

## Hall of Faith: Jeremiah

Jeremiah 20:1-18 ❖ Hebrews 11:36a

*“There is nothing superficial about Jeremiah. He lives in difficult times among dangerous people, but continues to deliver God’s message, even if it is unpopular. And he continues to be honest with us about how tough his life and ministry are.”*

(“The Baker Illustrated Bible Handbook,” Hays and Duvall, 343)

### Taking a Stand

Have you ever done the right thing and then suffered for it?

Jeremiah said, “The word of the Lord has brought me **insult** and **reproach** all day long” (Jeremiah 20:8).

What’s more important to you - being popular or being faithful?

God’s people don’t often “stay under the **radar**.”

### Jeremiah’s Day

For 40 years, the prophet Jeremiah was God’s spokesman to the southern kingdom of Judah.

Jeremiah begged God’s people to quit serving **idols** as the society around him **unravelling**.

What three things were being compromised? **worship**, morals and **justice**.

In 586 B.C., as a direct result of disregarding the prophets’ calls to repentance, most of the Jews were taken as **captives** to Babylon and **Jerusalem** was destroyed. (vv. 4-6)

Yet Jeremiah prophesied that eventually “his persecutors would **stumble** and not **prevail**” (v. 11b).

### Six Guarantees When We Stand with God

1) **We are going to be attacked.**

“... who through **faith** faced jeers and flogging” (Heb 11:36a).

2) **But we realize we can’t do otherwise.**

“If I say, ‘I will not mention Him or speak any more in His name, His word in my heart is like a **fire**, a **fire** shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed I **cannot**’ (v. 9).

3) **Persecution confirms we’re doing the right thing.**

Jesus said, “**Blessed** are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me” (Mt 5:11).

4) **We are going to get discouraged.**

Jeremiah was so distraught he “cursed the day he was **born**” (v. 14).

5) **God is faithful.**

“He **rescues** the life of the needy from the hand of the wicked” (v. 13).

6) **There will always be more stands to take.**

“The Lord is with me like a mighty **warrior**” (v. 11a).

### The Serenity Prayer

“God, grant me the serenity to

**accept** the things I cannot change,

**courage** to change the things I can,

and **wisdom** to know the difference.

Living **one** day at a time, enjoying **one** moment at a time,

Accepting **hardship** as a pathway to peace;

Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it,

Trusting that You will make all things **right**,

As I **surrender** to Your will;

So that I may be **reasonably** happy in this life

And **supremely** happy with You forever in the next;

**through** Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.”

(Reinhold Niebuhr, 1934)