

Jeremiah 15: 15-21

15 You understand, O LORD; remember me and care for me. Avenge me on my persecutors. You are long-suffering——do not take me away; think of how I suffer reproach for your sake. 16 When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty. 17 I never sat in the company of revelers, never made merry with them; I sat alone because your hand was on me and you had filled me with indignation. 18 Why is my pain unending and my wound grievous and incurable? Will you be to me like a deceptive brook, like a spring that fails? 19 Therefore this is what the LORD says: "If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me; if you utter worthy, not worthless, words, you will be my spokesman. Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them. 20 I will make you a wall to this people, a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you to rescue and save you," declares the LORD. 21 "I will save you from the hands of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of the cruel."

Say something. Say the opposite. Makes us frustrated.  
Jesus is Savior. Not. Godliness is right. Not.  
What gets us through that kind of opposition

IA1 Jeremiah worked as a prophet in Judah under four godless kings with people who worshiped other gods, filled their lives with covetousness, dishonesty, murder, stealing, false swearing, gross immorality, and loved to listen to false prophets who told them everything was fine.

2 Jeremiah yelled and screamed about these sins and confronted the perpetrators. He said God would allow the nation to be lost if the people did not repent. He was told to be quiet if he didn't have anything positive to say. He was told he must be wrong since other prophets were saying everything was OK. That's what he is talking about at the end of vs 15 "Think of how I suffer reproach for your sake."

B1 The result was isolation. He didn't participate at parties because he didn't want to give other people the impression that everything was OK in society. He was filled by the Lord with indignation against sin, so he couldn't possibly have let his actions say that the sins of his society were OK. That's what vs 17 means: "I never sat in the company of revelers. Never made merry with them; I sat alone because Your hand was on me and You(Lord) had filled me with indignation."

2 The isolation got to Jeremiah. Vs 18. "Why is my pain unending and my wound grievous and incurable?" Then he even questions whether God is keeping His promises to bless him. Vs 18: "Will you be to me like a deceptive brook, like a spring that fails?"

C1 What happens when you refuse to party? Isolation. "No. I am not going to go out drinking because I am not old enough. The government says it is illegal. So it is a sin for me to do that." Guess what happens next time. You don't get invited.

2 Or let's say you are old enough. "No. I don't want any more. I have had enough. I don't want to destroy my health, my body is a gift from God. I don't want to become addicted, because I want the Lord in control of my life. I don't want to put myself into a situation where I

can't tell what's right or wrong, because I want to do what God wants me to do in life." Guess what happens next time. You don't get invited.

3 Do we respond to isolation like Jeremiah? Of course. We are human and we are sinners. Isolation hurts. Being branded as socially unacceptable hurts. "Lord, doing things Your way causes unending pain and grievous incurable wounds." "Lord, I feel all alone. You promised to be with me always. It sure doesn't feel like that right now. Are You a deceptive brook and a spring that fails?"

IIA1 God got real tough with Jeremiah. 19: "If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me." Jeremiah's complaints that the Lord wasn't faithful to His promises had disqualified him from being a spokesman for the Lord. He needed to repent and be restored.

2 What would repentance include? 19: "If you utter worthy, not worthless, words, you will be my spokesman." A prophet is a spokesman. A prophet is to pass along God's message. A prophet is not to pass along what the prophet is thinking and feeling based on his isolation, frustration and the opposition he is facing. Jeremiah could be a prophet again if he did what a prophet was supposed to do - pass along God's message.

B1 God gave some further advice on how to be a prophet. "Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them." Jeremiah was to proclaim God's message and let it do its work so that these people would turn to Jeremiah as God's spokesman, listen to his message and follow it. He was not to let their pressure and their opposition sway him from God's message.

2 That would not be easy. God told Jeremiah that He would be with him and make him so tough that all these attacks and opposition would just bounce off him and have no effect on him. Vs 20: I will make you a wall to this people, a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you to rescue and save you," declares the Lord. I will save you from the hands of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of the cruel."

C1 "You know, we've been a couple for a long time. We enjoy each other's company. Other people think we are a perfect couple. But it drives me crazy that you refuse to have sex until we are married. It seems to me that means you really don't love me. I don't know if I can continue this relationship any more without some sexual confirmation. It's too frustrating." When you hear those words from your friend, you need to come to read Jeremiah 15:19: Therefore this is what the LORD says: "If you utter worthy words, you will be my spokesman. Let this person turn to you, but you must not turn to them. I will make you a wall to this person, a fortified wall of bronze. He/she will fight against you, but will not overcome you, for I am with you to rescue and save you."

2 "You know we have been working together in this type of business for a long time. We treat each other fairly. We are honest. But your openness about Jesus makes me really uncomfortable. Especially because we deal with a lot of atheists and Muslims and lots of other religions. Your insistence that Jesus is the only way to be right with God makes those people feel alienated. I will continue to do business with you, but I don't want to be viewed as a team with you anymore to other people. I think it's bad for my business." When you hear those words from your friend, you need to come to read Jeremiah 15:19: Therefore this is what the LORD says: "If you utter worthy words, you will be my spokesman. Let this person turn to you, but you must not turn to them. I will make you a wall to this person, a fortified wall of bronze. He/she will fight against you, but will not overcome you, for I am with you to rescue and save you."

3 Opposition brings isolation. Isolation could lead us to abandon the Lord. But the LORD

promises to give us the fortification necessary to withstand the opposition and overcome the isolation. Lord, please keep your promises to me.

IIIA1 If you want to know whether Jeremiah was a real person or not, this section gives the answer. Does he have the same range of emotions as we do? He sure does. Remember he questioned whether God was a promise breaker, a deceptive brook and a failing spring. Just before that in vs 15 he had said, “O Lord, You understand. Remember me and care for me. You are long suffering - do not take me away.” This is a real person. A believer who is also a sinner. Someone who questions God and at the same time trusts that God understands and is patient.

2 That leads to an attitude. The attitude is: vs 16 - When Your words came, I ate them; They were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear Your name, O Lord God Almighty.” Jeremiah eagerly anticipated the Lord’s words to Him. When he accused God of breaking His promises, He was looking forward to God’s response. He knew that it was the words of God that would fortify him against the isolation that came into his life because of the opposition. He anticipated the Lord’s words because He was a member of the Lord’s family. He wanted His heavenly Father to talk to him.

B1 “You know you messed up again. How can you consider yourself to be a child of God. You are more a child of the devil. Why don’t you just acquiesce?” How does that opposition by the arch persecutor the Devil make us respond? Don’t we respond with eager anticipation? Don’t we respond by saying, “Lord, talk to me. I need to hear from You again that the blood of Jesus, which He shed on the cross for me, has washed away my sins. Lord, I need to hear from You again that I am holy in Your sight covered with the holiness which Jesus lived for me. I need to hear from You that I am going to spend eternity with You because of Jesus’ resurrection. I am your child. I love it when You talk to me.”

2 “You know the only way to get along in life is to play by the world’s rules. If you don’t take care of yourself, nobody is going to take care of you.” How do we respond to the opposition brought into our lives by the people around us. Don’t we respond with eager anticipation? Don’t we respond by saying, “Lord, talk to me. I need to hear from You again that life is about loving people. I need to hear from You that gaining the whole world isn’t as important as having a relationship with You. I need to hear from You that You are with me always and nobody can pluck me out of Your hand. I am your child. I love it when You talk to me.”

3 “Life stinks. I can’t advance in my profession. I hurt my knee so I can’t be athletic anymore. My dog died. My family is breaking apart. I flunked two courses at school.” How do we respond to the conclusions of my own sinful self? With eager anticipation. Don’t we respond by saying, “Lord, talk to me. I need to hear from You again that You are in charge of all things. I need to hear from You again that You can produce something good for me out of what appears to be all bad. I need to hear from You again that nothing can come into my life that will divorce me from You.”

Conc Opposition to our faith and our godliness is going to be a part of our lives in our world. It isolates us from others. That’s a bad thing. It produces fortification in us because God gives that to us as a gift. That’s a good thing. It leads us to eagerly anticipate God’s communication with us through His Word. That a very good thing.

LORD Jesus, don’t let opposition to my life with You lead me to isolate myself. Please

use it to fortify me and anticipate what You want to say to me

## OPPOSITION PRODUCES

### I. Isolation

#### A. Jeremiah's situation

1. Kings' and people's status
2. Opposition by people

#### B. Result isolation

1. No parties
2. Questions God's promises

#### C. Isolation for us

1. Underage drinking
2. Refusal to join in
3. Hurts and causes questions

### II. Fortification

#### A. God's answer

1. Repentance needed
2. Needs to be a prophet

#### B. Further direction

1. Don't cave in
2. God will fortify

#### C. Our need for fortification

1. Demanded sexual sin
2. Demanded lack of Jesus only
3. Need fortification from Lord

### III. Anticipation

#### A. Jeremiah

1. Real person
2. Wanted God to talk to him

#### B. Our responses

1. To devil's accusations
2. To the world's advice
3. To our own conclusions

Conc: Recap: Bad, good, bad