

DISCOURAGED FROM SERVING THE LORD

(Jer 20:1-18) 06/06/18

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I. PASHHUR PERSECUTED JEREMIAH (Jer 20:1-6)

A. Pashhur the Priest (1)

1. There was a priest by the name of **Pashhur**. He is distinguished from others with the same name. His father was identified as **Immer** (cf. others Jer 21:1 cf. Jer 38:1 “son of Malchijah”).
2. Nevertheless, he was the “**chief officer**” or leading priest that was to keep order. Therefore, Pashhur took it upon himself to refute Jeremiah’s **prophecies** in Jer 19:10-15.

B. Pashhur had Jeremiah Beaten (2)

1. Pashhur was so angered by Jeremiah’s prophecies that he had Jeremiah **beaten** and then put in stocks.
2. Tradition suggests that **stocks** for false prophets included feet, hands, and neck (cf. Jer 29:26). In fact, the word for “stocks” is the Hebrew word *machpeketh* and means to turn or distort, i.e. distort the body, creating discomfort and pain.
3. This took place near the **Benjamin Gate**, which was the “*northern gate of the upper temple court*” (EXP).
4. *Benjamin Gate: Probably the same location as the later Muster Gate [Inspection Gate] or possibly the Sheep Gate. Jeremiah was put into stocks at the Benjamin Gate after Pashhur the priest beat him (Jeremiah 20:2).* (www.gotquestions)

C. Pashhur’s New Name (3)

1. When morning came, Jeremiah was released from the stocks. However, Jeremiah boldly prophesied against Pashhur.
2. Jeremiah said that he would no longer be called “**Pashhur**.” Instead, his name would be changed to, “**Magor-missabib** (Magōr-mēssabēb).”
3. Scholars are undecided about the meaning of Pashhur. Some contend that it suggests “ease” or “tranquility.”
4. On the other hand, Magor-missabib (Magōr-mēssabēb) means “terror on every side.”

D. Pashhur will be a Terror to Judah (4)

1. The Lord defined the meaning of Magor-missabib (Magōr-mēssabēb). He whose name means “terror on every side” will be a **terror** to those in Judah.
2. Pashhur had cried, “peace, peace.” But he would receive, “terror, terror.”
3. While Pashhur’s **eyes looked on**, many would fall in Judah by the sword. The rest would be taken as exiles and there be killed by the sword.
4. *For his opposition to the word of God through his prophet, Pashhur was to be exiled to Babylon and die there. This was God’s punishment for the calamity Pashhur had helped bring on the land by opposing the truth of God. This is the first time in the book that the **king of Babylon** is specifically mentioned as the conqueror of Judah.* EXP

E. Pashhur will be a Loss of Wealth (5)

1. Pashhur would be a terror to Judah’s life and Judah’s riches. All the **treasures of the kings** of Judah would go to the Babylonians.
2. Babylon would take everything from Judah.

F. Pashhur will be a Loss for Family and Friends (6)

1. Jeremiah prophesied that Pashhur, along with his family and friends, would be taken into captivity into Babylon.
2. Both Pashhur, his family, and his friends would die and be buried while in captivity because Pashhur **falsely prophesied**.

II. PRESSURE UNDER PERSECUTION (Jer 20:7-10)

A. Jeremiah’s Deception (7)

1. This next section has caused much controversy regarding its interpretation.
2. Chapter 20 will be the last of what has been called the “**Confessions of Jeremiah**” (Jer 11:18-12:1-6; Jer 15:10-21; Jer 17:12-18; Jer 18:18-23; Jer 20:7-18).
3. They are radical in complaint and often appear intensely accusatory of God. Though the Lord prepared Jeremiah for his role and Judah’s response, Jeremiah could not be fully prepared for the persecution that awaited him.

4. *To be sure, Jeremiah is not accusing God of lying or misrepresentation; but what he calls seduction [“**deceived**” intensive form of patah means “seduce” (Exo 22:16; 1Ki 22:20-22)] is the divine compulsion on his spirit. He is claiming that the Lord overpersuaded him to be a prophet. He pleads that, though the Lord **overcame** his resistance to his call (Jer 1:4-10) and he believed the Lord’s promises, he has now been abandoned to shame. We must remember, however, that the Lord had dearly informed Jeremiah of the difficulties he would face (Jer 1:18). Understandably, he could not have conceived of the magnitude and viciousness of the opposition, but the Lord had not lied to him. He complains that God had seized (so the Heb.) and overpowered him. The statement that the Lord had **prevailed** shows that his prophets did not speak by their own will. Jeremiah’s message was so unpopular that he was continually mocked and **laughed** at. (EXP)*
- B. Jeremiah's reproach for Prophecy (8)
 1. Jeremiah can hardly speak the words of prophecy without breaking down and **crying aloud** himself.
 2. The theme of his prophecies were **violence and destruction** against Judah for their sin.
 3. Jeremiah reveals what a true prophet experienced when under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Lord caused him to speak the **word of the Lord** rather than what he may have wanted to avoid saying (cf. 2Pe 1:20-21).
 4. What Jeremiah spoke led to Jeremiah’s **reproach and derision** all day long.
 - C. Jeremiah Cannot Refuse to Speak (9)
 1. The thought crossed Jeremiah’s mind that if he were to refrain from serving the Lord perhaps then he would have relief.
 2. However, a prophet cannot refuse the word of the Lord. Any silence on Jeremiah’s part resulted in a **burning fire** within his soul (Jer 23:29). It was humanly impossible to hold it in.
 - D. Jeremiah Hears Whispers Against Him (10)
 1. Perhaps the **whispers** were more difficult for Jeremiah to endure than audible accusations.
 2. The whispers were derogatory in nature. They mocked Jeremiah’s prophecies of “**terror on every side.**”
 3. Because the prophecies did not happen immediately, even his trusted friends **denounced** him.
 4. They eagerly waited for Jeremiah’s **fall** so they could take **revenge** against him.
- ### III. PRAYER FOR VENGEANCE (Jer 20:11-13)
- A. Jeremiah Supported by the Lord (11)
 1. Yet in spite of Jeremiah’s discouragement, he knows that the Lord is with him. He calls the Lord his “**dread champion,**” or perhaps his “fearsome warrior.”
 2. Because the Lord was his “awe-inspiring Mighty One,” Jeremiah’s persecutors would **not prevail** but would experience **eternal disgrace.**
 - B. Prayer for Vengeance (12)
 1. Because Jeremiah’s persecutors sinned against the Lord and rejected the word of the Lord, Jeremiah was ready to see God’s **vengeance** come upon them.
 - C. Praise for Lord’s Deliverance (13)
 1. Jeremiah’s confidence was bolstered in the presence of the Lord and he trusted in the Lord’s **deliverance** of his soul.
- ### IV. PROFANING HIS OWN BIRTH (Jer 20:14-18)
- A. Profaned Jeremiah’s Birth (14)
 1. This verse is not out of its place. It is certainly within the context of human emotions to vacillate back and forth. That includes the emotions of a prophet of God (cf. 1Ki 19:1-3).
 2. Jeremiah cursed the day he was **born** and the day his **mother** delivered him.
 - B. Profaned the Messenger of His Birth (15)
 1. Jeremiah cursed the messenger that told Jeremiah’s father the news of his **baby boy.**
 - C. Purged the Messenger (16)
 1. Jeremiah rhetorically stated that the **messenger** of his birth should be like the cities which the Lord **overthrew** after hearing the battle trumpets announcing war.
 - D. Prohibited Jeremiah’s Birth (17)
 1. He had wished his mother’s womb would have been his **grave** (cf. Job 3:3), **and her womb ever pregnant**, meaning *that she had never had strength to bring him forth* (Ellicott).
 - E. Permitted Jeremiah’s Sorrow (18)
 1. Coming forth from his mother’s womb has brought only **trouble** and **sorrow** (Jer 15:10).

V. OBSERVATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

- A. We must all be prepared for persecution (2Ti 3:12).
- B. We must all manage our emotions
 - 1. Emotions must be managed by the Lord, His Spirit, and His Word (Psa 119:25, 50, 92, 107).
 - 2. Emotions must be brought before the Lord in prayer (Mat 26:38-39; Php 4:6-7).
 - 3. Emotions must be ignored at times by simply trusting in the Lord (Pro 3:5-6).
- C. We must all be on guard against false prophecies and false teachers.
 - 1. There is no error in a true prophet, ever!
 - 2. Usually the words of a true prophet are rejected (prophecies about Christ's birth).
 - 3. Though true prophecies bring persecution, false prophecies bring judgment.