

A Trek Through Jeremiah 9 - 5:1-19

Bruce Pike

November 2, 2025

Why should I pardon? 5:1-31

- Ch 4 described the judgment to come.
- Ch 5 addresses why the judgment is coming.
- Theme in v7: Why should I pardon you? Repeated in v9, 29
- Five reasons to not pardon
 - Faithlessness 5:1-6
 - Apostasy, idolatry, immorality 5:7-9
 - Denial of Yahweh as Ruler 5:10-19
 - Denial of Yahweh as Creator 5:20-25
 - Social wickedness. 5:26-29
- Challenge: What will you do? 5:30-31

For this week: Part 1 5:1-19

- Search for faithfulness 5:1-6
- Apostasy, idolatry, immorality 5:7-9
- Denial of Yahweh as Ruler 5:10-19

Search for faithfulness 5:1-6

Among the poor 5:1-3

Jeremiah 5:1–3 (LSB)

1“Roam to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, And see now and know, And seek in her open squares, If you can find a man, If there is one who does justice, who seeks faithfulness, Then I will pardon her.

2“And if they say, ‘As Yahweh lives,’ Then they swear to a lie.”

3O Yahweh, do not Your eyes look for faithfulness? You have struck them, But they did not weaken; You have consumed them, But they refused to receive discipline. They have made their faces stronger than rock; They have refused to repent.

- V1 Search
 - Yahweh commanding Jeremiah: search for one righteous man who showed justice toward men and faithfulness to their oath. These would characterize covenant-keepers.
 - As Sodom (Gen 18:32) but less stringent. Ten righteous men required to spare Sodom but only one to spare Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem had more light.
 - Jeremiah speaking in general terms. Later faithful men appear (Baruch his scribe, Ebed-melech who rescued him)
- V2 Perjury
 - “As Yahweh lives” : Taking an oath to establish truth by the highest authority. Acknowledging Yahweh as their God.
 - Perjury since none of them have been faithful or submissive to Him.
- V3 Findings
 - Jeremiah speaking.
 - Faithfulness: To the covenant.
 - Diagnosis 3x for emphasis
 - What Jerusalem was doing: faithlessness
 - What Yahweh did: struck them...consumed them (discipline)
 - How Jerusalem responded
 - did not weaken (soften their heart)
 - Refused to receive discipline (learn from the discipline)
 - Made their faces stronger than rock (hardened their hearts)
 - Refused to repent (change their ways)

Among the great 5:4-5

Jeremiah 5:4–5 (LSB)

4Then I said, “They are only the poor; They are foolish; For they do not know the way of Yahweh Or the legal judgment of their God.

5“Let me go to the great And let me speak to them, For they know the way of Yahweh And the legal judgment of their God.” But they too, altogether, have broken the yoke And torn apart the bonds.

- V4-5a Widening the search
 - Poor. Common people
 - Foolish: act without understanding.
 - The way of Yahweh. Covenant requirements (Law)
 - The legal judgment of their God. Covenant consequences
 - Great. Authorities and leading citizens. They should know the covenant.
- V5b Findings
 - They too, altogether. Just as the common people, all of them.
 - have broken the yoke And torn apart the bonds.
 - Illustration from agriculture.
 - A yoke kept oxen walking together so that they were happy and productive.
 - The covenant was given to keep Israel walking in step with their God.
 - But Jerusalem had rejected the covenant. They saw it as bondage.
 - Ps 2:2-3 The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against Yahweh and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!”
 - Josiah’s reforms had removed worship of idols and reinstituted worship of Yahweh. But the people had not received Yahweh’s discipline, repented, returned to the covenant.

Judgment 5:6

Jeremiah 5:6 (LSB)

6Therefore a lion from the forest will strike them down; A wolf of the deserts will devastate them; A leopard is watching their cities. Everyone who goes out of them will be torn in pieces Because their transgressions are many; Their acts of faithlessness are mighty.

- V6a Illustration
 - City dwellers attacked by predators.
 - Describes the coming invader (likely Babylon): lion (strong), wolf (ravenous), leopard (swift)
- V6b Reason
 - Transgressions many, acts of faithlessness mighty.

Apostasy, idolatry, immorality 5:7-9

Jeremiah 5:7–9 (LSB)

7“Why should I pardon you? Your sons have forsaken Me And sworn by those who are not gods. I had satisfied them to the full, Then they committed adultery And trooped to the harlot’s house.

8“They were well-fed lusty horses, Each one neighing after his neighbor’s wife.

9“Shall I not punish these people,” declares Yahweh, “And on a nation such as this Shall I not avenge Myself?

- V7a Theme.
 - Of this section
 - Rhetorical question to explore the reasons for the judgment.
 - Pardon. No consequences.
 - Yahweh will pardon His chosen, but not because they deserve it.
- V7b Apostasy and idolatry
 - Forsaken Yahweh, gone after other gods. Swore by them (v2)
 - Did this when they were satisfied to the full.
 - Illustration from harlotry. Trooped: gathered together to go.
- V8 Immorality
 - Illustration from animal husbandry.
 - Well-fed. Satisfied to the full (v7)
 - Lusty...neighing after his neighbor’s wife. Immorality.
- V9 Vengeance
 - Repeating the theme of v7.
 - Avenge. Seek retribution against someone who has caused harm with the intention of restoring justice or personal honor. Personal and emotional.

Denial of Yahweh as Ruler 5:10-19

Treachery 5:10-13

Jeremiah 5:10–13 (LSB)

10“Go up through her vine rows and make them a ruin, But do not make a complete destruction; Remove her branches, For they are not Yahweh’s.

11“For the house of Israel and the house of Judah Have dealt very treacherously with Me,” declares Yahweh.

12They have dealt falsely about Yahweh And said, “Not He; Calamity will not come on us, And we will not see sword or famine.

13“The prophets are as wind, And the word is not in them. Thus it will be done to them!”.

- V10 Coming judgment
 - Illustration from viniculture.
 - Is 5:1-7 Yahweh’s vineyard
 - Planted with good stock. Cared for.
 - Produced worthless fruit. Growth but not from Yahweh.
 - Wall broken down/hedge removed. Trampled and laid waste.
 - Made a ruin but not completely destroyed.
 - Branches removed; growth not from Yahweh. Stock remains.
- V11-13a Reasons
 - Dealt very treacherously. General statement.
 - Two ways
 - Dealt falsely. Not told the truth about Him.
 - Not He.
 - No God to be concerned about. Ps 14:1 The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”
 - He will not act / does not see / does not care / is not able, so no consequences.
 - The prophets are as wind.
 - True prophets like Jeremiah who warned of judgment.
 - Nothing but wind (could be ignored). Do not have Yahweh’s word.
- V13b
 - Thus it will be done to them. The judgment prophesied.

Just deserts 5:14-19

Jeremiah 5:14–19 (LSB)

14Therefore, thus says Yahweh, the God of hosts, “Because you have spoken this word, Behold, I am making My words in your mouth fire And this people wood, and it will devour them.

15“Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel,” declares Yahweh. “It is an enduring nation; It is an ancient nation, A nation whose tongue you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say.

16“Their quiver is like an open grave; All of them are mighty men.

17“They will devour your harvest and your food; They will devour your sons and your daughters; They will devour your flocks and your herds; They will devour your vines and your fig trees; They will demolish with the sword your fortified cities in which you trust.

18“Yet even in those days,” declares Yahweh, “I will not make you a complete destruction.

19“‘It shall come about when they say, ‘Why has Yahweh our God done all these things to us?’ then you shall say to them, ‘As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you will serve strangers in a land that is not yours.’

- V14 Yahweh’s answer.
 - To v13.
 - Illustration of fire.
 - Jeremiah and other true prophets speak Yahweh’s word.
 - The people respond as v11-13
 - Yahweh brings the judgment that the prophets warned about.
 - Not like pagan magic. Prophets’ words are not spells. Yahweh is the one who accomplishes them.
- V15-17 Coming judgment
 - Yahweh bringing a nation against Judah
 - What they are like
 - From afar
 - Enduring
 - Ancient
 - Unintelligible language. Would not understand cries for mercy.
 - Mighty archers deadly in war.
 - What they will do
 - Devour everything.
 - Demolish the fortified cities Judah trusted in.
- V18 Reassurance
 - Destruction but not complete. Repeating v10.
- V19 Why
 - It will come about. When Jeremiah’s words are fulfilled. He was still living when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem.
 - Reaping what they sowed.

Application: A true King

5:12-13 They have dealt falsely about Yahweh And said, "Not He; Calamity will not come on us, And we will not see sword or famine. "The prophets are as wind, And the word is not in them. Thus it will be done to them!"

- What the people said
 - No God to worry about
 - He will not bring judgment
 - His word can be ignored
- What Yahweh said through: Judgment is coming.

Ph 2:9-11 Therefore, God also highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

- Jesus is given the name above every name.
- All confess that He is Lord.

Heb 12:7, 10 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ... He disciplines us for our benefit, so that we may share His holiness.

- For believers, God is our Father.
- He is faithful to discipline His children.

Do we understand that our Lord

- is able to discipline. Omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent
- Is faithful to discipline. Jealous for His name. Jealous for His people.

Application: With the pigs

Jer 5:19 “It shall come about when they say, ‘Why has Yahweh our God done all these things to us?’ then you shall say to them, ‘As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you will serve strangers in a land that is not yours.’

- They forsook Yahweh and served other gods.
- Therefore they would serve strangers in a foreign land.
- But the exile would not be permanent and a remnant would return.

Lk 15:11-32 Prodigal son

- Younger son asked for his share of the estate, left his family and went to a far country. There he indulged his lusts and squandered his inheritance. A famine came; he was forced to take a job feeding pigs. He was hungry. Came to his senses, returned to his father, confessed his wrongdoing, was welcomed home.

Is there something in which we have left Christ and are indulging our lust and squandering our inheritance? Beware of thinking that this can continue forever. Eventually, if we are really His, our Lord will be faithful to discipline us. The famine will come and we will find ourselves hungry and among unclean things. The remedy: return to Him, confess and repent, be welcomed home.

References

Baker, Warren, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, AMG, 1994

Baker, Warren, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament*, AMG, 2003

Feinberg, Charles L., *Jeremiah* in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan, 1986

Harrison, R. K., *Jeremiah and Lamentations* in Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Tyndale Press, 1973

Kidner, Derek, *Jeremiah*, InterVarsity Press, 1987

Thompson, J. A., *The Book of Jeremiah* in Eerdmans's Classic Biblical Commentaries, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980