

# Jeremiah

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- [ 0 : 00 ] I'm seeking the Lord's help. I direct your attention this morning to the prophet Jeremiah, reading from the 29th chapter and the 11th verse.
- The 29th chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah and the 11th verse. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord.
- Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord.
- Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end. And this word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah to Israel in captivity in Babylon.
- The Lord had worked according to his divine principles with his church.
- [ 1 : 20 ] The work of God is to punish sin. In the case of the wicked, it is an eternal punishment. An eternity of darkness where the worm dies not.
- That is the worm of conscience. And the fire is not quenched. That is the fire of God's wrath. Then the Lord performs his thoughts with mighty power.
- And he will accomplish them. But there lies for God's people something different.
- For the wicked, out of Christ, almighty power can do nothing but devour. But for his beloved remnant, there is chastening.
- [ 2 : 39 ] The Lord will deal in mercy. We may well misinterpret the chastening of God.
- Job did. He didn't grasp what the Lord was doing. He was in conflict with his God.
- But the Lord had divine purposes of love and mercy. And here, in this case of Israel, which is the figure of the whole church of God, the Lord was dealing.
- The chastening hand of God was to be for 70 years. There has been no escaping it.
- The Lord's work was to chasten for sin and disobedience. But there was a divine purpose in it.
- [ 3 : 51 ] What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? And how solemn that is. Wherefore, if he be without chastisness, then are ye bastards and not sons.
- The Lord's love and mercy is in the chastisement.
- He will bring his wandering people walking in their deep, dark disobedience and defiance, lukewarmness and coldness, mingling with the world and its carnality, out and separate them.
- But he uses an instrument to do it. He brings sorrow upon their hearts. They do not and cannot escape. If the Lord has the purpose of love and mercy, then be certain of this.
- Divine tribulation will follow the footsteps of his dear people. And if you be without it, and with every evidence, you are not a child of God at all.
- [ 5 : 10 ] If the Lord's hand is felt in your life and pathway as it was here, in ancient Israel, the Lord's purpose was to bring them back into conformity to his own will and purposes.

And the lash he laid on them. And the lengthy trial that he brought upon them was to bring them back as they did one day in the fulfillment of his word.

We read it in Nehemiah and Ezra. And this is a blessed pattern of the whole Israel of God, the whole church of God.

The Lord loves his dear people, but he disciplines them. And he works in their lives.

And so in these circumstances here, in our text this morning, the Lord says, to ancient Israel, I know the thoughts that I sing towards you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, give you an expected end.

[ 6 : 33 ] we trace these divine thoughts of God back into eternity past.

My mind rests very much this morning, not on natural Israel, but on spiritual Israel. The Lord has thoughts of love and mercy to that tiny remnant spoken of in Scripture as the election of grace.

those whom the Lord, in all his mighty sovereignty, has loved in eternity past.

this prophet Jeremiah was born into a solemn time, but he had some sweet tokens of the love of Christ to him in his heart.

He knew what it was to be told that before he formed, God formed him in the womb, he knew him.

[ 7 : 46 ] Oh, to have such a sight that the Lord has loved us. As he told this prophet in the 31st chapter, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

It is very precious when the Lord gives us personally, individually, in our hearts, a knowledge of his love.

The sweet experience in the soul of his dear people that they have been loved with an everlasting love, and therefore to grace and glory ordained.

And I do say yes to you this morning. Do you know anything of the love of Christ in your soul? Anything of that very personal knowledge of his thoughts towards you?

How solemn if you have no knowledge of what the Lord thinks about you. if they're not thoughts of peace, they must be thoughts of evil, not of evil.

[ 9 : 17 ] Oh, if the Lord's thoughts toward you are that he will cast you into darkness eternally, how solemn are those thoughts. thoughts. But, if his thoughts towards you are thoughts of peace, how blessed are those thoughts.

Here is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Creator of this universe, in all its glory and beauty.

His majesty as we look at the heavens and the minutest creation in this earth. Oh, how blind godless men and women are to their Creator.

We're living in a day and in a century when men are set on finding the reason behind creation other than the divine Creator.

Godless men will find some way to explain how the whole of nature and creation and how the whole of the cosmos was produced, but not the word of God let there be light and there was light.

[ 10 : 40 ] All things were created by him and without him was not anything made that was made and him was light. The light was the life of man.

But godless, unbelieving, blind, men and women have no sight of God, no knowledge of him, they have no concept of his thoughts and they're without hope and without God in the world.

but the child of God is the subject of divine attention. He is a fallen, ruined sinner as Israel was.

Jacob, in all his solemn condition, was a deceiver. of him it was true what the prophet Jeremiah wrote, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?

Oh, when we're brought to the place where we have a sight of our own deceitful heart and Jacob was, battle was the place where the light of God shone in his dear heart and he had a solemn realization for the majesty of heaven.

[ 12 : 16 ] What a blessing that was. Esau did not deceive his father father, but he was worldly and godless.

The Lord never touched him and we see in the case of these two brothers, twins in the womb, Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated. What thoughts.

And you might say how unfair. What have they done of good and evil? Oh, if you have thoughts like that.

you might look at the ninth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. Hath not the potter power over the clay?

You see all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All deserve eternal judgment and wrath. It is of the Lord's mercies that his people are not consumed.

[ 13 : 19 ] Salvation is of sovereign grace. They are eternal thoughts of love and mercy in eternity past. This prophet knew what he was speaking about.

Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee and ordained thee a prophet. Oh, if God's dear people are snatched from the burning, it will be solely and alone through sovereign grace.

And the Lord gives no account of his dealing. before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee. It is true of every one of his church.

Oh, I do say to you here this morning, what evidence have you got that he has loved you with an everlasting love?

Has he called you out of nature's darkness? has he separated you from this world that lies in wickedness? Are you in the same condition as when you were born in?

[ 14 : 27 ] Far off. How beautifully the apostle speaks of this in the letter to the Ephesians. Ye who once were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

O blessed mercy, if the Lord come into your soul and your life and speak to you as he did to ancient Israel in all their rebellion and sin and darkness, I know the thoughts that I think towards you.

I do say here this morning, is it an exercise, a concern in your heart to know what God thinks about you how he sees you.

You have only to consider your own sinful nature to have an obvious conclusion as to what the Lord thinks about you.

God's God's God's love. Why should he have any mercy on you? For your sinful, fallen, ruined nature is rebellion against God.

[ 15 : 37 ] He is ignored, he is forgotten, he is left. Not so the child of God. The Lord has called him.

He's not ignored, he's not forgotten. When called, he has an indication of the Lord's thought.

Nathaniel, under that tree, the Lord spoke to the dear man. How knowest thou me?

Oh, the Lord knew him. And Christ said of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile, that is, no rebellion, no hatred of God, no deceit, oh, one who had been brought to trust in Christ.

And you know, these blessed thoughts are revealed in the hearts of his dear people, in the divine act of God, in calling out of nature's darkness, and commanding to follow him.

[ 17 : 02 ] How, of how many was it said in Christ's day, they went back and walked no more with us. How solemn that was, the living family of God, called to follow him in obedience.

But the whole divine spoke of in years gone by as the effectual call of God. It was the visible evidence of his thoughts towards them.

They were thoughts of peace and not of evil. when we come to this word peace, the blessed word it is. Peace has its antithesis in rebellion, disobedience, war, conflict.

and we come to look at peace. We see the two in fallen nature. Man of war with God, man in rebellion, man walking in hatred of God.

You see it in the case of the apostle Paul, but God brought him to be at peace. He had thoughts of peace. peace. The Lord was going to end that rebellion and that conflict.

[ 18 : 40 ] The hatred, the malice, the wrath of the apostle Paul against God's dear people was to be stopped in a moment done.

One word from God. Then the Lord manifests his thoughts gently to the people of God.

The still small voice of God in Elijah's heart brought him to know God's thoughts. The Lord was grieved at his unbelief and his rebellion and he was speaking gently into his soul and he does into the hearts of his living family.

He spoke on the road to Damascus to his dear servant the apostle and it was done. It had an effect the voice of God in his heart. Oh have you known it?

Sinners wander far. They are great hypocrites. They will put one foot in the chapel and one in the world and be perfectly satisfied.

[ 19 : 57 ] They are inconsistent and they are not worried by it. They know it. For God will have consistency all the heart or nothing.

And oh when he comes to reveal his thought it is to reveal not his wrath against the sinner but his wrath against their sin.

Has he revealed that to you? Oh to be so taught and enlightened by his spirit that we know his thoughts towards us and have gone that one step further not just his anger against our sins but to bring us to the cross of Calvary and to have a sweet realization that we were there when he died.

As the apostle Peter said who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the train and that applies in the 20th and the 21st century.

It does. That precious blood that is the peace speaking blood was shed all those years ago and there on Calvary's cross in the Lord's heart was his entire church and Adam to the end of time.

[ 21 : 39 ] We cannot fathom nor comprehend the magnitude of what he bore when he bore the sins of his people but we know this that one drop of that efficacious blood of Christ can take away sin and guilt and we can know in our hearts the peace of God which passes all understanding.

Hear what was so often heard in his own day from his own lips thy sins which are many are all forgiven me.

And when that precious fountain is opened for sin then there is peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and we shall know then his thoughts towards us.

Beautifully spoken of as he left this world his dying utterances at the last supper my peace I leave with you my peace I give unto you not as the world give I unto you in the world you shall have tribulation but be of good cheer I have overcome the world it is but a foretaste of heaven to taste as the hymn writer speaks of it the streams on earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink a bar oh sinner have you tasted those streams on this earth have you known the peace of God has he left that peace in your heart beautifully spoken of over the hills of

Bethlehem Judah on earth peace said the angel that was a vital truth the eternal son of God the great peacemaker between God and his people the healer of the breach and the restorer of the powers to dwell in was in fact in this world and that the mystery of godliness had taken place God manifest in the flesh beautifully described in the creed in that language very God and very man oh for our peace he had to come here to redeem us body and soul and to do that he took into union with his glorious deity a body and soul conceived in the womb of the virgin under the overshadowing the holy spirit he was conceived without sin born in this world made in all points like as we are yet without sin and he came here as John

[ 25 : 28 ] Bunyan says of him to die for us body for body and soul for soul and so he offered his body on Calvary's cross that our bodies might be redeemed to glory and he offered his soul on Calvary's cross that our souls might be redeemed precious glorious truth here is the peace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and his was an acceptable sacrifice and scripture tells us that we are accepted in the beloved we are accepted in the courts of heaven above because of those eternal thoughts of love and mercy towards us and that divine provision that lay in those thoughts that God so loved his church that he gave his only begotten son but whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life my peace yes it was the peace he procured through his suffering sorrows on Calvary's cross it was peculiarly his and he gave it to his dear church search your heart and ask have I ever known it have I ever had a touch of the peace of God that passes all understanding has it been sweet to my taste oh what do you know what do you know of the blood of Jesus

Christ in your heart one occasion in my life I was listening to a sermon on this subject and I remember thinking as I listened to it I know nothing about the subject I've never known the blood of Christ in my heart and yet I hoped I heard one or two answers to prayer at that time but as I left the chapel this hymn dropped into my heart every grace and every favour comes to us through Jesus blood and I had such a sight I had a hope at that time that the Lord had begun with me he had heard and answered my prayers and I had such a sight that every prayer answered can only be solely in the know through the blood of Jesus

Christ I know the source oh the Lord obviously knows his own source but oh he reveals them to his dear people thoughts of peace the thoughts he thinks toward them are not of evil to give you an expected end my mind goes to the night that Nicodemus came to Jesus inquisitive I tell you this it wasn't a chance meeting it was divine ordained here was the man who was to carry the body of Christ to the grave a secret disciple but he came to

Jesus and Jesus had some precious thoughts toward him he loved him and he preached the gospel in all its power to him ye must be born again and it alerted Nicodemus to the fact that he was not born again how can these things be he said in his vast ignorance I once was travelling many years ago from Edinburgh to London and I was alone in the compartment in the train with one other young man and I had been at some bookshops in Edinburgh buying many of the Puritan works they were wrapped up in a brown parcel beside me and this young man asked me what was in the parcel and I said you won't be interested in that he said what is in it so I opened it and showed him all these books and it started a conversation on spiritual things it turned out that he was a consultant surgeon from

South Africa training in the Royal College of Surgeons at Edinburgh and that he'd been brought up in a Dutch reformed family in South Africa but he was godless and he looked at me and I shall never forget it he said what's the soul when I'm operating he said I know that if I cut a certain part of the body the person died he looked at me he said what is the soul and oh I shall never forget it came to me with such force art thou a master in Israel no it's not these things oh we spent the whole of the journey from Edinburgh to London talking together on this subject ye must be born again I've often wondered I have no evidence that it bore any fruit but eternity will show when we look at these thoughts of God oh with Nicodemus the Lord had a purpose when the

[ 32 : 20 ] Lord sent his apostle Paul from Asia Minor over to Macedonia to Philippi the Lord had thoughts of love and mercy to many in that city two of them were distinctly named in scripture Lydia and the Philippian jailer they were the subject of divine thoughts when the Lord sent Philip into the desert to the eunuch the Lord had thoughts he sent an instrument when the Lord sends his servants and anoints them with divine power he has thoughts towards his dear people of peace and not of evil to bring them down in submission and obedience to his mercy seat and to show them that he knows them and that he knows the thoughts that he has toward them thoughts of peace and not of evil he's not going to cast them out of his presence into an ever ending eternity but he has thoughts of peace oh that he has loved them and he will teach them and he will lead them into a knowledge of himself you may have this book in your hand in your home family but do you know the God of this book has he used this book to speak to you has he applied these words of his holy divinely inspired scripture with almighty power in your heart or has he not

Job said regarding his former religion I've heard of thee by the hearing of the ear and that is true of every one of you in this sanctuary of God today then he added this but now mine eyes see you see what was the effect I abhor myself oh a sight of God will give you a sight of yourself you will see in that light the blackness of your soul you will understand the language of the song of Solomon I'm black as the tenth of Kedah and yet I know the source black but comely the Lord has blessed thoughts towards his dear people he will deliver them out of their darkness and they will know him now mine eye see thee well could the apostle

Paul say that he knew the scriptures the Old Testament throughout he had studied them in detail and never seen Christ in them the men on the road to Emmaus were shown by Jesus himself all the things in this Old Testament scripture concerning himself the apostle they meant nothing but when by the eye of faith there is an opening up of them oh then the Lord teaches his dear people their relevance to themselves he leads them into the sweetness and blessedness of it and they can say now mine eyes see it I know the thoughts that I think towards you thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end yes there is coming rapidly for every one of us

Christmas from the youngest to the oldest an end an end of our presence here in this world when time will be no more and none of us know when that will be we've only got to look around us to see how suddenly and unexpectedly it comes into young lives some lived a great age godless die without hope and without God but oh how solemn is the truth the wages of sin is death and none can escape it rich nor poor educated nor uneducated whatever it may be all have sinned and come short of the glory of God there will be an end and we may like the ostrich bury our head in the sand thinking we may avoid the storm we never shall but there is an end here in this text and yet it is a blessed end to die at peace with God to know Christ

Christ as our saviour the holy spirit as our teacher God as our father to know that we're here he has brought us with a prize and have a sweet hope one day we shall be with him forever and that for us it is not the end as it is for a godless world for a godless world it's the end of all hope all mercy oh what an end the end of the wicked but for the righteous oh what peace enter thou in to the joy of thy lord my peace

[ 39 : 37 ] I give unto you oh when we look at the glories of the gospel the blessedness of Calvary's cross there we see the love of God to sinners there we see a fountain open for sin and all uncleanness there we see a precious hope of glory and there we see what the apostle saw for me to live is Christ and to depart is gain I'd rather depart to be with Christ he said which is far better what an end end of time the beginning of eternity an expected end it says in the margin of our text an end and an expectation yes in death an expectation of eternal glory the words of the apostle so blessedly true

I'm now ready and the time of my departure is at hand there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day and not to me only but to all them that look for his appearing oh have you an expectation blessed mercy if you can look back this morning in your life some of you your long life and mark those precious places where the Lord has dealt with you revealed himself to you and given you a precious hope my hope is built on nothing less and Jesus blood and righteousness amen