

PRAISE

the Lord for:

- ★ A recent gift of \$5000 which was sent in for our Cuban edition of the paper
- ★ The recent visit of Harold Peasley from Canada (formerly South Africa) who worked in Qld and WA with Carl for Challenge promotion and development
- ★ The amazing ongoing financial support we receive from various individuals and churches around Australia on a regular basis
- ★ Each of our ministry team who bring various skills and abilities to the Challenge ministry
- ★ The excellent team of Challenge writers. They do an amazing job each month. So often what they write speaks to the hearts of many needy people

Throwing in the towel !

Reading through Jeremiah and Lamentations I find them rather sobering books to read and ponder. We feel the burden and agony of Jeremiah's heart; how he yearned to see the nation of Israel respond to the call of God to return to Him.

Jeremiah's ministry wasn't a popular one and at times he grew discouraged and disappointed. Eventually he decided he couldn't go on being a prophet of God; he felt like resigning! ("*Sometimes I tell myself not to think about you, Lord, or even mention your name*" v.9a). See Jeremiah 20:7-11.

Try as he may, Jeremiah just couldn't throw in the towel because he was God's man for the job. Externally Jeremiah could put in his resignation but God wouldn't resign from his man because God still had work for him to do. Jeremiah could resign but the burden remained: "*But your message burns in my heart and bones, and I cannot keep silent*" Jeremiah 20:9b.

The Word of God was like an unquenchable fire in his heart that was ready to leap out at any moment. This was despite the mocking and jeering from a people that should have known better.

My desire is that Christians today would have an unquenchable burden and vision to reach the lost: that like Jeremiah we might discover what he discovered in verse 11: "*But the Lord is with me as a mighty, awesome one.*"

Circumstances, difficulties, trials and situations can blind us, and we have the perception that we are alone. Like Jeremiah we may face mocking, ridicule, derision, threats and intimidation, but we must not allow these to alter our understanding of just who God is, and that He is always with us.

After reading Jeremiah, and moving to Lamentations we see a rather forlorn prophet walking through



Continued over

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ The upcoming Christmas promotion of the paper and orders to follow up from that
- ★ The latest edition of Challenge and its distribution. Pray that each paper will clearly show people their need of Jesus as their Saviour
- ★ The ongoing effectiveness of the Challenge newspaper in Australia and overseas
- ★ Challenge staff who do an incredible job in staying on top of the ever pressing demands of deadlines for different papers in different parts of the world
- ★ A Creole edition of the Challenge newspaper going into Haiti later this month

the ruins of Jerusalem. I can just imagine him thinking to himself: why didn't I listen to the Lord? why didn't you turn back to God? Now look what has happened.

Yet despite this, Jeremiah says in Lamentations 3:22-24, "*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.'*"

Despite the disaster before his eyes it did not change Jeremiah's faith in God.

God's people must see that God does not condone sin, and sin left unconfessed, unrepented of, eventually leads to bondage. In effect Israel wouldn't listen, so God had to use a dramatic measure to get their attention. Suddenly all that they valued, all that meant so much to them, vaporized through exile.

Israel over a long period of time had made wrong choices: and perhaps even sadder still, had come to accept them as being right choices in their own minds. Sadly their pursuit of false gods had brought about the despairing picture of Jeremiah kicking through the smouldering ash heaps of Jerusalem.

Far too many Christian men and women's lives end up as smouldering ashes. Far too many Christian marriages and families are nothing but smouldering ashes because wrong choices were made and left unconfessed and unrepented of.

But the picture doesn't have to finish there. Lamentations 5:21 tells us this; "*Turn us back to You, O Lord and we will be restored; Renew our days as of old.*" The CEV (Contemporary English Version) reads: "*Bring us back to you! Give us a fresh start.*"

Today can be the day to rise from the ashes of disobedience, back into the joy of the Lord.

CARL CARMODY, EDITOR OF CHALLENGE



MY RESPONSE

Post to: Challenge Literature Fellowship, PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985

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With God's help I would like to be a partner in supporting the ministry at Challenge in the following way(s):

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\$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other: \$ _____

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