the end? But he doesn't. He says, and what will you do in the end? There's a switch.

Very interesting. We'll see that as we go on. Now, Jeremiah is a very wonderful character and a very wonderful book.

If ever there were a case against abortion, it's contained in Jeremiah and in particular in Jeremiah chapter one, where we see that the prophet was sovereignly formed. And it's interesting. God says there in verse five, He says, before I formed you, I knew you.

So you could put it in order. I knew you. I formed you.

And then it goes on. Jeremiah chapter one, verse five. I sanctified you.

I set you apart. And I ordained you. That's God.

That's sovereign. That's divine. Now, whether you take it as particular to Jeremiah or as a general pattern for all of life in respect of the being formed, it still doesn't matter.

It's a great case against abortion. What would have happened if abortion had been in Jeremiah's time? God says that He formed him. He formed him in the womb.

And He said, I knew you before then. There's nothing unknown to God. He says, I set you apart and I ordained you to be a prophet.

And then as you go down, verse nine of this same chapter, we're looking at this background in respect of what I want to say today. We have not only the fact of being sovereignly formed, but we have the fact of being supernaturally equipped. Verse nine.

Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, even though He knew Jeremiah, even though He sanctified him, even though He formed him in the womb and brought him forth, there came a moment when God touched him. When God touched his mouth. He says, touch my mouth.

And the Lord said, behold, I have put my words in your mouth. A prophet who proclaims the truth of God is somebody who has been divinely touched. And he does not speak his own words, but he speaks

something outside of himself.

He may not do it all the time, but there will be times, distinct times when he will do it. And those words will achieve always the end to which God has sent them. You see, Jeremiah, like Moses of the old time, said, I don't want to go.

I don't want to go. Every true minister of God that is ordained in a particular way will try and run away from his calling. I tried to do it when I was young, but I couldn't get away from it.

God brought me back. And Jeremiah was conscious of this. There came a time when the hand of the Lord touched him and it formed something within him so that he began to speak the words of God.

And this can happen at various stages in our lives. Those of us who are called into the ministry may not happen all the time, but it will happen supernaturally equipped. And then you will find that it says that he was signally commissioned.

Verse 10 says, see, I have set you this day over the nations and over the kingdom. And he lists four things which are negative and two things which are positive. And the negative precedes the positive.

This is usually how it goes. See, I have set you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out, to pull down, to destroy, to throw down. Those things are negative or what people would naturally think are negative, but they have to be because of the false stuff that was there.

There had to be that. The same thing was with Nehemiah when God sent him to rebuild the walls. He went around, he looked at the walls and he saw, first of all, all the rubbish.

The rubbish had to be removed before the rebuilding could take place. And so this is so with Jeremiah. And to build and to plant.

And then you find that he is significantly inspired. God asked Jeremiah, what do you see, Jeremiah? Now, what Jeremiah saw was supernaturally presented to him. I've heard one of the most fantastic messages I've ever heard preached from this.

Now, I perhaps won't tell you who it was, but it was absolutely abominable. And he said that Jeremiah chose to see. No, Jeremiah didn't choose to see.

God showed him something. And in his seeing it, God commended him for the way he expressed what he saw. The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah saying, what do you see? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

And the Lord said unto him, you have well seen. In other words, you have seen what I have shown you. I will hasten my word to perform it.

So what happens here, if you look through it, God showed Jeremiah two things. He showed him this almond rod. It was like a branch.

And it had just buds on it. And it was a symbol of new life. God was saying to Jeremiah, this is my pattern.

This is my method. And this will be the symbol of your ministry. That even though there's going to be a predominant thing with your ministry, there will always be the essence of new life.

There will be something infused. And you will always see this almond budding tree. The second thing that he saw was the boiling pot, which is a symbol of judgment, which was a major part of Jeremiah's message.

And it wasn't as I heard this man try to explain that the almond tree sort of dominated Jeremiah. No, actually the boiling pot was the thing that dominated in the message. If you look at Jeremiah, it's all a message of judgment.

But in the midst of it, there was this truth about the almond tree. So that is the background. That's the background of what I want to say today.

Then I want you to see the immediate context very, very quickly. Chapter five. So we turn over now to chapter five.

And what we have here is a case for judgment. God says to Jeremiah, I want you to wander through Jerusalem. And as you're wandering through, I want you to look for signs of justice.

This is what he's looking for. He's searching for justice. And this is a great search of God, the great quest of God throughout history.

It's always for justice. When judgment comes upon a church or upon a nation or upon an individual or upon a people, it's usually because of a lack of justice. Justice cries to God.

Our God is a just God. So there's this searching for justice. Run to and fro, says God to the prophet, through the streets of Jerusalem and see and now and know.

Seek in the broad places thereof if you can find a man. God is always searching for a man. If there be any that execute judgment that seeks the truth.

Notice that. Seeks the truth. Second Thessalonians chapter two says that if men do not love the truth, ultimately even God turns against them, becomes their enemy.

So this thing with God is always searching for. It's not that we're always just in all our actions, but there has to be a predominant desire in our hearts for truth. And so he says, this is what I want you to seek.

And he says, if you find that man, I will pardon it. Now this is quite incredible. God says he will pardon the whole nation for one man.

Now with Sodom and Gomorrah, God looked for 10, didn't he? Remember with Abraham? Because this is a worldly setting and the evil was so intense. And Abraham took it upon himself to argue with God and to reason with God and to pray to God. And he said, Lord, if you find 50 there, will you save? And God said, yes, I will.

And 30, 40, 40, 30, 20, 10. Right down to 10. And Abraham thought, well, surely, surely there'll be 10 righteous.

But there weren't. There weren't 10 righteous. So the judgment of God came upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Here, this is God's people. Here, representative of the church. You can apply it to the church.

If I find one, justice, justice, I will not destroy it. Now we're talking now and not about the church per se, but the various structures of the church. I will not destroy it.

It's incredible that. And though they say the Lord lived. You're seeing here, you have a picture of people sort of praising the Lord and saying, oh yes, we acknowledge God.

We acknowledge the existence of God. This is the big cat's cry of our time. Surely they swear falsely.

It's like the New Testament talks about. They have a form of religion, but they deny the power thereof. This is, this is the end time presentation, the end time church.

Oh Lord, are not your eyes upon the truth? What are you looking for? You're looking for justice. You're looking for truth. Verse three.

And you have stricken them, but they have not grieved. You have, you've chastised them, but it doesn't seem to have had an impact upon them. And you've consumed them, but they refuse to receive correction.

They have made their faces harder than a rock, but they have refused to return. Therefore I said, surely these are poor. They are foolish for they know not the way of the Lord or the judgment.

And then verse six, he says, so I'll, I'll turn away from the ordinary people and I'll turn to the leaders. I'll turn to the great men that they are. They have known your way.

Verse five. I will get me unto the great men and I will speak unto them. So they have known the way of the Lord and the judgment of their God.

But these have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds. They have, they've, they've broken it. This is what the leadership has done in Israel there and now in our time in the church.

He's searching for justice. And then because he cannot find that justice, verse 10 says, go you up onto the walls. There is a call for the slaying of the wicked.

Chapter five, verses 10 to 19. Very, very dark passage about the judgment of God coming upon Israel. And then verses 20 to 29, there is a picture in which we see God as sovereign.

Declare this in the house of Jacob and publish it in Judah saying, hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not, why don't you fear me? Saith the Lord. This is up on the, uh, uh, I think on the notes, you might like to throw it up. Jeremiah five, 20 to 31.

Declare this in the house of Jacob and publish it in Judah saying, I don't know if it's up there here now. Okay. There you are.

You might have it there here. Now this O foolish people and without understanding who have eyes and see not and who have ears and hear not. Will you not fear me? Says the Lord.

Will you not tremble at my presence who has placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it? Cannot pass what? Cannot pass the sand? Oh no, because the sea is always washing over the sand, isn't it? What is it? That they cannot look, look what it goes on to say. And

though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail though they roar? Yet can they not pass over it? Pass over what? Over the bound of the sand? No, because they're doing that all the time. What's he talking about? He's talking about the perpetual decree.

God has put a perpetual decree. Job talks about it and he says he will say to the waves thus far and no further. So what happened then with a tsunami? Back last Boxing Day.

The decree was taken away. God removed the decree. Now when God removes the decree, that's an awesome thing.

And we saw the consequences of it in degrees. If you read the book of the Revelation, of course, there's going to be far more. God's put decrees so far no further with regard to nations, with regard to nature and with regard to the church.

So far and no further. And then when his timing comes, he removes that perpetual decree and then you move into a new dimension. Now that's what we are beginning to see today.

Verse 23. But this people have a revolting and a rebellious heart. They are revolted and gone.

Verse 24. Neither they say they in their heart. Let us now fear the Lord our God, who gives rain, both the former and the latter in his season.

He reserves unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. God is gracious. What's the problem then? Verse 25.

Your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have withheld good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men. They lay weight as he that sets snares.

They set a trap. They catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit.

Therefore they are become great and waxen rich. That's not only with respect to the general world, but it is with respect to certain men within the so-called kingdom of God, the church. They have become rich on the basis of deceit.

It's like birds in the cage. Their house is full of deceit and that is what made them rich. Verse 28.

They are waxen fat. They shine. Yes, they overpass the deeds of the wicked.

They judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper. And the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit these things, says the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such things? And then, of course, we move into our text.

So what we have then in the background is a case against abortion as we look at the calling of Jeremiah. Then we have a context which is a case for judgment. And then in our immediate text, we have a case study for our time.

A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesied falsely and the priests bear rule by their means and my people love to have it so. You've got three things here.

You've got the prophet, you've got the priest and you've got the people. You have the place of the prophet and his influence. Jeremiah was unique among the prophets of his day.

He wept copiously and yet he preached fearlessly and he stood solitarily but successfully. How do you measure success? How do you measure success? In human terms, it's on the base of numbers, money, achievements, wealth, whatever. Was Jeremiah successful? In those terms, no.

Definitely not. You just look at the whole history. He began speaking and he spoke and he declared and nobody listened to him.

And eventually they turned against him and locked him up in a prison, put him down in a pit. And as we said, Elijah was just as anointed in the pit as he was in the pulpit. Made no difference because he was called.

God had called him to that task. Run to and fro and see if you can find a man who seeks after truth. Where is our success ultimately? Our success ultimately is measured by the degree that we stand for the justice of God and the degree that we stand for the truth of God.

Come what may, come what will, we stand for the truth. Jesus said, Whoever is ashamed of me in this world, I will be ashamed of him when he stands before me. But whoever confesses me in this world, I will confess him before my Father.

Hallelujah. Jeremiah was unique among the prophets of his day. Jeremiah illustrates God's unchanging method.

Amos chapter three verse seven says that the Lord will not do anything but what he reveals it first of all to his prophets. Now I don't think this is a text that we should use to justify our position or anything like that. But I think it is a principle on which God works.

Surely the Lord will do nothing but that he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets. Look back through in Amos chapter three for a moment. Just turn to Amos three with me.

The prophet says, Hear this word from the Lord. The Lord has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

Can two walk together except they be agreed? Will a lion roar in the forest when it has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den if it has taken nothing? Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where there is no trap set for him? Shall one take up a snare from the earth and have taken nothing at all? Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in the city and the Lord has not done it? Then this verse. Surely the Lord will do nothing but he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion has roared.

In other words, the prey has been taken. Who will not fear? The Lord has spoken. Who can but prophesy? Jeremiah illustrates this.

He stands there, that sort of transition period in Israel's history when they're going from liberty into bondage. And he stands and he proclaims the unchanging word of God in spite of the fact that all others around him are saying other things. He stands and he says precisely what is going to happen.

One of the problems of our time is that we've moved away from the prophetic message of the word of God and the Bible and we have done death bites to God. I've been reading a most incredible record here. It's

linked to the most popular thing that's happening in the church today, the Rick Warren Purpose Driven Church, and it speaks about the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

And it's quite interesting. There's some good things Rick Warren says and there's some very useful things that seem to be developing from his position. But one of the fundamental problems is that we are perceiving influence in the secular realm as if it were paralleling the true success within the Kingdom of God.

And the people that are becoming the prophets today are the sociologists. Here's some of the things that Rick Warren says. There's a verse in the Bible that says the intelligent man is always open to new ideas.

Now, as I said, I don't know where that's found, but he must have found it something that parallels that. He also said, when he came to this pew, he said, I also wanted to come and challenge you to see your writing as a stewardship of influence. Well, I mean, that's nothing new.

We know that the media are influential and we know that people like that he was interviewing and that we're interviewing him, like the New York Times and other journalists there, are the thinkers of the secular world. But are they the people that really influence anything? Are they the prophets of our time? No, I don't think so. He says, and he tries to draw a parallel.

And this is one of the things that Rick Warren says. He said, there's a fellow called Walter Rosenbusch, who is the man who came up with the social gospel. He was a liberal theologian, and he basically said, we don't need this stuff about Jesus anymore.

We don't need the cross. We don't need salvation. We don't need atonement.

We don't need to redeem the social structures of society. And if we do that, people will automatically get all we need to do. Sorry, let me just reread that.

We don't need the cross. We don't need salvation. We don't need atonement.

We just need to redeem the social structures of society. And if we do that, people will automatically get better. This is basically Marxism, says Rick Warren.

He's quite right, in a Christian form. And he rightly denigrates that. And he says, there were even magazines like the Christian Century, which was a pretty audacious title when it started at the beginning of the 20th century, as if to say, this is going to be the Christian Century.

We are going to bring in the millennium simply by changing the social structure of society. Well, nobody believes that anymore after two world wars and a bunch of other stuff. That's true.

That's all true. But the point is, now they're presenting the idea that they're going to do it now in our day with this new sort of emphasis. But of course, the Bible doesn't present that.

We're not bringing in the millennial reign of Christ. We're not here to just influence society, to make it get better and better. It won't get better and better.

The Bible says it's going to get worse and worse until Jesus Christ comes. We have an old-fashioned gospel to proclaim. But this is what he said.

But what happened is, Protestantism split into two wings. Racial justice and things like that. Today, there really aren't that many fundamentalists left.

What do you mean by that? I don't know if you know that or not, but they are much a minority. There aren't that many fundamentalists left in America. I think he confuses the term fundamentalism in all that he says.

But what he's basically saying is that we are here to influence. And this is, of course, the great thing of the purpose-driven church. And they become the prophets.

Now, what happens is, accepting that as the prophetic message, it then has a detrimental effect upon the pastor and upon the priest. Jeremiah says, the prophets prophesy falsely and the priests rule by their means. Now, Peter takes up this idea in 2 Peter 2, verse 1, where he talks about the Old Testament prophets.

And he says those Old Testament prophets were false, most of them. Jeremiah wasn't, of course. But the majority of them, they were far more false prophets than they were true prophets.

2 Peter 2, he says, but there were false prophets also among the people. And then he says this, even as there shall be false teachers among you. So the Old Testament false prophets parallel the New Testament false teachers.

2 Peter 2, verse 1. False prophets among the people, there shall be false teachers among you. What happens? Those that are put up at that level, who are seen as the prophets or the teachers, they say things. And the pastors pick up and they project it.

And then you have this same circumstance, same scenario. A wonderful and a horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means.

Now, this expression, bear rule by their means, has two possible ideas. The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means, by their word. They sort of refer to them and say, oh well, it must be right because the prophets said so.

Now, this is something that's affected the church very, very much, the Pentecostal charismatic church, so that people who are looked upon as being prophets, they're listened to and not only listened to, they're revered and their message is then projected down through the local congregation. It's what's happening with Rick Warren, what happens with a person called Cindy Jacobs, who prophesies the most absurd, irrational stuff. And yet, churches all over Brisbane here have been influenced by the stuff that she says and they still look at her and call her a prophet, even though there's been so much that has been presented to prove it false.

The pastor rules by the false teaching of our time. Or it could mean, and this is a margin possibility, the pastor rules by his own, not God's authority. The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their own power.

They set themselves up as a power base and that power gives them the authority, but it is not the authority that comes from God. Now, the text then goes to the final point. So you have the place of the prophet and his influence.

You have the position of priest or pastor and his work. Pastor parallels the priest of the Old Testament. And the third thing is the personal appeal to each individual.

My people love to have it so. If it wasn't for the love of the people for this sort of stuff, then it wouldn't happen. So ultimately it comes to that bottom line.

You might say, okay, the prophet is responsible. The priest, the pastor is to blame. No, says Jeremiah, my people love to have it so.

They keep them there. They keep feeding them. They keep the ego going.

They keep the message. My people love to have it so. But, says Elijah, says Jeremiah, what will, not they do, that's already determined, but what will you do? Where do we fit in? What will you do in the end? The thing that I've always been impressed about the message of the prophet is that so very often you read the burden of the word of the Lord as it was to Habakkuk.

The burden of the word of the Lord as it was to Amos. The burden of the word of the Lord as it was to Jeremiah. Jeremiah speaks of two things.

And he was not a naturally bold man. That's quite clear if you do a character study of the man through the book. But he knew the hand of God upon his life.

This is how he starts. The word of Jeremiah, the son of Ithokayah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah. Then in verse 3 it says, it came also in the days of Jehoiakim.

If you take those two kings, Josiah and Jehoiakim, they represent the beginning of the ministry of Jeremiah and the end of his ministry. Josiah was king of Judah for 31 years. It's estimated that the date was B.C. 639 to 609.

He was the great grandson of a very good man called Hezekiah. But between Hezekiah and Josiah were two evil men. Josiah's grandfather Manasseh, who performed wickedness in Israel.

And Josiah's father, who was king also of Judah, his name was Ammon. Those were two wicked men, Manasseh and Ammon. Isn't it interesting how good men do not always produce good sons? Not even in biblical terms.

Josiah descending, says one man from the loins of Ammon, is every bit as improbable as Manasseh descending from the loins of Hezekiah. For as wicked as his father and grandfather were, Josiah was exceedingly righteous. And this shows two things.

One, that we cannot just rely on paternity. We have to know God for ourselves. But it also shows the amazing grace of God.

That though our forebears, our father, our mother, our grandfather may have been evil, we can break the mold. We can break out into something new. Now very interestingly, as I study the life of Josiah, Josiah became king when he was only eight years of age.

And about the age of 18, between 18 and 21, something happened which absolutely revolutionized his life. Somebody found in the temple of God, the old, dirty, dusty law of God, which had been neglected in

Israel. And they reported to the king, Josiah, possibly 18, 19 years of age.

Josiah, we have found the word of the Lord. Interestingly, Jeremiah gets his call about this same time. We can't be absolutely sure, but between the age of 18 and 21 of Josiah, it seems almost certain that Jeremiah received his call, the one that he refers to here.

The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah in the days of Josiah. Now, I think that knowing the ways of God, it would have been that the law of God was discovered first, and then the prophet of God came forth. The word of the Lord established a basis on which the prophet could stand and proclaim.

And so, his vision was very, very significant in this whole setting. What do you see, Jeremiah? I see the rod of an almond tree with buds on it. You've well seen.

Because I will hasten my word to perform it. Josiah has found the word. I will hasten my word to perform it.

It will happen, Jeremiah. But there's something else you've got to see. What do you see, Jeremiah? I see a boiling pot, acrid fumes, seething, disturbing, facing to the north.

Judgment's going to come from the north. I'm going to judge my people because of their sin. But in the midst of it all, there's always going to be the almond tree.

There's always going to be the symbol of new life. Hallelujah. The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah in the days of Josiah.

But then it also came in the days of Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim was king of Judah for 11 years, the last but one king, the penultimate king, before they went into captivity. He was appointed as king by Nebuchadnezzar in the place of Jehoiakim's brother who was banished to Egypt.

Jehoiakim was the son of Josiah and Zebediah. At age 25, he was made king by Pharaoh Necho in place of his brother Jehoias who was exiled to Egypt. Jehoiakim reigned for 11 years, but his reign was an evil one.

Josiah was a good king. Jehoiakim was an evil king. But the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in the midst of both, and it never changed.

It never changed. It was the same. When everybody was prophesying all sorts of wonderful and fantastic things that were going to happen, Josiah said no.

Jeremiah said no, no, you're going into captivity. Judgment is coming. But in the midst of it all, and you'll find it over and over again, repeated things, I will not destroy everything.

There will be a remnant. I will bring out my purpose. And brothers and sisters, I believe in these days in which we live, this is one of the most incredible encouragements of our time.

God will ensure that the almond bud rodded tree with a bud will always be there. How will it come ultimately? Well, we're moving towards a big crisis in not only in the church history, but also in the history of our nation. Things are happening at whirlwind speed.

You only have to read your newspapers. You don't need me to go down through it all. But you read your newspapers and listen to your radios and watch your televisions, and you can see the incredible things

that are happening.

In spite of the obvious problem with the Muslim community, our governments really don't know what to do. And perhaps they're doing it out of the only way they can reason that if we give these people what they want, then we've got a chance that they won't rise up against us. But no, that won't work.

That won't work. What will work? Well, nothing will work really other than the almond rod. It's there.

Remember the occasion when God said, I'm going to show you what I can do? When Aaron was being challenged about his position. Of course, Aaron here represents our blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus. He is the great high priest.

He doesn't represent us. He represents Christ. And Moses said, okay, you who feel that we're giving too much prominence to Aaron as high priest, I want you to, each of you, bring your rod.

Just put it there. Put it there in the place of test. Put it there in the presence of God.

What is it that holds the decree? By a perpetual decree, God says it's his presence. Here it is. Put your rods there.

Each of them brought their rods. Moses' rod was there. And the next morning when they came out, there was one that stood out, had a difference.

What was it? It was Aaron's rod. Aaron's rod was budding. But all the others were exactly the same.

Here is death and resurrection life. Here is something which represents the one man that Jeremiah was told to go and look for. Go and find in the city.

Go and find in the church. Go and find in the community a man. A man who upholds justice.

And I will save the city. I will save the church. I will save the community because of it.

Because of what? Because of justice. Thank God the man has been found, brothers and sisters. Hallelujah.

And that man is the head of his church. His church will never fail. It cannot fail.

It will not fail because he said that he would build it and he said he would dwell within it. And by God's grace, I'm going to be a part of it. Hallelujah.

The man has been found. It's not Philip Powell. It's not Jacob Presch.

It's not anyone else who we feel upholds David, Dave Hunt or the men that we look to who have upheld the testimony and have stood firm in spite of all of the other false things that have come in. No, no, no, no. It's not you.

It's not me. It's not contending earnestly for the faith. It's not CWM.

It's not any of these things. Who is it? It's our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He has been found, blessed be his wonderful name.

And God will cause that whereas his decree may for a period be removed and denominations will come tumbling down, but his church will survive and continue to thrive because he said he would build it and he says he is in it. That's the almond branch. That's the bud.

That's the death and principle. And when that finds its duplication and replication in us, blessed be the name of the Lord, we will see the glory of God as it should be in our day and generation. Lord, help us.

We pray never to be false prophets. Help us, Lord, never to be priests or pastors who rule by our own means or by the prophetic word of false men. But if that happens, the question stands, what will we do in the end? We thank you, Lord, that there is an end to be determined.

We thank you that you are coming. We look up and we say even so come Lord Jesus. And we pray until that takes dawn, the shadows flee away.

We will be found among those who are righteous, those who bear testimony to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, not our own righteousness, for that is just like filthy rags, but the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And to that end, I pray that you will mold us together as a fighting force for you, as a people who know their God, who will rise up and take action in our day, who will rise up, as Daniel says, and do exploits in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12083.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/philip-powell/jeremiah-the-weeping-prophet/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net