

When You Feel Like Quitting

Jeremiah 20:7-18



Leap

of FAITH

Hebrews 11:1



Jeremiah 20:7–18 (NKJV)

7 O LORD, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me.

8 For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, “Violence and plunder!” Because the word of the LORD was made to me A reproach and a derision daily.

9 Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.

10 For I heard many mocking: “Fear on every side!” “Report,” they say, “and we will report it!” All my acquaintances watched for my stumbling, saying, “Perhaps he can be induced; Then we will prevail against him, And we will take our revenge on him.”

11 But the LORD is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.

12 But, O LORD of hosts, You who test the righteous, And see the mind and heart, Let me see Your vengeance on them; For I have pleaded my cause before You.

13 Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD! For He has delivered the life of the poor From the hand of evildoers.

14 Cursed be the day in which I was born! Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me!

15 Let the man be cursed Who brought news to my father, saying, “A male child has been born to you!” Making him very glad.

16 And let that man be like the cities Which the LORD—overthrew, and did not relent; Let him hear the cry in the morning And the shouting at noon,

17 Because he did not kill me from the womb,
That my mother might have been my grave, And
her womb always enlarged with me.

18 Why did I come forth from the womb to see
labor and sorrow, That my days should be
consumed with shame?

The Discouraged Prophet

This is the last of Jeremiah's recorded laments; it's a human blending of grief and joy, prayer and despair, praise and perplexity. When you call to mind the sensitive nature of Jeremiah you aren't surprised that he's on the mountaintop one minute and in the deepest valley the next.

The Discouraged Prophet

Jeremiah, however, lived above his moods and did the will of God regardless of how he felt. In this honest expression of his deepest emotions, the prophet dealt with three important concerns: God's call (vv. 7–9), his daily peril (vv. 10–13), and his inner despair (vv. 14–18).

God's Call

When the servants of God find themselves in trouble because they've been faithful in ministry, they're often tempted to question their call and reconsider their vocation. Then what do they do? One of the first things they ought to do is talk to the Lord about it and tell Him the truth.

God's Call

The word translated “deceived” carries with it the idea of being enticed or seduced. Of course, God doesn’t lie (*Titus 1:2*), but Jeremiah felt that the Lord had taken advantage of him and lured him into the ministry. “You overpowered me and prevailed” (*Jer. 20:7*).

God's Call

Jeremiah felt like a helpless maiden who had been seduced then taken advantage of by a deceptive “lover.” This is strong language, but at least Jeremiah said it privately to God and not publicly to others

God's Call

When you review the account of Jeremiah's call (*Jer. 1*), you find no evidence that God had enticed him. The Lord had told him plainly that he would have a difficult time. If he trusted the Lord, however, He would make him a fortified city and a bronze wall before his enemies. God had warned His servant that the demands of ministry would increase and he'd have to grow in order to keep going (*12:5*).

God's Call

As we serve the Lord, our capacity for ministry should increase and enable us to do much more than we ever thought we could do.

Jeremiah's Peril

After you've told God how you feel, what do you do next? Jeremiah resolved to quit being a prophet! He decided to keep his mouth shut and not even mention the Lord to anybody. But that didn't work, because the message of God was like a burning in his heart and a fire in his bones

Jeremiah's Peril

Jeremiah didn't preach because he had to say something but because he had something to say, and not saying it would have destroyed him.

Deep Despair

Having settled the matter of his call, Jeremiah then looked away from himself to the enemies around him.

Faith doesn't ignore problems; it faces them honestly and seeks God's help in solving them.

Deep Despair

No matter how much he was constrained to preach God's Word, Jeremiah had to deal with the fact that many people wanted him to keep quiet and would take the necessary steps to silence him.

When You Feel Like Quitting

God makes no mistakes when He calls His servants, and we should take care not to question His wisdom. All of us have had times of discouragement when we've felt like quitting, but that's when we must look beyond our feelings and circumstances and see the greatness and wisdom of God.

Don't Give up

Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.