

August 22

Jeremiah 21, 22, 32-34

The stage is now set. The city of Jerusalem is now surrounded by Nebuchadnezzar's forces. King Zedekiah is looking for some words of hope from Jeremiah, so he sends Pashur and Zephaniah the priest to see him. This is the same Pashur that had Jeremiah beaten and thrown into jail sometime earlier.

Jeremiah's message does not change. The city is about to be destroyed and its people captured and killed. The only hope for life is to surrender. Jerusalem will be burned. Even though the Lord has determined this awful destruction, Jeremiah is once again told to tell the king to do what's right. Rule with justice. Protect the innocent. Rescue the oppressed. If you do these things the Lord will preserve David's line. Yet Jerusalem, the City of David, will be burned up. These things seem to be in conflict. Zedekiah was the last king. Jesus Christ, Son of David, is the one to complete the picture and fulfill the promise.

He goes on to tell Zedekiah that while he will be captured and exiled, he won't be killed. That wasn't what Zedekiah wanted to hear, so he had Jeremiah put in confinement.

The next section has special significance to me because it contains a statement from the Lord that brought me peace in a time of distress.

The countryside has been captured by the Babylonians, Jeremiah is under guard, and the city is about to be overrun. At this darkest moment, the Lord gives Jeremiah an illustration and words of hope. Jeremiah's uncle came to offer him a piece of land from the family hometown of Anathoth. It's a laughable offer, because with the Babylonians in charge and Jeremiah in prison the land was inaccessible and worthless. Yet God wanted Jeremiah to buy it to show that one day the Jews would once again inhabit the land and live there normally once again. What looked impossible would definitely happen. God affirms the promise with these words; "I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?"

Often at 2 or 3 in the morning I would wake up with fear and worry as I felt the pressure of responsibility of a failing business. Things looked impossible. One night after I had read this verse in my devotions the day before, I woke up. This time, it was as if God quoted this verse to me! "I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?" "Quit worrying and go to sleep. I will help you!" The peace of God filled the night air and I slept, praising him and resting in his promise.

Let him speak his promises into your life as you meditate on his word today!