

## **The Importance Of The Word Of God In The Life Of Jeremiah.**

Text: Jer 15:15-21

Suggested Hymns:

500, 267, 265, 268, 264

1) The Bread Of Life

2) An Anchor And Stay In The Troubles Of Life

3) A Lamp To His Feet

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Jeremiah 15:15–21, <sup>15</sup> *O LORD, You know; Remember me and visit me, And take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In Your enduring patience, do not take me away. Know that for Your sake I have suffered rebuke.*

<sup>16</sup> *Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts. <sup>17</sup> I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers, Nor did I rejoice; I sat alone because of Your hand, For You have filled me with indignation.*

<sup>18</sup> *Why is my pain perpetual And my wound incurable, Which refuses to be healed? Will You surely be to me like an unreliable stream, As waters that fail? <sup>19</sup> Therefore thus says the LORD: “If you return, Then I will bring you back; You shall stand before Me; If you take out the precious from the vile, You shall be as My mouth. Let them return to you, But you must not return to them.*

<sup>20</sup> *And I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall; And they will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you; For I am with you to save you And deliver you,” says the LORD. <sup>21</sup> “I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, And I will redeem you from the grip of the terrible.” (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

In the 10th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke we find the well-known account of our Saviour’s visit in the home of Mary and Martha. The story is brief and simple, and its significance is obvious. While Martha was busy with much serving, Mary sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His Word.

Martha desired that Mary assist her in attending to the Master's bodily comforts. However, Jesus made use of the opportunity to show that, after all, only one thing is needful — His Word. God's Word is all-important.

Fifteen hundred years later we find Martin Luther, a twenty-year-old student, at the University of Erfurt, in Germany. For the first time in his life he finds a complete Bible. How eagerly he scans its sacred pages! How engrossed he becomes in the story of young Samuel! How earnestly he desires to possess such a Book!

Throughout the remainder of his life this Book, because it is the Word of God, is of paramount importance to him. Scripture alone was his foundation at the Diet at Worms and the Marburg Colloquium. In 1534 Luther gave to the world his complete translation of the Bible. Luther learned to say with Samuel, *“Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.”*<sup>1</sup> Both in questions of doctrine and in the application of doctrine to life, God's Word was to Luther all-important.

We are today addressing Christians. Christians know that without the revelation of God's will to mankind we would be most miserable. We would not know the true God. Without God's Word we would know nothing of our blessed Lord and Saviour and of the blood that was shed for our sins. We could have no certain hope regarding life or death. But we are happy and thankful; for God's Word has revealed to us who God is, and what He has done for our salvation.

And yet, do we always consider the Word of God to be the one thing needful? Is it to us the most important thing in life? For our instruction, comfort, and inspiration let us today go back in spirit to an Old Testament period, to the time of the prophet Jeremiah, and learn of — *The Importance of the Word of God in the Life of Jeremiah.*

Jeremiah found in the Word of God, *The Bread of Life, An Anchor and a Stay, and A Lamp to His Feet.* May the Lord bless our meditation.

## **1. Jeremiah Found In The Word Of God The Bread Of Life**

Jeremiah, who lived about 600 years before Christ, says in our text, *<sup>16</sup> Your words were found, and I ate them.* Although God had, through Isaiah and other prophets, previously warned the Jews, and had extended to them most loving

invitations, and had given to them the most glorious promises concerning the Messiah, most of the people appeared to care nothing for the Word of God.

It was indeed a dreadful time. Sunken in materialism and indifferentism, like the foolish rich man in the parable recorded in Luke 12,<sup>2</sup> the Jews were satisfied to feed their souls with earthly things. They were content to eat, drink, and be merry.

As for himself, the prophet Jeremiah says that he found, and did eat, the words of God. He made them his own, digested them, so that they became, as it were, part of his life and being. They were welcome to him as food to the hungry, and he admitted them to his understanding and heart, and imprinted them on his mind.

His words remind us of Deut. 8:3, where Moses says that *man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.* This text was also quoted by Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

St. Peter, writing to the Christians of his day, speaks of God's Word as spiritual food when he says <sup>2</sup> *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*<sup>4</sup>

And what was the effect of this "eating of the words of God?" *Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.* Jeremiah took pleasure in the words as a hungry man finds satisfaction after he has partaken of food. They were agreeable to him, and whatever God said to him brought him pleasure. He was glad to know and to do God's will; for it was to him, as with Jesus, food *to do the will of Him who sent Me.*<sup>5</sup>

There is plenty of heart-hunger in the world today. And how vainly people try to satisfy the longing of their hearts! Some follow the numerous strange and fanciful "isms." The road to Endor is crowded when people no longer listen to God.<sup>6</sup> Human philosophies and superstition bring only disillusionment and often despair.

Others seek happiness in riches; but if these could satisfy, wealthy people would be happier than they are. Still others follow the desires of pleasure; but instead of finding contentment, the devotees of pleasure are always seeking new forms of entertainment and amusement.<sup>7</sup>

Compare, if you will, the dominating greed of many people and their restlessness with *“the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding”*<sup>8</sup> as we find it in the devout Christian, and decide for yourself which is best.

There may be substitutes for the daily food we now use for our bodies, but there is no substitute for the food required by the soul. Only the Word of God can supply this need. Let us therefore feed upon the Word; let us diligently hear it, read it, and study it.

The hymnist writes,<sup>9</sup>

All our knowledge, sense, and sight  
Lie in deepest darkness shrouded,  
Till Thy Spirit breaks our night  
With the beams of truth unclouded:  
Thou alone to God canst win us,  
Thou must work all good within us.

## **2. Jeremiah Found In The Word Of God An Anchor And Stay In The Troubles Of Life.**

Life is often likened to a sea, which is sometimes calm and peaceful and at other times stormy and tumultuous. In the storms it is necessary to have an anchor and a stay.

Jeremiah was perplexed and troubled,<sup>18</sup> *Why is my pain perpetual And my wound incurable, Which refuses to be healed? Will You surely be to me like an unreliable stream, As waters that fail?*

Even though Jeremiah was gentle and tender by nature, it was his mission to announce a hard and dreadful judgement to his people. Nor would he have anything to do with the scoffers and mockers. He was compelled to forego the pleasures of youth, as we read in our text. <sup>17</sup> *I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers, Nor did I rejoice; I sat alone because of Your hand.*

Persecution followed him. Like Paul, centuries later, he was abused and insulted. The enmity to which he fell victim on account of his declaration of nothing but the truth, he deeply felt.

Add to that his anxious concern for the welfare of his people, and we can well understand the misery of body and soul of which we get a glimpse when he feels as if God had forsaken him.

However, Jeremiah does not altogether despair. Out of the depths he cries unto the Lord, <sup>15</sup> *O LORD, You know; Remember me and visit me, And take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In Your enduring patience, do not take me away. Know that for Your sake I have suffered rebuke.*

He has found an anchor and a stay. From the many promises of God he has received divine assurances of help.<sup>10</sup> God will help. And even though his wound seems incurable and his pain perpetual, he need not give up hope.

God will not be to him as a liar or as waters that fail. God is not a man that he should lie. The fountain of life will never be diminished. God's ways may be past finding out,<sup>11</sup> but the prophet can rest assured that God will not leave him nor forsake him.

What comfort for us to know that when troubles come, when God's dispensations perplex us, when all earthly helps fail, God sees us and knows all about us!

It is a matter of comfort to Christians to know that, whatever ails us, we have our God to go to, before whom we may spread our case and to whose omniscience and grace we may appeal. He is always ready. The hymnist expressed it this way, "*What a friend we have in Jesus all our sins and griefs to bear.*"<sup>12</sup>

Often the storms of life are sent in order that we might come closer to God. He wants us to cast all our cares upon Him. He has promised to be with us always. May we learn from the godly prophet that at all times God is our Anchor and Stay.

### **3. Jeremiah Found In The Word Of God A Lamp To His Feet.**

A lamp shows us the way lest we go astray or stumble. Jeremiah needed light to direct him in his perplexed state of mind. And even, though his cry to the Lord reveals much human frailty, God graciously directs him on the right way.

God tells him, ***“If you return, Then I will bring you back; You shall stand before Me; If you take out the precious from the vile, You shall be as My mouth. Let them return to you, But you must not return to them.***

He is to return, and to become reconciled to his work, like Jonah. He is not to doubt the Lord’s interest in his work. He should continue to preach the Word. In doing this he must ***“take out the precious from the vile.”*** Amidst all the wicked there are still many precious souls, about which he must be concerned.

He shall let the wicked return to him, but he is not to return to them. The prophet must rightly divide the Word of Truth, Law and Gospel. And he must not compromise with falsehood and unbelief. Further to strengthen the prophet and to illuminate the way for him, God promises to grant success to his labours.

Our text says, <sup>20</sup> ***And I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall; And they will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you; For I am with you to save you And deliver you,” says the LORD.*** <sup>21</sup> ***“I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, And I will redeem you from the grip of the terrible.”***

He shall be as God’s mouth, God’s ambassador. What an honour! God will restore to him tranquillity of mind. He shall be like a ***“fortified bronze wall,”*** and the enemies will not be able to prevail against him. God will finally preserve him for His heavenly kingdom. If God be for him, who can be against him?<sup>13</sup>

The Word of God is a lamp also to our feet. God has told us all we need to know, from the cradle to the grave. He convicts us of sin and tells us of sin’s dread consequence.<sup>14</sup> But He also points us to the Saviour.<sup>15</sup> He leads us in the path of righteousness.<sup>16</sup> He warns against compromise with evil.<sup>17</sup> He brightens the gloom of sadness.<sup>18</sup>

He lights up our death-bed,<sup>19</sup> and even sends forth rays of light to give us a glimpse of the harbour of heaven as we read in John 14:2–3, <sup>2</sup> ***In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*** <sup>3</sup> ***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.***

We need never to dwell in darkness or be uncertain about the way if we will follow the light of God’s Word.

Once when Faraday was lying ill, his doctor found him in tears, with his arm resting upon the table, on which lay the open Bible. 'I fear you are getting worse,' said the doctor. 'It is not that,' said Faraday, with a sob, 'but why will people go astray when they have this blessed Book to guide them?'

So in conclusion we ask once more, *What does the Word of God mean to you?* I Pray God that it may also be to you - the bread for your soul, your stay and anchor, the lamp to your feet, your choicest possession, your greatest joy, and the most important thing in your life. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel 3:10

<sup>2</sup> Luke 12:16-18

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 4:4

<sup>4</sup> Compare to Ezekiel 3:1-3

<sup>5</sup> John 4:34

<sup>6</sup> Cf. 2 Kings 1:1-4; Acts 17:21

<sup>7</sup> Rev. 3:17-18

<sup>8</sup> Philippians 4:7

<sup>9</sup> Hymn 500 v2

<sup>10</sup> Jer. 1:8-10

<sup>11</sup> Psa. 73; Rom, 11:33

<sup>12</sup> Hymn 426

<sup>13</sup> Compare Joshua 1:5-9

<sup>14</sup> Rom. 6:23

<sup>15</sup> John 14:4; 3:16

<sup>16</sup> Psa. 23:3; Titus 2:12

<sup>17</sup> 2 Cor. 6:14-18

<sup>18</sup> Matt. 11:28

<sup>19</sup> Psa. 23:4