

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

The Chronicler said, “The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place” (2 Chr 36:15). You knew they wouldn’t repent and still you sent prophet after prophet to warn them. I praise you today as the persistent God, the God who continually reaches out to unrepentant sinners with the truth of the gospel! What love and mercy and grace! All praise and glory be to you, my God and King. Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today it finally happened—Nebuchadnezzar’s third and final siege of Jerusalem. The tragedy is that it didn’t need to happen. It could have been avoided if they had only listened to you! This teaches me that “he who is often reprov’d, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing” (Prov 29:1). On the day that Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem, your word came to Ezekiel in Babylon: “Son of man, write the name of the day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day” (Ezek 24:2). Then you told him to speak a parable to your rebellious house: “Put on the pot...make it boil vigorously.” Earlier, the people had mocked your call to repent saying, ‘We’re safe in Jerusalem, just like meat in a pot’ (Ezek 11:3 NLT). Now you put a fire under that pot that would burn up all the wickedness and impurity in your holy city (Ezek 24:10–11). That same day, you told Ezekiel that his wife was going to die, and she died that evening. You did not allow him to mourn, and when the people asked what it meant, you told them that you were about to profane the temple: “the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes and the delight of your soul” (Ezek 24:21). Just as Ezekiel’s cherished wife had been taken from him, the people’s cherished temple would be taken from them. Ezekiel was a *living* testimony to the exiles; everything in his life communicated your message of coming judgment. This shows me what it means to be used of God. Am I willing to suffer personal loss in order to preach the gospel and further the cause of Christ? Ezekiel also prophesied against the nations near Judah: Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia. They couldn’t wait to take advantage of Jerusalem’s predicament, and you warned them that they would be judged for joining in Babylon’s attack. This teaches me not to rejoice when my enemy falls (Prov 24:17–18). Zedekiah panicked when the siege began, and he ran to Jeremiah for help. Jeremiah told him the city was doomed. Those who wished to save their lives from disease and famine should leave the city and surrender to Nebuchadnezzar. Yet Zedekiah still would not listen! Rebellious to the end—may this never be said of me!

Reflection

When Nebuchadnezzar lifted the siege of Jerusalem to deal with Hophra’s army, Zedekiah thought the city had been saved. Do I allow circumstances to bring doubt into my mind about the certainty of your word? Do I remain steady and faithful even when it looks like your promise has failed?

Request

Father, keep me from stiffening my neck and hardening my heart against you! May I never mock your messengers, despise your word, or scoff at your prophets. Give me a heart that loves you above all!

Thanksgiving

Thank you for your mercy and grace! Today’s reading shows me just how far you go to keep people from spending eternity in a devil’s Hell. Behold, you have set before me “the way of life”—I choose life!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Be Ready, All](#)” – H. R. Jeffery.

Meditation Verse: Jeremiah 37:10.