

JEREMIAH 32:1-3 & 6-15- This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup>The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah. <sup>3</sup>Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, “Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, ‘This is what the LORD says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.---- <sup>6</sup>Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>7</sup>Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.’ <sup>8</sup>“Then, just as the LORD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.’ “I knew that this was the word of the LORD; <sup>9</sup>so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels<sup>[b]</sup> of silver. <sup>10</sup>I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. <sup>11</sup>I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy— <sup>12</sup>and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard. <sup>13</sup>“In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: <sup>14</sup>‘This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. <sup>15</sup>For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.’

1 TIMOTHY 6:10-19 --10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the

good confession, I charge you 14 to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen. 17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

---

A PORTION OF A POEM ABOUT RISK REMINDS US THINGS LIKE:  
“TO LAUGH IS TO RISK APPEARING A FOOL...TO REACH OUT  
TO ANOTHER IS TO RISK INVOLVEMENT...TO LOVE IS TO RISK  
NOT BEING LOVED IN RETURN...TO TRY IS TO RISK FAILURE.

BUT RISKS MUST BE TAKEN, BECAUSE THE GREATEST  
HAZARD IN LIFE IS TO RISK NOTHING. THE PERSON WHO RISKS  
NOTHING, DOES NOTHING, HAS NOTHING AND IS NOTHING....”

THE POEM ENDS WITH A REFERENCE TO HEBREWS 11 AND  
WHY WE NEED TO TAKE RISKS AS CHRISTIANS. IT SAYS:

“WHEN WE TAKE RISK FOR GOD WE DO SO IN OBEDIENCE TO  
HIS LEADING. WE WILL WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT  
AND SEEK TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE GREAT HEROES  
OF THE FAITH.”

THIS BRINGS US TO THE THEME OF THE SERMON WHICH IS A  
LEAP OF FAITH. WE OFTEN PICTURE THAT PHRASE MEANING  
SOMEONE STANDS ON A SIDE OF A CLIFF AND THEN LEAPS  
INTO THE EMPTY SPACE TO A CLIFF ON THE OTHER SIDE.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IS FILLED WITH SUCH LEAPS LIKE:  
ABRAHAM TAKING HIS WIFE AND PROPERTY AND LEAVING HIS  
HOME AT GOD’S COMMAND TO GO TO A NEW PLACE.

THEN THERE IS MOSES GOING TO PHAROAH DEMANDING THE RELEASE OF ALL THE HEBREW SLAVES. AND THERE IS A SHEPHERD NAMED AMOS, WHOM GOD MADE A PROPHET.

THE LIST CAN GO ON AND ON WITH SIMILAR EXAMPLES IN BOTH THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER WAY TO IMAGINE A LEAP OF FAITH, ONE IN WHICH GOD ASKS US TO DO SOMETHING THAT SEEMS FOOLISH AT WORST AND GOES AGAINST COMMON SENSE AT BEST.

ONE EXAMPLE IS GOD TELLING NOAH TO BUILD AN ARK AND COLLECT ANIMALS, AND THUS ENDURE THE RIDICULE OF HIS NEIGHBORS.

THEN THERE IS JOSHUA WHO WAS COMMANDED TO LEAD A MARCH AROUND TO WALLS OF JERICHO BLOWING TRUMPETS.

OTHER OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES OF THIS KIND OF FAITH LEAP IS COMMON AMONG THE PROPHETS:

HOSEA WAS COMMANDED TO MARRY GOMER, A PROSTITUTE, WHO WOULD NOT REMAIN FAITHFUL TO HIM.

AND EZEKIEL WAS TOLD BY GOD TO LAY ON THE GROUND, TAKE A BRICK TO REPRESENT JERUSALEM AND BUILD A SIEGE WALL AROUND IT. HOW FOOLISH HE MUST HAVE LOOKED!

TODAY'S READING FROM THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF WHAT SEEMS TO BE A LEAP OF FAITH WHICH MIGHT MAKE HIM LOOK FOOLISH.

YOU SEE, JEREMIAH HAD BEEN PROCLAIMING GOD'S WARNING OF DISASTER, DEFEAT, AND EXILE.

THE REASON FOR THE PROPHECY TO KING ZEDEKIAH AND THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, WAS BECAUSE THEY HAD REBELLED AGAINST BABYLON.

THIS REBELLION WENT AGAINST GOD'S COMMAND AND SO THE LORD DECLARED THE CITY WOULD AGAIN FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THEIR ENEMIES AND THIS TIME BE DESTROYED.

THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE FROM GOD CAUSED HIM TO BE PUT UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN THE PALACE WHERE THE GUARDS LIVED.

JEREMIAH HOWEVER, CONTINUED TO PROCLAIM GOD'S WORDS OF JUDGMENT TO THE KING.

THOSE WORDS WERE THEN FOLLOWED BY A DECLARATION THAT HAD BOTH GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS.

THE BAD NEWS WAS THAT THE CITY WOULD FALL, AND THE KING AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE SENT INTO EXILE.

THE GOOD NEWS WAS THAT AFTER A VERY LONG TIME GOD WOULD BRING HIS PEOPLE BACK HOME.

THEN, WHILE THE CITY WAS UNDER SIEGE BY THE ARMY OF BABYLON, GOD MADE A STRANGE REQUEST OF HIS PROPHET.

THE LORD COMMANDED HIM TO DO SOMETHING THAT SEEMED FOOLISH TO DO FOR ONE WHO BELIEVED THE CITY AND PEOPLE WOULD SOON BE DEFEATED AND DESTROYED.

A RELATIVE OF JEREMIAH'S CAME TO HIM WITH A REQUEST WHICH GOD COMMANDED HIM TO FULFILL.

THIS RELATIVE HAD A FIELD HE WANTED JEREMIAH TO PURCHASE, SINCE HE WAS THE MAN'S CLOSEST MALE RELATIVE.

ORDINARILY THIS WOULD BE A GOOD THING TO DO SINCE IT WOULD KEEP THE PROPERTY IN THE FAMILY.

HOWEVER, UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IT WAS FOOLISH SINCE THE LAND WAS NOW WORTHLESS, SINCE IT WAS OCCUPIED BY ENEMY FORCES.

JEREMIAH, HOWEVER PUT HIS TRUST IN GOD. BUT THIS TRUST WAS NOT THAT DEFEAT AND EXILE COULD BE AVOIDED.

INSTEAD, THE PROPHET BELIEVED GOD HAD A PURPOSE IN COMMANDING HIM TO BUY THE FIELD HE WOULD NEVER USE.

THE PURPOSE WAS TO SHOW BY HIS ACTIONS JEREMIAH'S INVESTMENT IN GOD'S PROMISE OF A RESTORATION OF HIS PEOPLE TO THE LAND IN THE DISTANT FUTURE.

THIS IS WHY HE MADE A PUBLIC DISPLAY OF BUYING THE LAND INSTEAD OF DOING IT PRIVATELY SIMPLY TO HELP HIS RELATIVE OUT.

ACCORDING TO JEWISH LAW BY HIS PURCHASE OF FAMILY LAND JEREMIAH WAS REDEEMING IT FROM BEING LOST.

JEREMIAH WAS REDEEMING THAT PLOT OF LAND TO SYMBOLIZE GOD WOULD ONE DAY REDEEM HIS PEOPLE FROM EXILE IN BABYLON.

THEREFORE, HE NOT ONLY BOUGHT THE FIELD, THE PROPHET ALSO TOOK GREAT PAINS TO COUNT OUT THE MONEY WHERE OTHERS WOULD SEE.

HE HAD HIS SCRIBE WRITE UP THE PROPER LEGAL DOCUMENTS TO BE SIGNED, WITNESSED, AND PRESERVED IN CLAY JARS.

THUS, JEREMIAH SHOWED AND THEN TOLD THE KING, THAT IN SPITE OF THE FACT THE CITY WILL FALL AND THE LAND WILL BE USELESS TO HIM, HE PURCHASED IT BECAUSE HE BELIEVED GOD'S PROMISE.

HIS POINT WAS THEY TOO SHOULD BELIEVE THE WORD OF THE LORD ABOUT BOTH THE CAPTIVITY TO COME, AND ALSO THE REDEMPTION AND RETURN OF A FUTURE GENERATION.

STILL, FROM A WORLDLY PERSPECTIVE, JEREMIAH BUYING THAT FIELD, IN THE MIDDLE OF A WAR WAS FOOLISH.

HOWEVER, HIS ACTION WAS A GREAT LEAP OF FAITH-SHOWING HE BELIEVED HIS PURCHASE WAS NOT IN VAIN.

IT SHOWED OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD, AND HIS INVESTMENT IN A FUTURE REDEMPTION HE WOULD NOT LIVE TO SEE.

JEREMIAH'S EXAMPLE IS ONE THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE REMEMBER HIS PERSONAL INTERNAL STRUGGLES.

HE WAS A MAN OF DEEP EMOTIONS, WHO FREELY EXPRESSED HIS DOUBTS AND FEARS, HIS LAMENT AND DESPAIR, AS MUCH AS HIS FAITH AND HOPE, AND JOY IN THE LORD.

THIS SHOWS US THAT WHILE THE PROPHET HAD A STRONG FAITH IN GOD WHICH ENABLED HIM TO TAKE GREAT LEAPS, HE ALSO STRUGGLED, LIKE WE DO.

FURTHERMORE, JEREMIAH WAS THOUGHTFUL IN HIS FAITH IN GOD, BUT NOT BLINDLY LOYAL.

INSTEAD, HE DID NOT HESITATE TO QUESTION OR COMPLAIN, AND YET HE REMAINED OBEDIENT TO THE LORD.

IN THIS SENSE HE IS A HERO OF THE FAITH WHO SHOWS US THE VALUE OF RISKING COMMITTING ONE'S SELF TO THE LORD, EVEN WHEN WE KNOW THAT EVERYTHING WILL NOT TURN OUT THE WAY WE WANT IT TO.

HIS LIFE IS A CONTRAST TO THE KING AND OTHERS WHO LEFT GOD OUT OF THEIR PLANS DETERMINED TO DO THINGS THEIR OWN WAY.

THEY REJECTED NEWS ABOUT GOD'S JUDGMENT AND PLANS, AND PUT THEIR HOPE IN WORLDLY ALLIES RATHER THAN IN GOD.

THUS, WHILE JEREMIAH TIME AND TIME AGAIN TOOK LEAPS OF FAITH-MOST OF THE RULERS AND PEOPLE OF JUDAH TRUSTED INSTEAD IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR RESOURCES.

IN THE END IT WAS NOT JEREMIAH WHO WAS PROVED TO BE FOOLISH, BUT THE KING AND HIS OFFICIALS AND THE PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED AND TRUSTED IN THEM.

AND MUCH LIKE JEREMIAH'S PRIMARY LOYALTY WAS NOT TO HIS KING, NOR EVEN HIS COUNTRY, BUT TO THE LORD GOD, SO ALSO CHRISTIANS ARE PRIMARILY LOYAL TO JESUS CHRIST.

THE APOSTLE PAUL INSTRUCTED CHRISTIANS MORE THAN ONCE TO CONSIDER THEMSELVES FOLLOWERS OF JESUS AND NOT PAUL OR PETER OR ANYONE ELSE.

TRULY CHRISTIANS ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE HOLD OF THE ETERNAL LIFE WE WERE BORN INTO AT THE MOMENT OF OUR SALVATION.

THIS IN PART, MEANS TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR NO MATTER WHAT.

INDEED, WHILE CHRISTIANS MAY TEMPORARILY ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE LED BY RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, OR OTHER TYPES OF LEADERS-WE SHOULD NEVER SEE OURSELVES AS A FOLLOWER OF ANYONE OTHER THAN JESUS.

CHRISTIANS OFTEN FORGET THIS. SOME EVEN THINK BEING SAVED MEANS WE TAKE THE LEAP OF FAITH ONLY ONCE.

THEREFORE, THEY CONCLUDE SALVATION MEANS THEY CAN GET ON WITH THEIR EARTHLY LIVES AND GOALS WITHOUT THOUGHTS ABOUT ETERNITY, OR INTERFERENCE FROM GOD.

THIS IS MISGUIDED THINKING. SALVATION IS NOT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY BUT ITS BEGINNING. AND ON THIS JOURNEY, WE WILL BE CALLED BY GOD TO ACTIVE SERVICE, AND TO SHOW CONSISTENT OBEDIENCE.

CONSIDER WHAT SOMEONE ELSE SAID ABOUT BEING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS: "CHRISTIANITY IS AN ACTIVE RELIGION NOT A PASSIVE ONE...."

IN OTHER WORDS, TO BE SEEN AS, OR TO SEE ONESELF AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST IN NAME ONLY- IS TO NOT REALLY FOLLOW HIM AT ALL.

PAUL INSTRUCTED A YOUNG PASTOR NAMED TIMOTHY, WHOM HE MENTORED, TO NEVER FORGET IT IS JESUS WHO THEY, AND ALL CHRISTIANS, FOLLOW.

EARLIER IN HIS LETTER TO TIMOTHY, HE REMINDS HIM TO SHUN OR EVEN FLEE FROM THINGS THAT WILL INHIBIT HIS LIFE IN CHRIST. SPECIFICALLY, PAUL WARNS ABOUT THE TEMPTATION TO PURSUE WEALTH, AND TO USE IT FOR PERSONAL GAIN, INSTEAD OF IN SERVICE TO THE LORD.

HE ALSO INSTRUCTS HIM, AND INDEED ALL CHRISTIANS, TO AVOID USELESS SQUABBLES AND HARMFUL DESIRES, BUT TO INSTEAD PURSUE CHRIST.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12 SUMMARIZES THE THEME OF THE APOSTLE'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY, AND THROUGH SCRIPTURE, HIS ADVICE TO ALL CHRISTIANS.

"BUT YOU, O MAN OF GOD, FLEE THESE THINGS AND PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, PATIENCE, AND GENTLENESS. FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, LAY HOLD OF ETERNAL LIFE, TO WHICH YOU WERE ALSO CALLED, AND HAVE CONFESSED THE GOOD CONFESION IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY WITNESSES."

STRIVING TO BE FAITHFUL TO JESUS, AND REPENTANT WHEN WE FAIL IN ALL THE ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES, IS HOW WE FIGHT OF THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH.

THIS IS A LEAP THAT TAKES COURAGE, ALONG WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. SO ALSO, DOES LIVING IN THE BELIEF OUR ETERNAL LIFE IS NOT A FUTURE HOPE, BUT RATHER A PRESENT REALITY.

AND WE, LIKE TIMOTHY, ARE CALLED TO PURSUE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SAVIOR BY STRIVING TO LIVE OUT OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST BY EXHIBITING: LOVE, FAITH, GENTLENESS, AND ENDURANCE.

THIS MEANS THAT IN PURSUING THESE AND OTHER VIRTUES, THAT SOME PEOPLE MAY ADMIRE OUR FAITH COMMITMENT, BUT WE ALSO RISK BEING SEEN AS FOOLISH BY OTHERS.

BUT PAUL REMINDS CHRISTIANS, IN THIS LETTER AND OTHER WRITINGS, THAT WHAT MATTERS MOST FOR FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST IS NOT WHAT OTHERS MAY THINK ABOUT US.

INSTEAD, IT IS WHAT GOD KNOWS ABOUT US THAT REALLY MATTERS.

ANOTHER THING THAT IS IMPORTANT IS OUR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE LEAPS OF FAITH, AS THE LORD COMMANDS, INCLUDING THINGS THAT MAY SEEM TO BE MORE FOOLISH THAN COURAGEOUS. AMEN

SERMON SUMMARY: JEREMIAH 32 AND 1 TIMOTHY 6

TODAY'S READING FROM THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF WHAT SEEMS TO BE A LEAP OF FAITH WHICH MIGHT MAKE HIM LOOK FOOLISH. WHILE THE CITY WAS UNDER SIEGE BY THE ARMY OF BABYLON GOD MADE A STRANGE REQUEST OF HIS PROPHET.

THE LORD COMMANDED HIM TO TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH BY DOING SOMETHING THAT SEEMED FOOLISH TO DO, FOR ONE WHO BELIEVED THE CITY AND PEOPLE WOULD SOON BE DEFEATED AND DESTROYED.

THIS RELATIVE HAD A FIELD HE WANTED JEREMIAH TO PURCHASE, SINCE HE WAS THE MAN'S CLOSEST MALE RELATIVE. THE PROPHET BELIEVED GOD HAD A PURPOSE IN COMMANDING HIM TO BUY THE FIELD HE WOULD NEVER USE.

THE PURPOSE WAS TO SHOW BY HIS ACTIONS JEREMIAH'S INVESTMENT IN GOD'S PROMISE OF A RESTORATION OF HIS PEOPLE TO THE LAND IN THE DISTANT FUTURE.

THIS IS WHY HE MADE A PUBLIC DISPLAY OF BUYING THE LAND INSTEAD OF DOING IT PRIVATELY SIMPLY TO HELP HIS RELATIVE OUT. JEREMIAH WAS REDEEMING THAT PLOT OF LAND TO SYMBOLIZE GOD WOULD ONE DAY REDEEM HIS PEOPLE FROM EXILE IN BABYLON.

FROM A WORLDLY PERSPECTIVE, JEREMIAH BUYING THAT FIELD, IN THE MIDDLE OF A WAR WAS FOOLISH. HOWEVER, HIS ACTION WAS A GREAT LEAP OF FAITH-SHOWING HE BELIEVED HIS PURCHASE WAS NOT IN VAIN.

IT SHOWED OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD, AND HIS INVESTMENT IN A FUTURE REDEMPTION HE WOULD NOT LIVE TO SEE. JEREMIAH'S EXAMPLE IS ONE THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE REMEMBER HIS PERSONAL INTERNAL STRUGGLES.

HE WAS A MAN OF DEEP EMOTIONS, WHO FREELY EXPRESSED HIS DOUBTS AND FEARS, HIS LAMENT AND DESPAIR, AS MUCH AS HIS FAITH AND HOPE, AND JOY IN THE LORD.

THIS SHOWS US THAT WHILE THE PROPHET HAD A STRONG FAITH IN GOD WHICH ENABLED HIM TO TAKE GREAT LEAPS, HE ALSO STRUGGLED, LIKE WE DO.

FURTHERMORE, JEREMIAH WAS THOUGHTFUL IN HIS FAITH IN GOD, BUT NOT BLINDLY LOYAL. INSTEAD, HE DID NOT HESITATE TO QUESTION OR COMPLAIN, AND YET HE REMAINED OBEDIENT TO THE LORD.

IN THIS SENSE HE IS A HERO OF THE FAITH WHO SHOWS US THE VALUE OF RISKING COMMITTING ONE'S SELF TO THE LORD, EVEN WHEN WE KNOW THAT EVERYTHING WILL NOT TURN OUT THE WAY WE WANT IT TO.

JEREMIAH'S PRIMARY LOYALTY WAS NOT TO HIS KING, NOR EVEN HIS COUNTRY, BUT TO THE LORD GOD, SO ALSO CHRISTIANS ARE PRIMARILY LOYAL TO JESUS CHRIST.

THE APOSTLE PAUL INSTRUCTED CHRISTIANS MORE THAN ONCE TO CONSIDER THEMSELVES FOLLOWERS OF JESUS AND NOT PAUL OR PETER OR ANYONE ELSE.

TRULY CHRISTIANS ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE HOLD OF THE ETERNAL LIFE WE WERE BORN INTO AT THE MOMENT OF OUR SALVATION. THIS IN PART, MEANS TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR.

PAUL INSTRUCTED A YOUNG PASTOR NAMED TIMOTHY, WHOM HE MENTORED, TO NEVER FORGET IT IS JESUS WHO THEY, AND ALL CHRISTIANS, FOLLOW.

EARLIER IN HIS LETTER TO TIMOTHY, HE REMINDS HIM TO SHUN OR EVEN FLEE FROM THINGS THAT WILL INHIBIT HIS LIFE IN CHRIST, AND FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH.

STRIVING TO BE FAITHFUL TO JESUS, AND REPENTANT WHEN WE FAIL IN ALL THE ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES, IS HOW CHRISTIANS DO THAT.

AND WE, LIKE TIMOTHY, ARE CALLED TO PURSUE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SAVIOR BY STRIVING TO LIVE OUT OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST BY EXHIBITING: LOVE, FAITH, GENTLENESS, AND ENDURANCE.