

Jeremiah (Quality: Average, Quiet)

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Preacher: Crowter, David (1931-2000)

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Let's start in verse 3. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? We'll just read the first three verses of the chapter before the connection with the word.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof.

If ye can find a man, if there be any that executes judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.

And though they say, the Lord let it, surely they swear forth to me. O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?

[1 : 26] Thou hast stricken them, that they have not breathed. Thou hast consumed them, that they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than a rock.

They have refused to return. The circumstances surrounding this word are very solemn.

God had granted to the Jews a very special privilege. He had chosen them as a nation, brought them into their own land, given them the word of God as far as it was then completed, and directed them according to his worship, and taken them into covenant with him.

They have known that all of the nations of the earth had been so favoured. And while the heathen nations around them were given over, because of their own blindness, and their own wicked ways, they were given over through that way, so that they were sons in idolatry, and all manner of wickedness.

Yet the Jews had been distinguished from them. And yet, at this point of history, the ten tribes of the northern nations have gone into captivity on account of their sins.

[3 : 24] And the last three people of Judah, the southern kingdoms, were showing no sign of repentance or concern.

They themselves had worshipped idols. And as the background of this word are so vividly made, they had departed into all times of wickedness themselves.

And of course, such words as these are by no means out of grace. In the world today, there is so much to be seen of this decease and violence and unbelief and unconcern.

Amongst the nations of the earth, this may very frequently be seen. These things and fear that and grieve much that there is so much dishonesty and deceit and forcet and devarication even among the rulers of the world.

But so often, it is impossible to believe what the people say because of the circumstances and the claims and apparent view of the matter that it can be seen that they do not agree that there is a clear intention to be seen so that the word itself is very solemn.

[5 : 29] And yet, at least the background to it, that the word itself, the actual words of the text are like a beam of light in the darkness.

There is one who sees all of this and indeed therefore his own wise purposes permits it to be so.

If it were his will to prevent it, then he could easily do so. But he permits this to go on for his own wise purposes.

And at last that, in spite of all the wickedness of men, his own great name will be glorified. And so, Jeremiah asked this question not that it is a question that we need to look far for an answer to it.

The answer is very evident which is really a rhetorical question which of which the answer is very plain. But it is a fleeting question.

[6 : 49] O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the shrews? As though he would say, surely, Lord, thou seest what is really so.

Thou seest as to all the deceitfulness of men, to all the camouflage, to all the lies and intentions who were deceived, and all the treachery of men, dost thou not see it all?

And it certainly is so. We have them as the solemn and yet, in a way, a comforting and relieving word before us.

May the Lord make his word as solemn as it is, make it profitable good to our souls. For there is in this word much that is of great instruction and profit, yet the Lord will thus make it good to our souls, and grant us hearts to receive it.

O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the shrews? So that here we have, first of all, the Lord's view of man.

[8 : 17] In this respect, in particular, as it does appear to be especially upon the prophet's mind in this way, that the Lord sees through all the sacrifices and devices and the varications of men.

The Lord sees. Through all this, he sees what man really is. And then we may look at what it is that in this respect he sees in us and in others.

O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? First of them, we are face to face with the solemn truth, that the Lord deceives us all exactly as we are, that he sees the truth about every one of us.

We cannot in the least deceive him, however much we may deceive others and even deceive ourselves. The Lord's eyes are always upon the truth.

And I want, as I may be helped, to bring before you something of the very abundant and striking scriptural evidence for this matter.

[9 : 52] This is a subject which repeatedly occurs in the scripture and is expressed in a very strong and unmistakable language.

we mention some of the scriptures that refer to this tongue. The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the guile.

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of him whose heart is perfect towards him.

That word from the song of Hannah, the talk no more exceeding proudly. Let not arrogance come out of your mouth before the Lord is the God of knowledge and by his actions our way.

Everything that we do is accounted with him at its real value. And then again in the 33rd Psalm the Lord looketh down from heaven.

[11 : 16] He beholdeth all of the inhabitants of the earth. From the place of his habitation he beholdeth all the sons of men.

He fashioneth their hearts alive. He considereth all their ways. That is as the word literally means he weigheth them.

He considereth or weighs all their thoughts. So of course we have it extensively expressed in that psalm that we read Psalm 139 where the psalmist David is so deeply conscious that the eye of the Lord searches him through and through at all times in every place the eye of God is upon his very heart.

So it was expressed when Samuel saw the young David and the other brothers that it was not to be for those who looked so well to look so well to the one whom God had chosen as it is said that man looketh on the outward appearance the Lord seeth not as man seeth the man looketh on the outward appearance but the Lord looketh at the heart as it is what he is mainly concerned about what our hearts are and what proceeds from them.

We have it also expressed in the book of Jeremiah again and again. we have the words in the 16th chapter 15th chapter when we read that the Lord is searching the heart of man the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

[13 : 39] We do not often realise the depth of truth of the truth that there is expressed in such words as those are certainly most embattled.

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? I the Lord search the heart I try the reins even to give to every man according to his way and according to the fruit of his doing.

In the previous chapter concerning the people of Israel and Judah for mine eyes are upon all their ways. They are not hid from my face neither is their iniquity hid from thine eyes.

Again later we read he says the Lord says am I a god at hand and not a god afar can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him do not I fill heaven and earth then in the epistle to the Hebrews the word of God is quick and powerful to sharpen them to an any two edged sword piercing and dividing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit of the joints and marrow and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart neither is there any creature that is not made manifest in his sight for all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do and then again in the revelation we read that

Jesus says to the churches that or to the church of Tyra all the churches shall know that I the Lord search the reins and try the reins and search the hearts of all to give to every man according to every one of you according to the fruit of his doing now these scriptures are very plain as we might add many others of a similar character he reads how David solemnly warned his son Solomon that the Lord knoweth all hearts and the imagination of all their thoughts this is a most wonderful and such a great thing that

[16 : 48] David in that psalm was almost overwhelmed by the consideration of it he says such knowledge is too wonderful for me it is high I cannot attain unto it or I cannot understand it but there it is it plainly declared that it is so even though it goes far beyond what our minds can really grasp that there should be such to be and intense knowledge let me remind you of some of the matters that are brought before us in those scriptures concerning this knowledge which God has of each other and first that it is universal those words express that every creature that every one is in the same case in this matter that the

Lord sees us all and every one upon the face of the earth in this all searching way no one is no one can possibly escape this searching eye of God he surveys every heart of men whether young or old whether rich or poor whether famous or unknown whether intelligent or otherwise whether religious or not we may be sure that this is the case according to the Lord's own word for every one of us and for every one every person upon the face of the earth the Lord sees our hearts exactly as they really are he sees through all the deceitfulness of the heart and any pretence that we might put up before others the

Lord his eyes are certainly upon the truth concerning us now dear friends it were good as we realize this more that we each individually are under his all searching his all seeing eye there is nothing that has changed his view nothing that we can ever conceal from him this view is not only universal but it's also continuous therefore not a moment of our lives but as the eye of the Lord lead us all through every moment that we spend here below everything that we do every word that we see every thought that goes through our mind is altogether known to him not for one moment is that knowledge interrupted night and day month after month and year after year everything about us is known unto

God for a good thing if our realization of this truth to anything like as continuous as the eye of God is and as regards us now dear friends we also lay these matters to heart which are so plainly before us in the word the eye of the Lord is upon us and sees the truth concerning us always not only is this continuous and universal but it's very thorough it isn't merely a superficial view of us it is a view which goes right through us there is not anything no creature that is not made manifest in his sight for all things all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do every word that we see every thought that we sing every motive behind our actions for we may deceive many but we can't for one moment deceive the all wise and all knowing

God this searches reaches to the very depths of our hearts the thoughts and intents of the heart right to the very depths of our being we are known unto God absolutely and then this is a remembering view also it is plain from the expression for the youth that that which God sees he never forget it is so very different with us that we cannot readily appreciate this truth but there is in those passages as I mentioned again and again a reference to a rewarding every man according to his work the matter of bringing these things into judgment at last they are not forgotten what we did 10, 20, 30 years ago is still completely known to

[23 : 10] God we may have forgotten many things that we said yesterday and almost everything that we said a month ago but everything is just as plain to the Lord as though it were said now our memories are weak and faulty about the Lord never for one moment or never in the least forget what he has seen in us and at last there is that judgment for God will bring every secret every work into judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or whether it be evil Jesus said I tell you that every idle work that men see that they shall give account at the day of judgment for we have forgotten many of these about the

Lord has them still in his remembrance nothing is ever forgotten now dear friends what a difference it would make if people really remembered this if these people of old and people nowadays realised and remembered that these things are the very truth of God he has declared very plainly that these things are so and yet men fondly imagine that he does not really see them at all he does not remember what they are lying or that he will not in the end bring them to judgment but do we realise it would it not make a very great difference in our lives the things that we do and the things that we say if we really realise always what is the truth concerning us that the

Lord's eye is always upon us and that it pierces even to the depths of our hearts certainly that experience of David where he was brought very much into the realisation of this truth had a very deep effect upon him it is a psalm that 139th psalm of great wonder David speaks in great awe of this knowledge that he realised when the Lord laid his hand upon him and showed him something of the depth of his knowledge that everything that he did and everything that he spoke and even the very thoughts of his mind were altogether open to the Lord we read of Isaac of old that he dwelt to by the well in the hay

I roi which means thou God see his name we may well believe that that had a spiritual meaning to him it were good if we dwell to their more under this realization that all through the matters of our lives every day whether we are alone or in a crowd what the circumstances and conditions we may be in the Lord sees us all together thou God seest me now do you realize that do you remember it we might well come to that question raised in the other psalm when we really weigh these matters up a little if thou

Lord shouldst mark iniquity oh Lord who shouldst that but there is forgiveness with thee for thou mayest be feared for if we had to justify ourselves or even to attempt to do so how could we ever stand would you care even for the thoughts of your mind to be written up in public things that pass through your heart from day to day could you bear them to be presented before those who know you and who love you or who esteem you to some extent but how did it appear before God one says therefore I can hardly bear what in myself I see how black and dire must

[28 : 43] I appear most holy God to thee but then there's something else in his heart there is that faith which looks to the Saviour but the sins my Saviour stands between in garments dyed with blood says he instead of me is seen when I approach to God what a difference that makes for the whole matter as solemn indeed it is to realise the Lord with his holy eye sees us all together as we are yet this surely brings us to realise or at least I hope it may do how much we need the Saviour that we could not possibly stand on our own merit we are altogether undone in ourselves we have failed so dissonally and so sadly and so repeatedly and yet there is forgiveness with the

Lord that he may be fear there is a way of salvation there is a fountain open for sin and for all uncleanness there is the blood of Jesus Christ God son which cleanses us from all sin then I must speak a little concerning what it is that the Lord sees in us in particular so that it is mentioned especially in this context O Lord are not thine eyes upon the truth first of all then the Lord sees deceit and he also sees sincerity there was in the people of old much deceitfulness they were still acknowledging the name of the

Lord they said the Lord liveth but it didn't really mean anything and if there is one thing that is particularly denounced in the word of God is bringing so much a provocation to God it is hypocrisy in religion it is the spirit of the Pharisees and of these of old who said the Lord liveth but surely they swear falsely and again we read the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me saith the Lord they have denied the Lord and said it is not he neither shall evil come upon us they did not believe what he said they sought to cover up everything that they did with excuses and with a covering camouflage that the

Lord sees through it all we read later in this prophecy that they hold fast to deceit others and it surely is one of the most grievous matters of our present day that there is in our own country and in so much of the world so much that is of a deceitful nature so much deliberate intention to deceive others about the Lord sees it he sees it completely not for one moment does anybody ever deceive him he sees them the deceit and we should not merely be looking at others we should remember that the word says that the heart is deceitful above all things we have in our own sinful hearts a deep rooted tendency to deceive and to pretend for it is very hard indeed to live in a spirit of utter sincerity to be absolutely the same wherever we go in this respect not to change our words or our attitude because the company that we are in is different but the

Lord also sees sincerity where is it found in the heart Jeremiah himself could say later with a son with thee O Lord thou knowest me it was not to him although no doubt a solemn matter it was not one which brought him into great fear and distress but it was a comfort to him that the Lord knew that his heart was upright and honest and sincere and the Lord knows with us where there is a true sincerity in the heart because we may be sure that where the Lord works there will be we shall so to speak react against this deep rooted tendency to deceive we shall realize something of this fact that whoever else we may deceive we can never for one moment deceive the

[35 : 07] Lord himself and that will pretend to produce a sincere and upright heart in us and the Lord will see it where it is so he certainly sees it he knows exactly our thoughts and our feelings although there may be much that we must deplore in us yet it is a great mercy if he has made us sincere before him as we read blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven whose sin is covered blessed is the man for whom the Lord will not impute iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile these people around Jeremiah were full of guile they were always trying to deceive each other but the Lord says blessed is that man in whose spirit there is no guile and the

Lord Jesus said as much concerning Nicodemus behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile he doesn't want to deceive anybody he wants to be perfectly open and plain honest before his fellow men and before God could that be said of you dear friends and then also the Lord sees rebellion in the heart of man and he also sees submission he had spoken through his prophet through many prophets to these people and what was the effect it is very sad and serious that it should be so they have refused to receive correction they have made their faces harder than a rock they have refused to return they were most stubborn and rebellious they hardened their faces and they hardened their hearts against the word of God and he saw all the wicked and terrible rebellion of their hearts they were saying in effect we will go our own way we will do what we like we will not have this land to reign over they altogether desire to throw off any restraint that the word of

God was put upon them how solemn is that the sin of rebellion to hear the word of God and to fight against it to reject it but the Lord sees also where there is submission in the heart where there is another spirit which he has given and evidently it was so with Jeremiah he had his failing he certainly had his times of much discouragement and depression but although he had to say as we read here that this people have a revolting and a rebellious heart yet he himself submitted to all the will of God in these very painful circumstances now to submit is really to fall under it's to bow oneself down it's to accept that that which at first may be uncomfortable and unwelcome to us it is equivalent very much to that which the prophet the apostle

Peter calls us to humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand word of God that he may exhort you in due time now when you hear a word like this do you rebel against it do you resent it when such things are spoken or when such things are read or do you fall under have your heart to submit to the word of God for it is a great mercy if it is so and the Lord sees the truth concerning us if we accept and confess our own sinfulness and acknowledge the sovereignty and the mercy of God and then also the Lord sees in our hearts as we he saw in the people of

Judah he sees idolatry or he sees worship true worship where it is so in our hearts and as we are met together to worship God he knows whether it is so with us whether it is only formality whether we have some other idol in our hearts or whether we are really here in the spirit of worship of course in this background here the people of Judah had committed idolatry they had been warned so plainly in their history with the most definite words that could be stated the Lord said thou shalt have no other gods beside me thou shalt not make any molten image or any graven image these are all such dangers things we might have thought they wouldn't have been inclined to at first when the

[41 : 39] Lord had so appeared to them for very soon they were and there is so sadly an evil tendency in our hearts toward this great sin of idolatry you may think well we don't worship gods of stone or wood or metal now no but in the New Testament we have such words as that the words of the church of God too put off these things and one of them is covetousness which is idolatry to covet something that is to desire really that something that another possesses might be yours instead of his it is the word of God says idolatry it is making that object more important to you than the will of

God and his being and this tendency is so much in our hearts we have no cause really to look down upon those who have some visible idol while we may all the time have some idol in our hearts whatever object or person takes the place in our hearts that God should have alone is an idol that which carries away our thoughts or affections more than the Lord himself has become an idol to us thou thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine hearts with all thy soul with all thy mind with all thy strength and then thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself love the love of God comes first the Lord knows where there is this love and where there is a spirit of true worship and we have those wonderful words that Jesus spoke the true worshippers where they are they worship him in spirit and in truth they worship him in a spiritual way in their own spirit and in true sincerity before him their hearts are right and we read that as the Father seeketh such to worship him he's looking upon them he looks upon them with favour and pleasure that there should be such that truly desire and wish to worship him in their hearts are there true worshippers here today the Father seeketh such to worship him may the Lord deliver us from all the idols that tend to have a place in our affection to warm a place may he reign himself alone upon the throne of our hearts what shall we say to these matters dear friends surely we have much need of forgiveness of that wonderful mercy of God when we think that the Lord's eye has always been upon us and yet so often we have been quite regardless of it we have forgotten all about it we have not been conscious of this great truth that the

Lord's eye is always upon us and sees us exactly as we really are and oh how much there is if we begin to look at our lives that must have been so sinful so abominable before God for how much we need to confess our sin and to plead for that mercy that pardon which flows from Calvary and also dear friends how much we need his grace that grace which so abounds in the Lord Jesus how can we live acceptably under the continual eye of the most holy God unless he grants us that grace that we so much need the apostle says let us come boldly let us therefore because the saviour is exhorted to be an intercessor let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy the mercy that we need because our sinfulness is so great and that we may find grace to help in time of need we need mercy for what is past we need grace for the present and for the future and that grace does so gloriously and richly abound in the

Lord Jesus Christ the Lord giveth more grace there is abundant grace in the saviour God is able to make all grace abound toward you that ye always having all sufficiency for all things may abound unto every good work there is that abundant grace that all sufficient grace in the saviour as he said my grace is sufficient for thee amen as including hymn 927 in marshall 366 thou only sovereign of my heart my refuge my almighty friend can my soul from me depart on whom alone my hope depends wither our wither should I go a wrecked wanderer from the

Lord can this dark world of sin and woe one glimpse of happiness afford hymn 927 commence at the third verse hope hope from the garden I can find it Thank you.

[49 : 55] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[52 : 39] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. All right.