

A Prayer for Relief from Oppressors and God's Answer

Jeremiah 12

Outline

- 1-4 | Jeremiah pleads his case with God
- 5-6 | Opposition can come from many sources, even from your family
- 7-13 | God's frustration with the nation
- 14-17 | God promise to "uproot" Judah from among their surrounding nations and promises compassion if they learn the ways of the Lord when they return

Reflections

Jeremiah's prayer speaks to his frustration with those who oppose him (see chapter 11). His main argument is found at the end of verse two and the beginning of verse three.

[Jeremiah 12:2b-3a NASB](#) ... You are near to their lips But far from their mind. **3** But You know me, O LORD; You see me; And You examine my heart's attitude toward You. ...

Opposition	Jeremiah
Their worship is only lip service but their heart is still far from loving God wholly.	The Lord knows that Jeremiah's heart is wholly His.

By contrasting himself to his opposition, Jeremiah is trying to plead his case for God's intervention. God begins His response to Jeremiah in verse 5.

God starts by asking questions.

- If you can't outrun a footman, how can you out run horses?
- If you can't last in a "safe" country, how will you do in a foreign land?
- Even your family has opposed you.

The **Bible Knowledge Commentary**¹ provides a little insight.

God indicated that if Jeremiah found his present circumstances difficult, his future situation would be even worse (Jeremiah 12:5). ... The idea of this second question could possibly be paraphrased: If Jeremiah could trust in God only in a time of peace, how would he manage when the going got tough?

What it really comes down to is this, if a person struggles in their home country and even among their family members, how will they do when confronted by some real opposition?

Do you find your present situation difficult? It could be worse (and quite possibly will be). Learn how to deal with difficult situations now so that you can be prepared when even more difficult times arise.

God does promise that a time of judgment will come and Judah will be taken into captivity but God also promises that they will be returned. It appears from the text to not only be judgment against Judah but also the nations that led them astray and caused them to worship the Baals. This is a time for them to learn God's might, that He would allow His chosen people to be taken captive for pruning. God also offers hope to them as well as the Jewish people.

[Jeremiah 12:15-16 NASB](#) "And it will come about that after I have uprooted them, I will

¹ Walvoord, John, and Roy Zuck. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: Old & New Testament*. Victor Books, 1983.

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again have compassion on them; and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance and each one to his land. 16 "Then if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, 'As the LORD lives,' even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, they will be built up in the midst of My people.

God promises to bring the Jewish people back and then if the nations learn to worship God they too will be built up in their midst. However, in the last verse God warns that if they don't, they will suffer the same fate as Israel.

Lord God, You are a righteous judge who knows people's hearts and does not consider just what they say and do, executing judgment on the small and the great, and offering compassion to all who would repent. Change my heart so that my worship would never be just lip service but true worship in spirit and in truth. I pray that Your Spirit will help me to stand strong in the face of adversity and trust in You in times of trials so that I will not weary and falter but persevere. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Key Words: Old Testament, Prophecy, Jeremiah, Prayer, Adversity, Restoration, False Religion, True Worship

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