



7/6/26

What a great start we had to our series, Storming the Throne. It was really cool to read the prayers of past presidents, regardless of their political party, seeking the glory of God for our country. I pray that you and I will take the message to heart... Pray first... in everything... pray first.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Proverbs 29:26, Jeremiah 17:5-13

If there's one message I want to keep in the forefront of my mind from this sermon series, it's this... Pray FIRST. God is the source of all wisdom, all knowledge, and all hope. I need to bring everything to Him... everything. He cares. In fact, Psalm 62:8 says, "Trust in Him at all times, O people. Pour out your heart before Him. God is a refuge for us."

So as I look at today's passage, I want to look at Jeremiah 17 through the lens of Proverbs 29:26, which says, "Many seek the face of a ruler, but it is from the Lord that a man gets justice." I can try to look to someone in government to be my answer, but whoever is in government does not have all the wisdom, power, and understanding that God has. It's so easy to put my hopes in the person, but Jeremiah 17:5-6 tells me that it will not go well for me when I do. Jeremiah 17:5-6 tells me...

"Thus says the LORD: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.'"

Thus says the LORD, Yahweh. God Himself is speaking. He is the Creator. I should probably pay attention to what He says. He says that seeking the face of a ruler is putting my trust, my confidence, my hope... in man and making flesh my strength. I am always tempted to put my hope in a person, including my SELF. But when I do that, it will never go well for me. When I put my trust in man, I am taking away my trust from the Lord, and my heart necessarily turns

away from Him, whether I admit it to myself or not.

To put my trust in man will ALWAYS leave me like a shrub in the desert. Even if good does come, I won't be able to recognize it. I will dwell in the desert, in parched places. That will ALWAYS be the result for me putting my trust in someone other than the Lord, because no one other than the Lord has His kind of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. And no one but the Lord has the power to do what is best for me. Why spend the rest of my life trying to prove God wrong??? The result of that will be misery. This is His design.

To seek a man for strength and hope will never prove to be what I thought it would. But to seek the face of God for my strength makes sense according to vs. 7-8...

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

God is not out to curse me. His purpose is to save me and help me. His desire is to bless me. When I put my trust and confidence in Him, He will make me like a tree planted by water. That means that my roots will run deep. Even if heat or a drought comes, I won't have to be afraid, because God is able to help my branches bear fruit.

As I look at the one who is cursed and the one who is blessed, I see that both of them face heat and drought. But the one who trusts in the Lord is made to thrive regardless of the circumstances, while the one who trusts in self or man or ruler is crushed by his circumstances.

Why is there such a massive difference that's simply dependent on where I place my trust? To seek the face of a ruler who doesn't have the infinite mind and wisdom of God is deception... because... "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" How can I put my trust in someone who is just as deceived as I am? How can I put my trust in myself when my heart is deceitful above all things? God is not trying to take something good from me by calling me to trust Him. He's trying to protect and bless me.

When I consider God's word, I see that seeking the face of God makes sense. God is able to do what no man can. He is able to search my heart and test my mind. I can't even understand everything that's in my heart and mind. No other person can search my heart and mind, and I wouldn't want them to! But God can. He says, "I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

Honestly, when I first read this, I don't like that God gives to me according to my ways. When it comes down to it, I think the fruit of my deeds doesn't add up to much. I know I fail Him. But when I look in context, I see that this is talking about TRUST. The fruit of my deeds is not so much about my actions as it is about my motivation. Romans 14:23 says that anything not

done in faith is sin. And throughout scripture, I'm told that my faith is counted to me as righteousness. Trust is faith. Faith is trust. God can see all my motives, better than I can. I can't deceive Him, but I do deceive myself. I'll know how well I'm trusting Him, not by my circumstances, but by how I respond to my circumstances... either in faith or in doubt. I may tell myself I'm trusting Him, but my actions will give me away. And He knows whether or not I'm really trusting Him.

God is not telling me who is cursed and who is blessed, who receives reward and who doesn't, so that He can punish me or withhold good from me. He's telling me so that He can save me from the curse! He WANTS to bless me. I see as I look at the context of this passage that Jeremiah was a prophet who was trying to warn God's people of the consequences if they continued to ignore the Lord and put their trust and hopes in man. God refused to give up on them. He wanted them to turn back to Him. O Lord, I pray that You will not have to wait for me to repent. Please help me to put all my trust in You, so that even when circumstances are hard, I can still thrive with You.

Here's what God wants to save me from...

"Like the partridge that gathers a brood that she did not hatch, so is he who gets riches but not by justice; in the midst of his days they will leave him, and at his end he will be a fool." God wants to save me from the pain of pursuing happiness from false means, from things that don't belong to me. It says, "In the MIDST of his days they will leave him." That means that the consequences of bad choices aren't immediate. They come slowly. But in the end, pursuing justice apart from God will make me a fool. There is nothing good about the end for a fool.

"A glorious throne set on high from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary. O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You shall be put to shame; those who turn away from You shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living water." The Lord is my fountain of living water... the place where my roots can run deep, where I can receive what I need to flourish. To put my hope and trust in the Lord is to put my hope and trust in the One who is enthroned forever. To put my trust in man and make flesh my strength IS to forsake the Lord and to be put to shame. Yikes. O Lord, please let me not be deceived!!!

Do I feel like a shrub in the desert? The first thing I need to do is not look at my circumstances, but look at my heart. Ask the Lord to expose any deception in me. Am I looking to something or someone other than Him for my strength? The evidence of where I place my trust will be in whether or not I'm able to thrive in the midst of rough circumstances.

I think there's a temptation to put my trust in man because I am deluded into thinking that man can make my life comfortable or easy. But man is just man... without power like God's power, without wisdom like God's wisdom, without love like God's love. God won't lie to me. He says it's going to be hard. He doesn't promise what He won't fulfill. But if I'll put my hope and trust in Him, I will be able to thrive regardless of the heat. O Lord, please open my eyes to the

truth and help me to choose You every single time, in any and every circumstance. You are LORD. You are on Your throne. You are the fountain of living water!!!