

How Israel got to their “no remedy” moment

Jeremiah’s assignment in God’s Upper Story

Ezekiel and Jeremiah speak

The bright spot in a dark time of history...there is still hope!

Discussion questions:

1. Randy said, “For hundreds of years God waited patiently, warned his people, and gave them chance after chance.” Why was God so patient with the people of Israel when they were so rebellious and sinful? How have you experience God’s great patience in your life?
2. In the prophet Ezekiel’s amazing and powerful vision from God (Ezekiel 1, 2, 6), what do we learn about the following:
  - The condition of the people’s hearts (the nation of Judah)
  - The reasons for the coming judgment
  - What lies ahead for Judah and Jerusalem
3. How can God’s discipline of his children be the best gift he can give us? How has God disciplined you on your journey of faith and how did his loving discipline help you grow?
4. Once Jerusalem had fallen and the Babylonians had utterly destroyed the nation of Judah, Jeremiah recorded what he saw and felt (Lamentations 1-5). What did he write that made the situation seem hopeless, like it was all over? What did he write that seemed to have a sense of hope, like God’s plan could still be accomplished?
5. When God called Jeremiah to serve him, he assured him that his plan had been in place since Jeremiah was in his mother’s womb. In the New Testament, we learn that God has a plan for each of us who follow him. How has God gifted and called you to serve him and how are you following this call?
6. As with many of the people God calls (in the Bible and in the world today), Jeremiah had his list of excuses. What excuses do we use to try to get out of following God? How can we encourage each other to stop making excuses and boldly follow God’s leading?
7. In one of the most hopeless times in biblical history, the prophet Ezekiel pointed ahead to a future time when the story’s ending will be rewritten (Ezekiel 36:1-37). How do Ezekiel’s words bring hope when it feels as if the story is over?
8. Respond to this statement: “In God’s employment contract, he does not ask us to be successful (by the world’s standards) but faithful. Success is based on faithfulness to God...not the results.”

Homework: Hezekiah had children who were not faithful and so did Josiah. We see this pattern throughout scripture with some very godly leaders, including Eli and Samuel. Identify teens or adults in your own family who have wandered from God. Pray for them. As applicable, consider giving them a call, sending a note of encouragement, or spending time with them. Ask God to use you to extend his message of grace.

For next week, please read Chapter 18 of The Story (Daniel 1-3, 6; Jeremiah 29-31