

Boast in the Lord

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[0 : 00] Now turn to the chapter which we read, Jeremiah chapter 9, and we shall consider this evening verses 23 and 24.

Jeremiah chapter 9 and at verse 23. Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might.

Let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which excites lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these things I delight, saith the Lord. The prophet Jeremiah is standing heartbroken in the midst of the devastation and the desolation and the death that once was a great land.

He longs to cry incessantly. You can hear him heartbroken speaking in the first verse of the chapter.

[1 : 32] Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.

He longed to cry and cry and cry because he was so brokenhearted. Seeing those whom he loved, seeing them in the desperate situation they were in, seeing them destroyed, seeing them perishing. I wonder do we know something of the same mind, the same attitude, the same burden that Jeremiah had. Do we know what it is to feel weeping, at least in our hearts, if not physically with our eyes?

Do we know what it is to grieve over? Yes, loved ones in our own homes. People that we know. His heart's desire is for people to turn. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

[3 : 12] I have no pleasure, he says, in the death of the wicked, but that you turn from your evil ways. Do we know what it is to grieve as Jeremiah did?

And then in verses 2 and 3, he wants to run away and hide. Sometimes we feel like that too.

When we see the mess that the church is in, when we see the mess, the spiritual mess that the world is in, we want to run away, to find a lodging place in the wilderness.

Yes, maybe even to become a hermit, to anyway, one way or another, get away. Perhaps we even feel we'd like to die. That we just can't go on.

The problems of life become too great for us. Satan seems so powerful. The forces of darkness seem to be increasing in their power.

[4 : 14] And we see all around us, the devastation, the death, the darkness, the sin. Jeremiah says, I want to get away to the wilderness, to leave my people and go from them.

For they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. They bend their tongue like they're bow for lies. They are not valiant for the truth upon the earth. They proceed from evil to evil.

They know not me, saith the Lord. They've turned away from God. Jeremiah longs. He feels a longing to get away, to escape.

The burden is too great for him. He feels he cannot, he cannot carry it. But God comes to him with words of encouragement. Yes, God says to him, all human achievement is vanity.

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom. Let not the mighty man glory in his might. Let not the rich man glory in his riches.

[5 : 20] But the answer is to be found somewhere else. Not in wisdom. Not in might. Not in riches.

But let him that glorieth. Glory in this. Glory in that he understandeth. And knoweth the Lord.

The Lord who excites loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth. For these things I delight. Here's what encourages Jeremiah.

To know the Lord. In the midst of a world of sin. In the midst of a world where the devil is a prince of this world. And seems to be so powerful. And darkness seems to reign.

Men and women are going on in sin. And even God's people are backsliding. And falling asleep. And careless and thoughtless. And sometimes, yes, also adulterers and liars and so on.

[6 : 19] Jeremiah feels that he cannot go on. He wants to run away and hide. And God says, no, you don't have to look to your own resources. You don't have to look to your riches.

Or to your strength. Or to your wisdom. But look to me. Glory in the Lord. For I am the Lord. And I the Lord work in the earth. And I work powerfully in the earth.

I am doing my loving kindness, my judgment and my righteousness in the earth. Showing them forth. Displaying my glory. So people.

My people will be saved. All my elect will be saved. My church shall thrive and grow. Nothing shall overthrow.

The work and purpose of the Lord. All God's elect shall be saved. Yes. We need not be discouraged. Or downhearted.

[7 : 18] God reigns. He is on the throne. God reigneth. Let the earth be glad. The isles rejoice each one. Let's not be downhearted.

Trust in and glory in the Lord. He can save us. No matter the mess we are in. And he can save the people around us too.

God is the only hope. In the midst of a dark and wicked world. I wonder is he your hope tonight. First let's look at sinful boasting.

And then turn and look at holy boasting. Sinful boasting. Let not the wise man glory or boast in his wisdom.

Or the mighty man boast of his might. Or the rich man boast of his riches. Wisdom. Power.

[8 : 21] Riches. The trinity. That this world worships. Isn't it true? The world around us. What do they worship? Wisdom.

Riches. And power. Might. They worship wisdom. Education. How important for many people education is.

That they get degrees. That they get professional qualifications. That they grow in knowledge. That they acquire general knowledge.

Literary knowledge. Scientific knowledge. How important it is for them. That they reach this position. Of being a knowledgeable person.

A person with a lot of know-how. A lot of common sense. Of wisdom. Always to have an answer. No matter what the problem. No matter what the question.

[9 : 25] The wise man glories in his wisdom. And this world thinks so highly. Of the educated. The wise. And yet.

The wisest will reach the end of their resources. When the day of trouble comes. When the real problem comes. When the dark and cloudy day comes.

They will know what to do. Remember how it was with Eve. Satan came to her in the Garden of Eden. And said. Eat of the forbidden fruit.

And then. You'll be like God. Knowing good and evil. He tempted Eve. With knowledge. He wanted the knowledge.

To be like God. And sometimes. We can be tempted. We can be tempted.

[10 : 23] To give to knowledge. A place that it shouldn't have. We can be tempted. To give to earthly wisdom. The place that God has. To be so concerned. About seeking these things.

That we forget. The place God should have. In our lives. How many people there are. In our own society too. Thinking of a different line. Of knowledge.

Who are looking. For some special. Esoteric knowledge. Who are playing. Experimenting with drugs.

To get some knowledge. Some wonderful experience. So that they'll know. What other people know. How many people there are.

Who are playing with the powers of darkness. Ouija boards. Spiritualism. Different forms of. Trying to get in contact with. Mediums.

[11 : 17] Through mediums. With. Other powers. Looking for some special knowledge. Some special revelation. Glorifying the special knowledge.

But let not the wise man. Glory in his wisdom. Let us remember. That there is a day coming. When the wisest.

Will be without a word. Yes. A day coming. When the very wisest. Man and woman in the world. Their mouth shall be stopped.

The day of judgment. Every mouth shall be stopped. And all the world. Shall become guilty. Before God. God. On the day of judgment. There will be no arguing with God.

There can be plenty arguing today. But there won't be then. Let not the wise man then. Glory in his wisdom. Or be proud of his wisdom. Or think that he's something great.

[12:18] Because of some special wisdom. That he has. Let not the mighty man. Glory. In his strength. In his might.

There's much of this today too. Gloring in the strength of the body. And concern to build up the body. Yes. Almost worship of the body.

That the body be strong. That the body be athletic. That you be good at sport. That you keep fit. And keep old age as it were at bay.

But let not the mighty man. Glory in his might. Because. Even the mightiest. Even the fittest. Old age will creep over them.

Weakness and infirmity at last. Will take its toll. Let not the mighty man. Glory in his might. The person who's able to work long hours.

[13:18] And who seems to be able to handle a tremendous strain. Pressures at work. Let not the mighty man. Glory in his might. There comes an end.

There comes a breaking point. Let not the healthy person. Glory in their health. Again.

There's a time when the health will fail. Maybe you can say. I've never. Never been a day off my work. But the day will come. When you will be off your work.

Sooner or later it will come. It comes to all. Let not the powerful one. Glory in the power that they have obtained. The person who has reached a position.

Of prominence and prestige. A position of power. Don't glory in your power. Remember. No matter how high your position. It's shaky.

[14:17] You can easily be toppled. And one day. You'll fall from it. You'll have to give way to somebody else. Let not the mighty man. Glory in his might.

I wonder are you. Glory in the might. That belongs to you. Or the power. Or is this your great ambition. To reach some position. Of might.

Of power. Of prominence. If that's your sole ambition. You're looking for fulfillment. For satisfaction. In a way. Where you won't find it. It will elude you. At the end of the day. Let not the rich man.

Glory in his riches. See how rich I am. See all I possess. See all that I've attained. See the position. [15:11] That I have reached to. See the money that I've made. The rich man glories in his riches.

And yet. Disaster can hit.

So easily. The thief can come. Fraud can take place. Yes. Yes. Or inflation.

Or inflation. Can come along. Or the stock market. Can crash. Or a depression. Such as. Occurred in the 1930s. Can come again. Suddenly all the money is gone.

Or you can be out of a job. There's so many ways. In which we are shown. The insecurity. Of earthly riches.

Earthly power. Or earthly wisdom. How many people there are today. Their only ambition is riches.

[16:11] How hard their work for it. And yet. Does it bring them. Lasting happiness. Surely not.

Judah boasted. Of her wisdom. Her might. Her riches. But where are they now? The economy has collapsed.

Their homes and their cities. Have been raised to the ground. Their whole land. Has been devastated. By the enemy.

Their people. Have been either slain. Or carried away. Into captivity to Babylon. Wisdom.

Might and riches. Are no help to them. What help. Where wisdom. Might and riches. To the Jews.

Of Hitler's Germany. Some of them. Were very wise.

[17:19] Very knowledgeable. Great scientists. Some of them. Had achieved. A position. Of great prominence. And power. Some of them. Were tremendously rich. And yet.

They walked into the gas chamber. Side by side. With peasants. What benefit. Was to the rich farmers. Of the Ukraine. And Stalin's day.

Their riches. Their power. And their might. How shaky. Anything this world. Can give us is. How insecure.

If you worship. The worldly trinity. One day. It will let you down. And if it won't fail here.

It will certainly fail. In the day of your death. For what shall it profit a man. Though he gain the whole world. And lose his own soul. What can you give.

[18:16] In exchange for your soul. What can be valued. With heaven. Eternal life. Surely nothing. Sinful boasting.

So common in our days. So characteristic. Of our own land. Boasting in wisdom. Boasting in might. Boasting in riches. But getting you nowhere.

But then let us turn and look. At the holy boasting. But let him that boasteth. Or glorieth. Boast in this. That he understandeth.

And knoweth me. That I am the Lord. Which execute loving kindness. Judgment. And righteousness. In the earth. For in these things. I delight. Saith the Lord.

There is a proper boasting. Boasting isn't always wrong. We're asked to boast. In that we understand.

[19:21] The Lord. Many people read the Bible. They listen to sermons. They read good books perhaps. And yet it doesn't make sense to them.

The key seems to be missing. They might be very clever. They might be even professors. And yet. They need enlightenment. There's something missing.

They can't see how it all fits together. Now. Indeed it's only God himself. Who can open our eyes. The natural man.

Understandeth not the things. Of the spirit of God. For they are foolishness unto him. Because they are spiritually discerned. The natural man. The unconverted man.

The natural man. Cannot understand the things of the spirit of God. But the Christian. The spiritual man. Understandeth all things. Because he has the spirit.

[20:20] He knows the mind of the spirit. He knows the mind of God. God can give to us this understanding. And only God can. These things have been hidden from the wise and the prudent.

And revealed unto babes. And I think that's something really wonderful. About the gospel. That the brightest. Most brilliant of people.

Sometimes cannot understand it. But the simplest child. By the grace of God.

Can understand it. How wonderful the gospel is. That it can be fully comprehended. And understood. Even by a half-wit.

Because. God's spirit. Has opened. Their eyes. And their mind. Jesus said to. Blessed are your eyes.

[21:22] Which see. These things. And your ears. Which hear these things. You are blessed.

Because. Many prophets. And kings. And mighty men.

Decided to see these things. And didn't see them. But we have seen them. The disciples saw them. And so have we. Christ has died. He has risen again. We are in a special.

And privileged position. Let him that boasts. Then. Boasts in this. That he understands. The Lord. Boasting.

Not in himself. Not in. Us. As if we were particularly clever. And that's why we could understand the Bible. But boasting rather. In the wonderful God we have.

Who bothered. To explain it to us. Who opened our minds. Who gave us. The understanding we need. To grasp it.

[22:22] Boasting. In God's mercy. The God. Who has revealed to us. Our own sinfulness. His wrath against our sins.

His son's death on the cross. In our room and place. Who has revealed to us. The way of salvation. Through faith and repentance. The one who has revealed to us. The pathway of life. Walking in the spirit. Following the Lord.

On the way to glory. Do you understand God? Can you glory. In this.

That you understand the Lord. On the ways of the Lord. Or is it all a bit. Cloudy. Difficult.

[23:17] To you. It's amazing how. A person. When they are converted. The Bible. Seems to them. A new book.

Each page of it. Each chapter. Speaks to them. The whole Bible. Is a message. Addressed to them. When they go to church. They think the minister.

Preaches far better. Than he ever preached before. They think the minister. Has taken. A turn for the better. In his preaching. But it's only because. They've got the key. Because they understand. The Lord. The one who has. Opened their minds. Boast. In understanding God. And boast. In knowing me.

In knowing God. Not simply knowing about him. But knowing him. Knowing him. Personally. Knowing him. As the Lord. Lord. And when the word.

[24 : 17] Lord. Is used in block capitals. Such as it is. As it's printed in your Bibles. In this passage. The word Lord. Is.

The word. That is used. To translate. The Hebrew word. Jehovah. Or Yahweh. Let him glory. In that he. Knoweth. Jehovah. I am. That I am. The covenant God. The faithful one. What a contrast.

With Judah. So faithless. Committing adultery. So often. Going astray. Following this idol. That idol. But God is faithful. What a contrast.

With us. Today we might be full of love. And zeal. Towards the Lord. But then tomorrow. Bad tempered. Sulky. Unkind.

[25 : 16] Unthankful. Forgetful. Of God. We. So changeable. That God. I am. That I am. The same yesterday.

Today. And forever. The faithful God. The loving God. The one who will never leave us. Nor forsake us. In that he knoweth me.

Jehovah. The Jehovah. Which excises. Three things. Loving kindness. Judgment. And righteousness. The loving kindness.

Of the Lord. Is his. Steadfast love. His. Mercy. His grace. His kindness. His loving kindness. His kindness. Which will not end. Towards his people. That's what we have here. I am the Lord. Which show loving kindness. The covenant God.

[26 : 23] Who claims you. As mine own. And who will be your God. And who will show my kindness to you. Boast in this. That you know me.

Jehovah. The faithful God. The kind God. The loving God. The gracious God. Boast that you know me. The God of judgment. Who exercises judgment.

Restraining and punishing sin in the earth. Delivering and vindicating my people. Rewarding. Those who serve me.

The God who exercises judgment. Judgment to punish the wicked. Judgment to save the righteous. The God who exercises righteousness in the earth.

Who does right. And who makes right. Who does what is good and proper. And who saves his people. By granting it unto them. His own righteousness.

[27 : 22] Justifying. The God who delights in mercy. Is the God that we're to glory in. We're to boast of him.

Boast. In the Lord. Not in ourselves. But in the Lord. In the Lord. And what he has done for us. In the Lord who delights.

In mercy. In mercy. Judgment. And righteousness. This is the great God. And we serve. Boast.

Why are we so reluctant. To boast of our God. The Muslims. They're not ashamed. To stand on the housetops.

And shout that they follow Allah. Islam. They're not ashamed of their religion. The Muslims. They're proud of it. And they're proud to state who they are.

[28 : 22] And what religion they follow. They don't try and cover it. They're very keen to instill it in their children. Their children will spend two hours.

Every night of the week. After school is over. At the Islamic school. Getting drilled. In their religion. They're proud of their religion.

They want to pass it on to their children. And they're prepared to fight for it. Think of the Roman Catholics too. How proud they are of their Roman Catholicism.

They're prepared to stand for it. They're prepared to shout about it. They're prepared to display it. They're not ashamed. They don't cover up the signs of their religion.

They're quite prepared to show you their various trinkets. And talk about themselves going to confession. Or going to mass. Or whatever it is.

[29 : 23] The Jehovah Witnesses. They're not ashamed of their religion. They wouldn't be going round the doors. Hour after hour. Day after day. If they were ashamed of their religion.

They're very proud of it. And they declare it. And proclaim it to everyone. To anyone that will listen to them. But the Christians. They whisper.

They only whisper to people. Why is that? Why do we keep so quiet? Why do we hide our light under a bushel?

Why do we sometimes pretend. That we're not Christians? Why do we pretend.

That we're just one. One of the world. Just ordinary people. Just following the same values.

Following the same life. As the rest of the people around. Why are we ashamed?

[30 : 26] Why does the world not know. About our God. The God. Who is righteous. The God who is just.

And the God who is full of loving kindness. Why do we keep so quiet. When we have the truth. The Islamic faith.

Is falsehood. The Roman Catholic religion. Is mere human traditions. The Jehovah. Witness.

Cult. Is myth. And falsehood. But we have the truth. And we keep so quiet.

It should not be so. Let him that glory. Have glory in this. That he understandeth. And knoweth me. That I am the Lord. Which excites loving kindness.

[31 : 26] Judgment. And righteousness. In the earth. For in these things I delight. Saith the Lord. Be proud of your God. Trust in him. Look to him. As your God.

Rejoice in him. Put your faith in him. Yes. And glory in him. And let the world see. That you're glory in him. Don't be glory in your riches.

Don't be glory in your might. Don't be glory in your wisdom. But glory in the Lord. That's the only thing worth glorying in.

And if you have God. You have everything. You have riches. Incalculable. You have a greatness.

A might. Of indescribable proportions. If you have God. You have all the power of God with you.

[32 : 27] And if you have God. You have divine wisdom. You have him. To open your mind. To lead you.

And to guide you. You have his spirit in your hearts. So that you know all things. You have an unction from the Holy One. And know all things.

The world knows some things. But you know all things. Because you have the Holy Spirit. Glory. Boast.

Be proud of God. Be proud of Jesus Christ. Be proud of the Holy Spirit. Be proud of the salvation.

God has given you. Don't be whispering about it. Stand on the housetop. And declare it. Let us pray.

[33 : 27] Gracious and ever blessed God. We rejoice in thee. We boast in thee. We glory in the Lord. We pray that thou would help us.

To declare. How great thou art. Grant oh Lord. That we were not weary. In this great work. But that we would rejoice.

In the glory that belongs to thee. Help us in the midst of a troubled world. In the midst of a troubled life perhaps. Help us to turn to thee.

And to put our trust in thee. And to experience. The strengthening. Upholding arm. Of the Lord. To know that we have the answer. When we have God.

Forgive us for our sins. And our shortcomings. For Jesus' sake. Amen.