

Read: Jeremiah 26:8-15

The Iron Prophet

Jeremiah 26:12-15

Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and all the people: “The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the things you have heard. Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the Lord your God. Then the Lord will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you. As for me, I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think is good and right. Be assured, however, that if you put me to death, you will bring the guilt of innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and on those who live in it, for in truth the Lord has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Do you ever wish you had a cool nickname like Alexander the Great, Ninja, or The Rock? Today we read about an Old Testament prophet named Jeremiah. Prophets were people selected by God to speak his messages. Jeremiah’s nickname was “the weeping prophet” because he was sad that the people of Judah would not listen to his message from God.

Jeremiah’s message for his people was that they should repent and turn from their evil ways, or their city and temple would be demolished. The people didn’t like to hear this. They wanted Jeremiah to be put to death. It would have been easy for Jeremiah to change his message or just leave. Instead, even facing the threat of death, he spoke the truth of God’s Word because he cared so much for his people. He wanted them to be saved. This determination led him to receive another nickname, “the iron prophet.”

We are blessed to have pastors, teachers, and staff ministers who have been called by God to teach us the truth of God’s Word. There are times when their message is hard for us to hear. Like the people of Judah, we might be upset when they tell us that we are sinners who need to repent. Like Jeremiah, they don’t avoid preaching the law, because they want us to know the truth. They care about our spiritual life. They realize that unchecked sin has eternal consequences.

When they preach the law, they simply mirror the message of Jesus who never took shortcuts around the truth. Jesus never took the easy way out. That’s why he went all the way to the cross to save us from our sins. Jesus made up his mind to win for us the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life with him in heaven. That’s determination!

The people who teach us the truth of God’s Word are just as determined. They care so much about us that they will not take shortcuts. May we gladly hear and obey the message they bring to us!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What do we call the book that teaches us about Jesus?
- Name two people (not your parents) who teach you about Jesus.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- God's Word contains law and gospel. What does the law show us? What does the gospel show us?
- Give a reason why it's important that we are taught both the law and gospel from the Bible?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why is Jeremiah called the "weeping" prophet? Why is Jeremiah called the "iron" prophet?
- Evaluate yourself: Are you more "weeping" or made of "iron?" Why is it important to be both?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for the people in our lives who teach us the truth of your Word. Help us to gladly listen to them, even when their message is hard for us to hear. Most importantly we thank you for giving your life to save us from our sins. Amen.