

Call Upon Him With Your Whole Heart

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Preacher: Willard Lyons

[0 : 0 0] Okay, back to Jeremiah. Last week we were in chapter 26 and God had given Jeremiah instruction! to go into the court of the temple and there speak his word to the people.

! The word that he's going to give them or give to him. So he does that and all the people that are there including the high priest or the priests and leadership, spiritual leadership of Judah were there and remember the message that God gave to Jeremiah in essence was that this place is going to be like Shiloh. It's going to come to total destruction if you do not repent from your ways. And so naturally again there was opposition about that and such opposition that said you are worthy to be put to death. But God raised up some people. Remember the princes of Judah stood in his defense and said this man's from God. He's brought us God's word and then they gave, remember, the example of Micah the prophet who Hezekiah listened to and obeyed. And so God just miraculously provided for Jeremiah. So with that said, we're going to jump to chapter 29. But on the way there, we're going to look for a minute at chapter 27 and a little bit about chapter 28 because that wasn't not in the January Bible study, but I want to do that because we really need to look at that because there's some vital things in there that we need to see that God is saying to the kingdom of Judah through his prophet Jeremiah. So go to chapter 27 and we'll begin in verse 1. We'll just read the chapter. Might make some comments about it as we go along. In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah from the Lord saying, thus saith the Lord, notice, thus saith Jehovah to me. Jehovah, the self-existent God that reveals himself to man. So here's another revelation of

God, if you will, to the nation or the kingdom of Judah. Thus says Jehovah to me, make thee bonds and yokes and put them upon thy neck and send them to the king of Edom and to the king of Moab and to the king of the Ammonites and to the king of Tyrus and to the king of Zidon by the hand of messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah, king of Judah, and command them to say unto their masters, thus saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, thus shall you say unto your masters.

Now, the yoke, of course, you realize what a yoke is. A yoke is that thing you put on an oxen or an ox that you use to control and guide that beast when you're plowing the field with him. And so God tells Jeremiah, make yokes, put one of them on your neck and leave it there. Send others to some of the other nations, the kings of some of the other nations. All right. And so Jeremiah does so. And here's what he has to say to the people of Judah from Jehovah of hosts. Verse five, I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground by my great power and by my outstretched arm and have given it unto whom it would or it seemed meet unto me or right unto me. Now we need to recognize that passage, don't we? I know that he's talking here to the tribe of the kingdom of Judah, the two tribes of the kingdom of Judah. But I think we can safely say this is a universal thought here as well. God said to Judah concerning, really, he's looking at Nebuchadnezzar as well. Remember, because what that yoke is representative of is the yoke of bondage that Judah is going to come under, under the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. All right. And so God is saying here,

I've made it all, fellas. I've made it all. I've created it all. And I put whom I want to put, wherever I want to put them, even the heathen kings. All right. And a little bit later, he calls Nebuchadnezzar his servant. So in other words, God's going to use them as his pawns, if you will, to produce whatever purpose he has for the kingdom of Judah. So he says there, I have given it unto whom it would seem meet unto me. And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant. And the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And so all these kingdoms that he tells Jeremiah to send the yokes to, he said, I've given those to Nebuchadnezzar. All right. They're under his control. And so, as well as the beasts. All right. And

that is to serve him. Verse eight, it shall come to pass that the nation and kingdom, which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon. That nation will I punish, says Jehovah. I'll punish with a sword and with the famine and with the pestilence until I have consumed them by his hand. Boy, that's pretty straightforward, isn't it? Therefore, hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon.

[6 : 45] For they prophesy a lie unto you to remove you far from your land, and that I should drive you out, and you should perish. But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord, and they shall till it and dwell therein. All right. So instructions again, even over other heathen nations, if you will, and to Judah as well. You're to remain under that yoke of bondage. Again, he's saying, don't listen to those false prophets that are saying this either isn't going to happen, or in just a minute we're going to see that one prophesies that it's only going to last for two years. He said, don't listen to what they say. They are false prophets. Now, verse 12, let's go ahead and do it.

I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah, according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him and his people and live.

Why will you die, thou and thy people, by sword, by the famine, by the pestilence, as the Lord hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Therefore, hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon, for they prophesy a lie.

For I have not sent them, says the Lord, yet they prophesy a lie in my name, that I might drive you out and that you might perish, ye and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus says the Lord, Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon.

[8 : 43] For they prophesy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them, serve the king of Babylon and live, wherefore should this city be laid waste?

But if they be prophets and if the word of the Lord be with them, let them now make intercession to the Lord of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the Lord are in the house of the king of Judah and at Jerusalem go not to Babylon.

For thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the pillars and concerning the sea, concerning the bases and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city, which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took not.

When he carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem.

So get the picture here. The captivity has already taken place. All right. It's already taken place at this point. Jerusalem has been taken captive. Now, they shall be carried to Babylon and there shall be there.

[9 : 49] They shall be until the day that I visit them, says the Lord. Then will I bring them up and restore them to this place. Now, of course, again, that's conditioned on the fact they stay in Babylon.

All right. All right. Now, in chapter 28, notice something here. One of the prophesiers, one of the false prophets begins to speak. It came to pass the same year in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the fourth year and in the fifth month, that Hananiah, the son of Azar, the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

Now, isn't it amazing here? And this false prophet comes to Jeremiah and tells him that here's what God said. And all the princes and all the others are listening to all of this.

All right. And so verse three, within two full years, will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took away from this place and carried them to Babylon.

Now, notice, get the picture here that when Nebuchadnezzar came in, that he stole some of the artifacts or some of the things that were in the temple and that were of gold in particular and took them to his place.

[11:19] All right. And so now Hananiah is saying God's going to restore those within two full years. And then verse four, I will bring again to this place Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah that went into Babylon, says the Lord.

For I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah, in the presence of the priests and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the Lord, even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen.

I like this. Amen. He said, OK, amen. Let the Lord do so. Yeah. Let him do so. I'd be glad for that. All right. Jehovah, let Jehovah perform thy words, which thou hast prophesied to bring again the vessels of the Lord's house and all that is carried away captive from Babylon into this place.

Let it happen. I wonder what what Hananiah thought when Jeremiah said that. Yeah. He might have thought to himself, well, my goose is cooked because this isn't really from the Lord.

And I know that. OK, so. So Jeremiah says, bring it on. Bring it on. Verse seven. Nevertheless, hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears and in the ears of all the people.

[12:44] The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries and against great kingdoms of war and of evil and of pestilence.

The prophet which prophesied of peace when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him.

OK, there's the telltale truth. Who really is the true prophet? Well, it's the one whose prophecy comes to pass by the Lord.

Now, look what Hananiah has the nerve to do here. Verse 10. Then Hananiah, the prophet, took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and break it.

And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus says Jehovah, even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years.

[13:47] And the prophet Jeremiah went his way. OK, he just walks off. Then the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, the prophet. After that, Hananiah, the prophet had broken the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus says Jehovah.

Now, this is this is the real stickler here for Hananiah. Thus says Jehovah, thou hast broken the yokes of wood, but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.

For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

And they shall serve him. And I have and I have given him the beasts of the field also. Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah, the prophet.

Hear now, Hananiah, Jehovah hath not sent thee, but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore, says Jehovah.

[14:56] Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth. This year thou shalt die. Because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord.

So Hananiah, the prophet, died the same year in the seventh month. Didn't even get to see whether his prophecy came true. Amen. I think you got the idea, don't you?

When Jeremiah said you're going to die. And then within the year he died. So I thought that interesting. God being so specific about the reality of them going to be in Babylon for a good period of time.

And so now in chapter number 29. We begin to see something interesting that takes place here. As I said, people are already in captivity.

He has already come in and taken people away out of Jerusalem. It's not quite finished yet. Realized the captivity really came in stages.

[16:12] Wasn't just one grand march through the city. This thing happens in more than one episode. We'll see that as we go further into the study. But at this point, Jerusalem has been captured, been sieged.

And the people have been taken captive to Babylon. But there's still a small remnant now that still remains in Jerusalem. These are the people that really were unskilled.

Didn't have any real skill to themselves. So Nebuchadnezzar didn't really feel like they would be of any value or any use to him. And so he just leaves them there in Jerusalem.

Now, when you go into captivity, you would think captivity really has nothing to offer. All right. Hardship, bondage, confusion, doubt.

And most importantly, they're away from their place of worship. They're away from the place where Jehovah, their God, met with them.

[17 : 20] So it's a difficult place. A place of hardship. But we see in chapter 29, God has something different in store for the people.

It doesn't have to be as hard as they really anticipated that it was going to be. God instructs Jeremiah here to write a letter and send it to the elders, the priests, and the prophets, and all the people that are in captivity there in Babylon.

The message is quite different than what you would think of a message to a captive being. And so let's take a look at it here. Chapter 29, verses 4 through 7.

Here's what the scripture says. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the captives whom I have caused to be carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

Build yourself houses and dwell in them. Plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. Take wives and have sons and daughters.

[18 : 24] Take wives for your sons. Give your daughters in marriage that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there and do not be diminished. And seek the peace and welfare of the city to which I have caused you to be carried away captive.

And pray to the Lord for it. For in the welfare of the city in which you live, you will have welfare. Isn't that interesting here?

Let me ask you this. You know, he tells them that this thing's going to be 70 years long. And there's not going to be any changing that. So, you might as well come to the reality of that.

It's going to be a long-term deal. So, go ahead and build yourself houses. You know, make yourself at home here in whatever city Nebuchadnezzar has planted you.

They didn't all go to one city. In various cities of the region there, they put various captives. So, whatever city you've been planted in, build houses there.

[19 : 24] Pray for the peace of that city. Because if you do, and peace comes, then that will be for your good. That will be for your welfare. Now, and then, allow your sons and daughters to marry.

And have kids. All right? Become grandparents in captivity. That's not too bad a deal. Could be worse. Amen? Why? Why did God tell them, in particular, to let their sons and daughters marry?

And have children? Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Did not want Judah to diminish in population.

Why? Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It's indication that, yeah, in reality, there's going to be a long period of captivity.

But it one day will come to an end. And what happens then? Then you will be brought back to the land. That is your inheritance. So, that's a good promise there.

[20 : 31] It's kind of in the background of what he tells them to do there, is that promise. That this thing is going to end one day, and then you're going to be brought back to Jerusalem.

So, my planet for you is still the same. And we'll see that here, maybe tonight. Maybe in a little bit. Okay. Anyway, so that's what he tells them to do.

Notice, Jeremiah always begins whatever letters he writes with a word of encouragement. All right. It's not all just doom and gloom. And that's what he does here.

All right. The letter begins as a word from Jehovah of hosts. Of course, the one that has everything at his disposal to meet whatever the need may be.

So, here we catch a good glimpse of the faithfulness of God to his people. All right. The one who has everything that he needs at his disposal to do whatever is needed.

[21 : 31] So, we see a good tender care of his people by their Lord, Jehovah of hosts. Now, can we not look back at our own lives?

I think we've talked about this before. Can we not? Well, maybe it's in Sunday school. Can we? I'm getting too confused here. Sunday school and what I've taught in Sunday school, what we're teaching here. Isn't it true that we can look back on our lives and see how faithful God has been to us?

May not really have acknowledged it at the moment that it occurred, but we can look back and say, Oh, yeah. Look what God did back there. Remain faithful.

1 Thessalonians 5, verse 23 and 24 say, And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray, God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he says, Faithful is he. Just faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it. In other words, don't ever forget.

[22 : 42] God is faithful to what he promised. 2 Timothy 2, verse 13. I like this verse. If we are faithless, that is, if we do not believe and are untrue to him, he remains true.

That is, faithful to his word, to his character, and to his righteousness. For he cannot deny himself. He is true.

He is righteous. He is just. And that's what he is inherently in his nature. So he cannot be untrue to that nature.

Amen. That's God. That's who he is. And so as a result of that, we can deem that he indeed then is faithful.

Now, captivity is going to last 70 years, as we said. So he instructs them, settle down, pray for the city, for your own welfare.

[23 : 41] Now, then he says in verses 8 through 9, again, don't listen to the false prophets who say otherwise. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, let not your false prophets and your diviners who are in your midst deceive you.

Pay no attention and attach no significance to your dreams which you dream or to theirs. For they prophesy falsely to you in my name.

I have not sent them, says the Lord. How important is spiritual discernment? I think it's vital.

Amen. It's vital for God's people to have spiritual discernment. First John chapter 4 tells us that.

Turn there with me just a moment.

First John chapter 4 and let's look at this. There's so much stuff. And we've seen that, of course, in the videos that we've seen. From time to time here at church on Sunday night.

[24 : 48] But we need to remind ourselves there's a lot of junk being thrown out there. Amen.

Yeah. I'll never forget. I'll never forget. When I was pastoring at New Harmony.

We lived in the old parsonage that was there right beside the church. And we'd gotten a little dog, little pup, sweet little dog. Well, you stay a little long. It had all kind of breed in him.

But anyway, I noticed him outside. We had this long sidewalk from the parking lot of the church to the front porch of the parsonage.

And a little porch there on the parsonage with a little wood rail around it. And he always liked to jump down there and walk around. I came home from being somewhere one day and I saw him out there.

And I looked down there. He's in the middle of that sidewalk. And he had, he was just sniffing and clawing at it and wanting to chew on it. And I thought, what in the world has he gotten a hold of?

[25 : 49] So I walk up there and I look and I look down there. And lo and behold, somebody had thrown away. It probably came out of the trash can somewhere that the garbage guy dropped.

But it was a little package of meat. You know, styrofoam bottom with cellophane on the top. But you could tell that was rancid. I mean, it was just spoiled.

But there he was. That little pup just thought he was in heaven. Yeah. He was trying to want to devour that thing, trying his best to get that thing opened.

Yeah. I said, Dylan, don't do that. That's nasty stuff. You know, for a dog it wouldn't have been. But hey, just the thought of it. Yeah. How many times do even God's people sometimes fall into the trap of sniffing at and clawing out and chewing at the garbage?

Amen. Amen. That rancid stuff that sometimes comes on the airwaves. Yeah. That's not of God, really. We've got to have the spiritual discernment that's necessary to determine what it is.

[27 : 07] First John chapter four. Verse one said, beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Believe not. The literal idea is it's the idea of stop an action that's already going on. All right. Don't let it continue. Stop believing every spirit.

So see, they were even doing it back in the day of the apostles, early church. Stop believing every spirit. All right. But try the spirits.

That is to put to the test for the purpose of approving and to see if he meets the specifications laid down for that test.

Now, the idea is this. It's not that it's not that you have a brother here that's speaking and you want to put him to test to see if he fails.

[28 : 09] It's not the idea. You want him to meet the qualifications laid down to be approved. All right. So you're looking for him.

You're looking for him to say all those things that are necessary and correct in his teaching or preaching. All right. But the idea here is this.

While you're listening to what he says. When though if those those errors, I'm not going to call them mistakes.

If those errors come up. Then it raises a red flag. All right. And you begin to question, is he going to meet the test of a true prophet or man of God, whatever you want to call him.

Is the idea here. He said, put them to the test and need to do that with everyone. Amen. Yeah.

When you call Pastor Mike, we weren't members then.

[29 : 14] But when you call Pastor Mike to be your pastor, what did you do? What was that process? They checked him out, didn't they?

They listened to him to see how he preached, what he preached. When he came to the congregation in view of a call. No doubt.

Preached. And the church listened intently to him. To what he said. Or what he didn't say. Amen.

And so undoubtedly, he passed the muster.

Right? Yeah. And that's why you brought him here. Because you want to listen to him, hear what he has to say. And you're sensing then, as you do that, you're sensing that he has what it takes.

All right? As a true man of God. And when you listen to him, that became the reality. He met the specifications to be approved.

[30 : 14] So that's what John is saying here. Listen to everyone. Now, once you've done that, and you've determined that he has met the specifications and been approved, then you rejoice in the Lord.

And then you'll listen to what he has to say because you know he's God's man. Amen? Yeah. Now, don't go in there nitpicking like I do. No, no. Let me qualify that.

I don't go in here nitpicking, but if I listen to someone on the radio, as I'm driving down the road, I'll listen carefully. Because I realize how many of these guys are not true men of God that are on the radio.

So I'm skeptical when I listen. All right? So I listen skeptically. If that's such a word. All right.

But when you go in there and you hear him and you know, you've already proved him. You know he's a man of God. So you thank God for that. And so you listen to what God has to say through him as you do that.

[31 : 18] All right? All right. So, spiritual discernment is an absolute imperative for us in the things of the Word of God.

Now, God's unfailing love for the people of Judah is revealed through his Word. Verses 10 through 14, God expresses his love and the people of Judah begin to experience that once again.

For this says the Lord, when 70 years are completed for Babylon, then will I visit you and keep my good promise to you, causing you to return to this place.

Now, here's the part of the verse that became so popular here a few years ago. For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord.

Thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

Then you will call upon me, and you will come and pray to me, and I will hear and heed you.

[32 : 27] Then you will seek me, inquire for, and require me, and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Hmm. Yeah. A lot of people, when they use that verse, they use it out of context because they didn't realize that's a captivity verse. Amen? Yeah. So you've got to be careful using that verse.

God's love will put you in captivity so it can come to pass. Yeah. Yeah. Notice Deuteronomy chapter 4. That's what we look at here. When he said, when you seek me, the day is going to come when I return you to the land and you will experience the good I have in store for you because you will seek me and it'll all come to fruition whenever you seek me with all of your heart.

All right? Now, verse 29 of Deuteronomy 4. But if from thence thou shalt seek Jehovah thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

When thou art in tribulation, all these things are come upon thee even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God and shalt be obedient unto his voice.

[33 : 54] So, not only was it a captivity verse, but you can see here even probably a tribulation verse. He says, even in the latter days. Okay?

It's amazing how expansive the scripture is. If you seek me. But here's the qualification to it. If you seek me with all your heart.

Somewhere in the annals of my files, I got written something I had found, finally found somebody that could really expound on that little phrase with all your heart.

But I didn't have the time to go try to find it. With all your heart. What does that mean? What does that mean? Let me ask it this way and see if we can figure this out.

What is the real, other than the Lord, okay? Set the Lord aside for just a moment. In your life, what is your real passion? What's the thing you really love to do?

[35 : 05] Your family. Okay. That's a good one. What else? Hold on. I'm just going to use that one because I'm thinking of something here.

With that, Stan? You've got the sweetest, cutest little granddaughter. Kyle brings her every once in a while to Monday night before the nursery opens up.

She was here this last Wednesday, last Monday night. I sat right over there to eat and he was right there with her. She's the sweetest little thing. I could tell she was Stan's granddaughter.

Just by the way he looks at her. Yeah. Yeah. He stood right over here. He didn't say a word.

He was just watching her. There was a gleam in his eyes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I could tell he loved her.

[36 : 08] He adores her. Am I right, Stan? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And so, I would guess, I would guess that when it comes to her, boy, he had bend over backwards because she is a prize, not a possession, but a prize object of his life.

All right? And so, in essence, he would give everything for her because he loves her with his whole heart.

Okay? Yeah. Yeah. Now, when it comes to the Lord and our dealings with him, his dealings with us, our surrender to him, our walk with him, is it casual or is it really with our whole heart?

To me, when you look at the idea of the whole heart, you're getting close to total abandonment To that thing, whatever the object is or the person.

Total abandonment of the heart to God. Yeah. Yeah. And that's what God says here to Judah. Judah, I'm going to bring you back.

[37 : 37] I'm going to do that. Restore things for you. And you'll call upon me when you call upon me with your whole heart.

Now, I see a two-full fulfillment in this. Yeah. Yeah. After the 70 years, what happened?

God lets them go back, right? There's a restoration. Things eventually are rebuilt. But did they really turn to the Lord with their whole heart?

Mm-mm. I don't think we really see that for Judah because in reality, we'll begin after far too long to see God speaking to both Israel, the northern kingdom, and Judah, the southern, as the covenant nation once again.

And I really sense that what he's talking about here in this complete fulfillment won't be until the tribulation period, the second half of the tribulation period, where, where everybody comes against Israel and, in essence, there's no hope for Israel.

[38 : 57] No way out. But here comes a rider on a white horse. Amen? Yeah. Scripture says Israel, all Israel is going to be saved in one day.

And that's because they see Jesus coming to deliver them from total destruction. And they turn to Him, recognizing Him as their Messiah, and they turn to Him with their whole heart.

Yeah. So in the meantime, He has turned to the church, turned to the Gentiles to call out from them a people for His namesake, called it the church, the body of Christ, who needs to do what?

What does, what does the Scripture tell us about ourselves when it comes to our whole heart? We shall love the Lord thy God. Love Him. Agape.

Will all of our heart our entire being. Amen? Yeah. Yeah. So when we love Him with our entire heart, love Him wholeheartedly, then we'll call upon Him with our entire heart.

[40 : 15] Amen? Yeah. Not superficially. My fear is so much of Christianity is superficial in this day and time. Always has been to some degree, but I think the closer we get to the rapture of the church, the more superficiality we're going to see.

Yeah. In professing Christianity. Though, God is in essence saying, though I've appointed a long time of captivity for you, don't fear.

Don't think that I've utterly rejected you. Don't be afraid of that because again, I know my design for you. I know what I have in store for you. My thoughts toward you are good, they're not evil.

Now that I have inflicted lengthened sufferings for you, this chastisement has a meaning, has a purpose, and it serves to bring your welfare about in the future.

All right? Now, and he says that future is one of hope and one of peace. But realize something.

What's got to happen? What's got to happen for that future hope and peace to become a reality for the people of God?

[41 : 26] What good does it do if we don't learn the lesson from it? And the lesson is what is God's purpose in it all? Find out what it is and remember it.

And that's what leads to repentance. Okay? But they've got to avail themselves of that, to be willing to let God bring them to that point of wanting to know what this is all about.

Why are we here? Why? Now, it's not in an essence to blame God, but it's the idea, all right, God, what's caused you to have to do this to us?

Yeah. Yeah. That's the idea here. Same thing for us. Amen? Yeah. And we'll look at some of that more next time. All right, let's pray together.

Father, again, we're grateful for your love and grace. Thank you for the good time together tonight. It's always good to be together in your word. The fellowship of the gospel is a glorious thing, so we thank you for that.

[42 : 26] And now I ask, Father, that you keep on our heart and mind tonight, not just the reality that you're faithful, not just the reality that you love us, but that the things you do in our lives always have a purpose.

Things you allow in our life always have a purpose and enable us to always be looking to see and to seek from you what that purpose is so that we can make the application to our lives and come out of it the way that you've designed us to come out of it, to have produced within us those things you want to produce.

And we'll thank you for it now in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.