



ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 10TH 2025
PRAYERS AND REFLECTION
BASED ON JEREMIAH 20



When the priest Pashhur son of Immer, the official in charge of the temple of the Lord, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things, ² he had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put in the stocks at the Upper Gate of Benjamin at the Lord's temple. ³ The next day, when Pashhur released him from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, "The Lord's name for you is not Pashhur, but Terror on Every Side. ⁴ For this is what the Lord says: 'I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; with your own eyes you will see them fall by the sword of their enemies. I will give all Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon, who will carry them away to Babylon or put them to the sword. ⁵ I will deliver all the wealth of this city into the hands of their enemies—all its products, all its valuables and all the treasures of the kings of Judah. They will take it away as plunder and carry it off to Babylon. ⁶ And you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house will go into exile to Babylon. There you will die and be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have prophesied lies."

Jeremiah's Complaint

⁷ You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸ Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the Lord has brought me insult and reproach all day long. ⁹ But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. ¹⁰ I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side! Denounce him! Let's denounce him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him." ¹¹ But the Lord is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹² Lord Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance on them, for to you I have committed my cause. ¹³ Sing to the Lord! Give praise to the Lord! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked. ¹⁴ Cursed be the day I was born! May the day my mother bore me not be blessed! ¹⁵ Cursed be the man who brought my father the news, who made him very glad, saying, "A child is born to you—a son!" ¹⁶ May that man be like the towns the Lord overthrew without pity. May he hear wailing in the morning, a battle cry at noon. ¹⁷ For he did not kill me in the womb, with my mother as my grave, her womb enlarged forever. ¹⁸ Why did I ever come out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow and to end my days in shame?

QUIET TIME IN PRAYER

Lord, I'm here metaphorically at your feet reflecting on the words of the prophet Jeremiah. In my moments of trial and turmoil, strengthen me in the same way you strengthened your prophet. Grant me the courage to continue to speak your truths even when faced with opposition. May my heart resonate with unwavering faith, always trusting in your plans despite my own struggles. Fill me with your Spirit, guide my path as I seek your wisdom and share your love with the world. In the name of Jesus, I pray amen.

PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS

- Thank you, Lord, for beauty in nature, skies and rainbow colours
- Thank you, Lord, for safe places, access to fresh food, water, heating, cooling and transport
- Thank you, Lord, for nurses, doctors, aged care facilities and those who dedicate their lives to work in them, police men and women, teachers, TAFE teachers, Universities, and people who offer hope in times when hope is distant

POINTS FOR A PRAYER OF PRAISE

- To be able to worship, witness, serve the living Christ
- For living in a time and place of safety
- For being surrounded by Saints
- For the reassurance that God's presence in the world is real

POINTS OF CONFESSION

- For not believing the truths found in the scriptures
- For a lack of respect towards those who share a different point of view
- For being blinded by the trials of life and not seeing the joys and points of happiness
- For thinking that living a just and faithful life is just too hard.

WORDS OF GRACE

In asking your forgiveness I may know cleansing, renewal and a dislike of doing things against you. Jesus says when we confess our wrongdoing with an attitude to be sorry, we are forgiven. In Christ you are forgiven, thanks be to God, amen

REFLECTION

Jeremiah 20 manages to capture his struggles and inner turmoil he's experiencing, and yet, we can also find hope, love and grace. The opening verses reveal his deep anguish as he faces persecution for delivering God's messages. He expresses his feelings of betrayal and despair, stating that he feels deceived by God. This raw honesty is significant; it shows us that even the most faithful followers of Christ can experience moments of doubt and pain.

However, within Jeremiah's lamentation lies the seeds of hope. Despite his suffering, Jeremiah acknowledges that he can't stay silent about God's word. His inner conflict reveals a powerful truth: love and commitment to God compel him to continue to spread God's message, regardless of the considerable cost. This dedication reflects the grace that sustains him, reminding us that God's presence often shines brightest in our darkest of moments.

Jeremiah's ultimate realisation is that God is with him like a mighty warrior, offering protection and strength. This assurance of God's support is not only powerful it also offers a source of hope, encouraging us to trust in God's plans even when it doesn't look possible. The love that God has for God's people is quite evident in God's unwavering presence, guiding and sustaining us through our trials, turmoil and trauma.

Jeremiah finishes expressing his deep desire for justice and redemption, strengthening his faith in God's ability to deliver. This aspiration resonates with us today, as we seek hope in our struggles and uncertainties. He reminds us that while we may face challenges, God's grace enables us to rise above what's bothering us, find our voice, and continue our journey with faith, hope, and love. In our darkest moments we are reminded that we are never truly alone, for God's grace is always present, just a prayer away, leading us toward healing and a restored relationship with God.

PRAYER POINTS OF INTERCESSION

- Remain faithfully courageous when facing challenges
- Keep hopeful when all appears on the surface to be lost forever
- Healing from emotional pain, remembering that Jeremiah was given strength in his moments of anguish and anxiety
- To have a heart of worship just like the great prophet Jeremiah

'HOPE, LOVE AND GRACE WHEN IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE' ©VR 2025

In the depths of despair, where shadows reside,
A voice cries out, with nowhere to hide.
Jeremiah's heart heavy, yet truth must be spoken,
In anguish he wrestles, though hope feels broken.

For love's gentle whisper, through trials may sing,
A promise of grace, in the suffering it brings.
Though the world may revile, and hatred may reign,
God's presence surrounds him, his spirit unchained.

Like a fiery river, the words will not cease,
Compelled by a love that brings weariness peace.
Through the darkest of nights, a warrior stands tall,
With grace as his armour, he answers the call.

The pain may be vivid, the struggle appears real,
Yet hope weaves a tapestry, a heart can still heal.
For in every heartache, in every sharp sigh,
The promise of mercy breaks clouds in the sky.

So let laughter find footing where sorrow once dwelt,
And kindness be tasted where bitterness felt.
For love, like a beacon, will guide us each day,
In Jeremiah's journey, it lights the way.

In the face of the storm, we rise and we sing,
Embracing the beauty that each moment can bring.
With hope intertwined in the fabric of grace,
We find love everlasting, in God's warm embrace.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXDhCEmM-bQ&list=RDM&index=32>