BFF518 Jeremiah 13-26

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith and Family" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I'm a little achy, but how are you?

Scott: I'm good. You said you were decrepit earlier. I feel that.

Steve: Achy is much nicer than decrepit. I drove back to Pittsburgh for my high school reunion on Saturday, and I decided to not spend the night and to come back the same day. It was 480-mile round trip, plus five and a half hours of intense visiting, which was wonderful. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had the opportunity to give my testimony at least once, maybe twice, and won the corn hole tournament for the second year in a row. I am now the champion.

Scott: All right. Didn't know the competition hasn't gone out of you since high school.

Steve: Then I painted sheetrock yesterday. Early this morning I looked at and said to myself, "It looks like a drunken sailor did it." I've got my painting clothes on, and when we're done, I'm going to do another coat.

When I was out at my reunion one of my classmates asked, "What's your podcast about?" I said, "Right now, we're studying Jeremiah." After a long pause, he looked at me and said, "Jeremiah was a bullfrog."

Scott: Nice.

Steve: Sadly, that's what most people identify if you say Jeremiah, but not our listeners. We know Jeremiah.

Let's pray. Father, as we study Jeremiah today, enable us to have spiritual eyes and spiritual ears and a spiritual ability to comprehend what this spiritual man is talking about. Help us to not only understand what he's saying, but to look for gems and practical scriptures that we can apply in our everyday life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: On the way out, I listened to Jeremiah 13-25. Then when I got home, I prepared by going over it all again, so I feel pretty saturated in Jeremiah.

We're going to start in the 13:8, "The word of Jehovah came to me, thus says Jehovah, even so will I spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem."

There are passages in our readings today where he's talking to the 10 tribes that have been dispersed, but most of his ministry is to those who are around him because he is in the Southern Kingdom about to be taken into captivity.

In the 11th verse, interesting expression. He tells him to get a loincloth. He already had said this in the early verses. "As the waistband clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me, declares Jehovah, that they might be for Me a people for renown, for praise, and for glory, but they did not listen."

It's pretty clear that he's a prophet, and he does things to illustrate. He doesn't simply talk. He illustrates. God told him to take a loincloth and then go put it next to the

river and dig it up, and it's good for nothing. What caught my attention was that word "cling."

Similar to wrapping a belt or a cloth or some garment around your waist, that's really close to you. That word is dabak in Hebrew, and it's the same word that's used in Genesis 2:24, where it says, "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall become united and cling or cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

That's a beautiful picture. A fuller definition, to adhere, to stick, to join. God's purpose when He created the household of Israel and the household of Judah, the original 12 tribes, was that they would be His people and cling to Him. Instead, they have turned their back. So sad.

That's an image. That's God's heart. He wants us to be close to Him. When I'm at home, I have two dogs that cling to me. One's on one side, one's on the other. Sometimes they both try to get into my lap. They can't get enough of me. This is how we're supposed to be with God. We're supposed to cleave to Him and become one flesh with Him.

17th verse, "If you will not listen, my soul will weep in secret for your pride. My eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears because Jehovah's flock has been taken captive." He has been called, more than any other name that I've heard, Jeremiah has been called the weeping prophet. He wept with those that wept.

I feel his pain. I also feel the fact that up to this point, he's alone feeling this pain. I wish he had a school of prophets like Elijah or Elisha had, or I wish he had a wife that could bear his burdens with him, but this is hard.

14th chapter, "Jehovah said to me," and you don't often see this in scripture, but He said to Jeremiah, "Do not pray for the welfare of this people. Though they fast, I will not hear their cry. Though they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them, but I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence."

"And I said, 'O Jehovah God, behold, the prophets say to them, you shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.' Jehovah said to me, 'The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them.'"

God has seen that these people have crossed the line. 15th chapter, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them out of My sight and let them go."

Then He gives a reason, and we know historically this reason. Fourth verse, "I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem." That wicked king made the streets run with blood. God saw and took note.

Then in the 15:10, Jeremiah is being real. He's being vulnerable. He's hurting. He says, "Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land. I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them cursed me."

He's alone. He's standing against a wicked nation. I don't normally do this, but I'm going to jump to the 20th chapter because there's similar language. 14th verse, "Cursed be the day on which I was born. The day when my mother bore me, let it not be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, a son is born to you, making him very glad."

This is the same language that we heard from Job. "I wish I had never been born." Such despondency. Yet, right in the middle of the 15th chapter, there is this wonderful little gem, the 16th verse.

"Your words were found, and I ate them. Your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Jehovah, God of Hosts."

That poor guy, you could see him swinging between total despondency and yet delight that he's God's man, and he loves God, and he wants to eat His word up.

16:10, The people ask him, "What's our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against Jehovah our God? Then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me, declares Jehovah, and have gone after other gods, and have served and worshiped them and have forsaken Me and have not kept my law, and because you have done worse than your fathers.

“For behold, every one of you follows his stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to Me. Therefore, I will hurl you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.'"

Wow. 14th verse, really interesting passage. "Behold, the days are coming, declares Jehovah, when it shall no longer be said, as Jehovah lives Who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but as Jehovah lives, Who brought up the people of Israel out of the North country and out of all the countries where He had driven them." This is the 10 tribes.

Then He says, "For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. I'm sending for many fishers, declares Jehovah, and they shall catch them. I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill and out of the cliffs of the rock. For My eyes are on all their ways."

God never totally forsook them. He kept His eye on them. Then He says in the 21st verse, "Behold, I will make them know. This once I will make them know My power and My might, and they shall know that My name is Jehovah."

This is God. He has to punish them because of their ways and their iniquities, and yet His eyes are on them, and He's still looking for ways to bring them back. We're going to read about this theme all the way through these minor prophets that are following.

Probably one of the most quoted sections of scripture in Jeremiah is the 17:5, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from Jehovah."

On the contrary, in the seventh verse, "Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah, whose trust is Jehovah. He is like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by

the stream and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

This is like Psalm 1. This is what we do, we meditate on the word of the Lord. We're like a tree planted by water. What a wonderful contrast.

Then verse 9, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick. Who can understand it?" The answer is in the next verse. "I, Jehovah, search the heart and test the mind to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

This is why when we come to Christ, He gives us a new heart and a new spirit, and He washes us with pure water. Getting ahead of myself, that's in Ezekiel. We need a new heart because our heart is deceitful. We don't even know how deceitful it is, but we want God to search it and lead us in the way everlasting.

Another gem in the 17th chapter, "Heal me, O Jehovah, and I shall be healed. Save me, and I shall be saved, for You are my praise." Amen. Now I'm reading this, and I'm talking to myself, saying, "Yes, yes, that's what I want too."

At the end of the 17th chapter, there's a long section here. I'm only going to read two verses. Remember, this is a city that's about to go into captivity that had been wicked since the days of Manasseh and before, and he offers them two sources of hope. One I'm going to read about in a second, one right here.

"If you listen to me, declares Jehovah, and bring in no burden by the gates of the city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy and do no work on it, then there shall enter by the gates of the city kings and princes who sit on the throne of David."

He's very clear on this. This is a longer passage, but He says, "If you'll keep the Sabbath holy, all these other things that I've said, I'll turn aside." Do you see God's heart and how important the Sabbath is to Him?

Because those verses, beginning in 17:19, and proceeding all the way through the end of the chapter, is about keeping the Sabbath day holy, one of the 10 commandments.

In the 18th chapter, we have the potter making clay. Jeremiah he goes down. He watches him. Then God says, "Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it."

Now, I have that highlighted in my notes because that's exactly what Jeremiah was commissioned to do, to pluck up, to break down, to destroy, to overthrow. Then it says, to build and to plant.

Let me keep reading. "And if that nation concerning which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it. And if at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will build and plant it."

This is God being consistent with Jeremiah. He was created for good works to build and to plant, as well as to pluck up and break down.

19th chapter, hard to read, but it really starts in the 18:18, when the people had had enough of Jeremiah and his words. They said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah."

Jeremiah 19:15, "Thus says Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, behold, I am bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear my words."

In Jeremiah 20, the first two verses, "Pashhur, the priest, the son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of Jehovah, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. Then Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet and put him in the stocks." The rest is very readable, but Pashhur is not going to do well, and Jeremiah tells him.

Another expression that we find in Jeremiah 20, which is similar to Jeremiah 17. People know the "heart is deceitful above all" that verse, but this verse is also well known.

"The word of Jehovah has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say I will not mention Him or speak anymore in His name, there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot."

I don't know if you've met people like this, Scott, but I have. There are people that have a Jeremiah prophetic makeup, and when they see something that is not right, they can no longer keep their mouth shut than they can stop breathing. It's a fire in their bones, and they have to let it out.

Wonderful verse following those. "Jehovah is with me like a dread champion." What a great verse. I'm going to hold on to Jeremiah 20:11.

Then in the 21st chapter, "This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah when king Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur," his old pal, "the son of Malachi and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, saying, 'inquire of Jehovah for us, for Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, is making war against us. Perhaps Jehovah will deal with us according to all His wonderful deeds and will make him withdraw from us.'"

I'm sorry I laughed, but duh, haven't you been listening? This is Jeremiah. It says that the whole city was full of his words. They knew what he was saying. Zedekiah knew. "Pray for us that maybe God will be nice to us."

Eighth verse, "And to this people you shall say, thus says Jehovah, behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.

"But he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have his life as a prize of war. For I have set My face against the city for harm and not for good, declares Jehovah. It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."

That is the last thing Zedekiah wanted to say. Somewhere in the Bible, perhaps back in Kings and Chronicles, Zedekiah asked this question of Jeremiah, and Jeremiah told him, "Look, surrender. Go out. You'll live. Stay in here, you're going to die." I'm afraid of the people that have already left. There is more going on here than meets the eye.

Just as God offered them hope if they would only keep the Sabbath, in the 22nd chapter He gives them another source of hope. Verse three, "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed.

Do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. For if you will indeed obey this word, then there shall enter the gates of this house kings who sit on the throne of David."

Almost the same language. "If you'll keep the Sabbath, kings will sit on the throne of David. Good guys, if you will do justice," and I couldn't help but note, "nor shed innocent blood." God help us and save us from abortion.

Wonderful promise in the 23rd chapter. "You have scattered My flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares Jehovah.

“Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares Jehovah."

I love it when He talks about sending shepherds, people that will care for these people and not make money and seek to become famous. They're going to be looking out for the needs of God’s people.

Then we have a Messianic promise, 23:5. "Behold, the days are coming, declares Jehovah, when I will raise up for David a righteous branch, and he will reign as King and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely, and this is His name by which He will be called Jehovah our Righteousness."

Whoa, beautiful. This is the thing that I get when I read through Jeremiah. I go from the Valley of Despair to these mountaintops, to these glimpses of our Savior.

Jeremiah 23:18, "Who among them has stood in the counsel of Jehovah to see and to hear His word? Or who has paid attention to His word and listened?" This is what we're doing, folks, in reading His word. We're paying attention to what God has written, and we're listening. May God continue to give us ears.

Then He says, "If they had stood in My counsel, then they would have proclaimed My words to the people, and they would have turned from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds."

For those of us in ministry, and I believe all of God's people are in ministry to some degree, it starts with us standing in the counsel of Jehovah, waiting on Jehovah, listening to His voice, and then our ministry will be blessed.

Another sweet, strong passage, 23:29, "Is not my word like fire, declares Jehovah, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?" Good stuff.

24th chapter, we're going to read about figs. "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile from Jerusalem Jeconiah the son of Jehoiachin king of Judah, together with the officials of Judah, the craftsmen and the metal workers had brought them to Babylon.

“Jehovah showed me this vision. Behold, two baskets of figs placed before the temple of Jehovah. One basket had very good figs, like first ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad they could not be eaten. Jehovah said to me, 'What do you

see, Jeremiah?' I said, 'Figs, the good figs, very good, and the bad figs, very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten.'"

"Then the word of Jehovah came to me, thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans.

“I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down. I will plant them and not pluck them up. I will give them a heart to know that I am Jehovah, and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart."

That's worth this whole section, reading that, because that is exactly what's going to happen. Men like Zerubbabel and Joshua and Ezra and Nehemiah are going to come back loving God, loving His word, loving His land, loving His people, and they're going to be planted again.

Then, "Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten, so I will treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land." He made it very clear. "If you leave, it'll go well. If you stay, it'll go badly."

Then 25:10, I don't know how you can read this and not see how God had His hand on this man. He indeed, as it says in the first chapter, has been watching over this word to perform it, and He watched over this word to perform it.

This is where it comes from, 10th verse. "Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride." 11th verse, "This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years."

There it is, 70 years. That's the passage that Daniel read 70 years after they were up there and said the time is up, and he set himself to pray that they'd return, and they did.

12th verse, "Then after 70 years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares Jehovah, making the land an everlasting waste. I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations."

Jeremiah was anointed by God to preach His word and to declare what was going to happen, and God watched over all the words written in this book. That's why we are reading all the words written in this book, because He's going to see that they're fulfilled. We haven't even read all of them yet.

26th chapter, He uses an expression, "I'm going to make your house like Shiloh," and the people did not like it. They said, "No, Shiloh."

I did a little bit of research on this, and it turns out that Shiloh is mentioned 32 times in the Bible, and for 300 years from Joshua 18:1 on, this had been the center of Israel. This is where the tabernacle had been erected. They divided up the land at Shiloh.

Then God moved it after Eli's two boys took the ark. The ark left Shiloh, went down to Gaza, where these cities of the Philistines. It came back, and then it stayed at a guy's place until David brought it up to Jerusalem. Shiloh was the place.

When He said, "I'm going to make you like Shiloh," the people got really upset because they had seen what had happened to Shiloh.

"The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words to the house of Jehovah. When Jeremiah had finished speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, 'you shall die.'

Why have you prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, this house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without inhabitant? All the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of Jehovah."

This was significant to this nation. They knew the history of Shiloh. When he said that, it's like he pushed a button and the people went nuts on him.

The contrary is, when Jerusalem is reestablished, it is going to be a source of light for the world. I'm going to read from Isaiah 2. We've already read it once, but this is the word that Isaiah saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

"It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established as the highest of the mountains, shall be lifted up above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it.

Many people shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His ways and then we may walk in His paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.'"

Shiloh was not a happy situation. They saw that. They said, "No, not Shiloh." That's what happened. Jerusalem fell, but Jerusalem is going to be built up again. Amen. OK, Scott, what do you think?

Scott: I noticed in a couple of places examples like 15:19 and 18:8. There's the business of, if you would repent and return to Me, I will turn away my wrath kind of thing. It's like there's always, yes, there is the wrath that's coming, but if they would turn around, He's still ready to be merciful, but they won't do that.

Then 25:15, it's the cup of the wine of God's wrath. Yet again, there it is with trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored. It's like, I don't know. That image is so powerful to me. Drinking the cup of God's wrath, it sounds horrible to me.

Steve: Scott, that's an excellent point on this cup of the wine of wrath, because when I read that, I hardly knew what to do with it because how do you make a nation drink from this cup of God's wrath?

This is what He says in 25:15, "Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They shall drink and stagger and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them." Then Jeremiah said he did it.

Steve: I believe it, and I believe He made them all to drink of it, and closing with the king of Babylon himself, but I don't understand. I don't know how He did it. I don't know how that was done in the spirit, done in the spiritual places, but God told him to do it and he did it, and that's exactly what happened. Thank you for bringing that up.

Scott: That does not sound good.

Steve: No, it doesn't, especially when you bring that up. That's an excellent observation. I noticed that word too in Jeremiah 15 when I read through it. "If you utter what is precious and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them."

I made a note in my head. I said, "I want to make sure that my mouth is uttering what is precious and not worthless. I want my words to be upbuilding and true and right and not vain and meaningless." Good word.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for being true and just and also being merciful. Thank you for offering ways of escape. They would just go to Babylon, if they would just keep the Sabbath, if they would only do righteousness.

Thank you for Jeremiah, how you kept him going even when he was alone and wished he'd never been born. You are with him as a dread warrior. Be with us. Help us to speak the truth. Help us to be like our brother Jeremiah. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith and Family podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email steve@spdemme@Gmail.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.