

Series: Message From the Major Prophets

SEEKEST THOU GREAT THINGS FOR THYSELF JEREMIAH 45

Text: Jeremiah 45:5

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⁵ And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

Introduction:

In this relatively short chapter we find some great truths and principles.

The central character of this text is a man named Baruch. I think he can best be called Jeremiah's secretary.

"Baruch" means "blessed one!"

Baruch, by implication, is a blessed man. But how is he so blessed, in what way?

Several answers may be given to that question, all valid responses. But here's where we'll start today. Baruch is

always associated with the Prophet Jeremiah, one of the greatest men of God who ever lived.

It's obvious that Baruch is a discouraged man.

God told this man Baruch, in Jeremiah 45:3, his very innermost thoughts!

Jeremiah 45:3

³ Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

Why was he so depressed?

Note with me some thoughts regarding this man Baruch and the messages or principles we can learn from this.

1. BARUCH'S COMPLAINT (VS. 3) WOE IS ME

Jeremiah 45:3

³ Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

- He's feeling sorry for himself. He had just said, in a pitiful way no doubt, "Woe is me now."

- He is highlighting his troubles – grief, sorrow, and no rest
- He is looking on the dark side of everything.

We've all done this at one time or another.

Baruch believes the Lord has really worked him over!

- Trial after trial!
- Heartache after heartache!

One thing is certain – Baruch was not where he needed to be for the Lord has said:

Matthew 11:28

²⁸ **Come unto me**, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest.**

Our attitude directly affects our aspect.

It's interesting when you look at the attitude of Baruch as compared to the attitude of Joseph.

Baruch said: “The Lord hath added grief to my sorrow.”

Joseph said: “Ye thought **evil** against me; *but* God **meant it** unto good, to bring to pass, as **it is** this day, to save much people alive.”

What do we say when troubles hit us?

What is our attitude when things get difficult?

Not only do we see “Baruch’s Compliant” but notice also:

2. GOD’S CONCERN, AND CONVERSATION TO BARUCH (VS. 2)

Jeremiah 45:2

² *Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch;*

It’s a blessing to me to know that God sent a message to Baruch personally.

- God knew his name, and need.
- God knew the thoughts of Baruch.

Jeremiah 45:3

³ Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

Baruch had served with Jeremiah as his scribe or secretary – penning the messages God had given to Jeremiah.

He had served faithfully.

The messages that he had penned for Jeremiah that he had received from God for the most part spoke of judgment that was coming.

There is no wonder Baruch and sometimes even Jeremiah stayed so discouraged! They did call the Jeremiah the "weeping" prophet, if you remember.

But what an encouragement it is to me to know that when I'm discouraged God knows my thoughts, needs, and will have a message for me as well.

Not only do we see "Baruch's Complaint" and "God's Concern, and Conversation to Baruch" but notice also:

3. A NEEDFUL CONSIDERATION (VS. 4) – SEEKEST THOU GREAT THINGS FOR THYSELF

Jeremiah 45:5

⁵ And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

We are told what Baruch was seeking.

It may have been:

A More Secure Life – Remember God in this message has said that He is going to uproot this nation – which would also affect Baruch.

Worldly Honor – He served with the great prophet Jeremiah. He had penned the messages that Jeremiah had received from the Lord.

Today many seek to receive some degree of honor but we need to remember what we read in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 9:25

²⁵ And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

Great Riches – Many are controlled by greed. While away I watched a documentary about Hank Paulson the 74th US Secretary of the Treasury and oversaw the credit crisis in 2007-2009.

Because of greed banks offered mortgages to people who couldn't pay them back which caused house prices to increase at a rate that wasn't realistic banks began to struggle because of these bad mortgages.

He pushed through legislation authorizing the Treasury to use \$700 billion to stabilize the financial system – known as the bail-out.

It was greed on the part of banks, and others that caused this near disaster – “which is not fixed it was just fed”.

Again we must remember:

Matthew 16:26

²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Proverbs 27:24

²⁴ For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

Great Position and Power – Neither of these things matter in the end.

It would seem as if Baruch had a brother that was a prince.

Jeremiah 51:59

⁵⁹ *The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And this **Seraiah was a quiet prince.***

No doubt he had a desire for some of the same things his brother enjoyed.

The Christian should not seek worldly honor, riches, and power to the neglect of his own soul.

The things that the world offers are only temporary whereas the things of God remain forever.

Even when thinking in temporal terms, the child of God is assured of having every need supplied.

Matthew 6:33

³³ *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

4. THE COVENANT RECEIVED (VS. 5) – LIFE UNTO THEE

Jeremiah 45:5

⁵ And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

Not only are you having some difficult days, the whole world is going to experience such.

And a whole lot worse!

The time to judge and punish their blatant sin and rebellion and perversion has arrived.

Hard times are here.

The wrath of Almighty God is soon to be unleashed!

Baruch had not adopted the best attitude, often complaining about God's way of doing things!

Yet God still blessed him, abundantly blessed him.

For some reason, God has decided to spare Baruch's life ... everywhere the man goes!

He will always be safe.

The word "prey" means "reward," or "a prize acquired in war."

As a "treasure," God will always protect and spare Baruch's life.

Why would God do this for a not-so-outstanding person?

Just a regular man who had some secretarial skills?

I think the answer can be found in Baruch's respect for the Word of God!

For the scrolls and manuscripts Jeremiah had dictated to him.

God blesses those who honor His Word!

Baruch had invested countless hours hearing God speak to Jeremiah, writing meticulously every word.

Being exact about spelling and grammar and form, no doubt as well!

Baruch then had apparently read aloud God's Word from Jeremiah, publicly!

At the risk of harm to himself!

Remember:

1 Samuel 2:30

³⁰ *Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for **them that honour me I will honour,** and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*

Lessons to be learned

- It's always right to remain faithful even when the task God gives us to do will not be popular to most people.
- God knows us by name and knows what's going on around us and what it is that we need all the time.
- When we find ourselves discouraged – we should never be critical of God.
- There are things that we should seek and not seek after.
- The things that many seek – God has in store for his children.
 - Great Honor

1 John 3:2

² *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

- Great Riches

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

- Great Position and Power

Revelation 3:21

²¹ *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

Close:

There is little wonder the Baruch at times became discouraged with the difficult circumstances he faced.

I can now even better understand some of his complaining. He was human, after all.

But still we all are surely amazed at his endurance, his tenacity and determination to stay at his God-given job! And perhaps most of all, his devotion to the Word of God!

Little wonder God gave him this great promise.

Jeremiah 45:5

*⁵ And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: **but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.***

Your life will be precious!

Your life will be spared!

You are a "treasure," a "prey," a "valuable" in the eyes of God!

This reminds me of the words we read in Malachi:

Malachi 3:17

*¹⁷ And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day **when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them,** as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*

May we remain faithful to the task God has given us!