

Ladies' Fellowship Prayer Retreat Preparation

December 2017 Devotional

"ASK HIM..." Jeremiah 33

By Deborah Tomlian

We were scattered about my father's house when we heard an excited proclamation from our youngest son, "Oh, thank you, thank you Pap-pap! How did you know? It is just what I needed!" Of course, we all scrambled to see the much-needed gift Pap-pap had given. Upon rounding the corner, there was the happiest little guy stuffing five dollars into his pants pocket. The exuberance of his gratefulness put a warmth and a smile within our hearts that morning.

As we were traveling home later in the evening, we exited the main highway to see a scruffy-looking fellow, backpack in hand, collecting money near the bottom of the exit. As is often the custom, my husband bellowed out, "Quick, who would like to help this fellow before the light turns green?" The van grew quiet while all sat still watching my husband check for his wallet. From the back of the van we heard a voice, "Here, give this to him!" My husband received the gift and looking in the rear-view mirror, asked, "Are you sure?"

"Yes," came the not-so-loud reply. So out the window went the five dollars. We each realized the much-needed gift was just given away and our hearts grew pensive. After several seconds of silence our daughter stated, "You told Pap-pap you needed that, and you gave it away?"

"Yes," came his reply, "he needs it more."

In Jeremiah 33:3, The Lord is talking to Jeremiah, "Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not now about things to come."

I can ask anything? "Oh, thank you Jesus! This is just what I needed!" One of the greatest joys of serving Jesus is the developing relationship between He and I. I am amazed how personal and intimate He longs to be. He desires for us to ask Him anything. He desires for us to come into His presence. He loves an inquisitive being seeking Him. He loves when we obey. He longs for us to love Him. If we knew that He would answer our prayers and show us Himself, why would we not ask? What I am finding is that when the Lord shares His heart through prayer, the Word or another believer, it is not for one alone. Many times, truth revealed is also for the heart of another.

God called Jeremiah at a young age to be a prophet. God promised to put His words in his mouth. Jeremiah would stand up against nations and kingdoms; some would be destroyed, and others would be build up. The Lord is saying to Jeremiah, "Ask me..." Jeremiah is in the confines of the courtyard of the guard. He had been through loneliness, rejection, and persecution. It seems Jeremiah would have much to ask God. Judah and Jerusalem were going to be destroyed. The people had sinned greatly, defiling herself with immorality, corruption, idol worship, evil in the heart of the priests, rulers, and prophets. Israel was exchanging her Glorious God for worthless idols. The people were living in sin and yet acting as if, God lived among them. Sin, no longer made them tremble, it had become a part of their lifestyle and the Holiness of God grew dim. The Lord longed for His people to repent and turn to Him. He waited with arms wide open, but their hearts were stubborn. The Lord said, "If you obey me and do whatever I command you, then you will be my people and I will be your God." (11:4b) God had a passionate love for them. He is a jealous God and He will not tolerate sin.

I am baffled... God tells Jeremiah, "Ask me..." Jeremiah does not ask anything from the Lord, in this chapter. However, we see the Lord remind Jeremiah of the coming destruction and then the Lord gives promise after promise of things to come.

I will heal your wounds.

I will make Jerusalem prosperous.

I will bring true peace.

I will restore.

I will rebuild her towns.

I will cleanse Jerusalem of their sins.

I will forgive all their sins of rebellion.

This city will bring me joy, glory and honor.

I will show my Goodness.

I will bring life to the streets and towns.

I will bring joy and laughter.

I will bring back the joyful voices of bridegrooms and brides.

I will bring back songs and thanksgiving offerings to the Lord.

I will restore prosperity to the land. There will be pastures and shepherds.

I will raise a Righteous Descendant from David's line. (Promise of the Messiah)

Judah will be saved.

Jerusalem will live in safety.

Jerusalem's name will be, The Lord is Our Righteousness.

David's descendants will sit on the throne forever.

Levitical priest will always be present to offer offerings and sacrifices.

My covenant will never be broken.

David's descendants and the Levitical ministers will be multiplied.

I will never abandon you.

I will restore your land and have mercy on you.

Amazing Promises! What great love! What could be more redemptive! At this time in Jeremiah's life, I am uncertain if Jeremiah could see the promises for restoration. God understood Jeremiah, and in His Goodness and Mercy reiterated His promises. These promises were for the people of Israel had they turned their hearts back to God. These promises were "Hope" to those going into and returning from exile. These promises are for God's people today as we live in obedience to Christ.

God desires us to "ask" of Him anything at any time. By "asking" we acknowledge Christ's Lordship in our lives. Through our prayers, a closeness develops with Christ, and He unfolds Himself to us. This Christmas I pray that you will find *God's promises unchangeable, unshakeable and unforgettable.*

I pray you receive the much-needed gift of His Presence, His Love and His Promises. Then as God's Gifts burn within your heart, share them with those around you. So together we can say, "Thank you Father. It's just what we needed!"

"Ask Him...!"

Merry Christmas!

Deborah Tomlian