

JEREMIAH 33:3

[PRELIMINARY REMARKS]

- Welcome
- Connections Sunday
- Pray

[INTRODUCTION]

[Series Setup]: We're starting the year with a series called *Possible: When God Has More*.

- Over the next three weeks, we'll think intentionally and honestly about what God might do in our lives this year.
- Have you had a chance to think about that? It's quite a thought, isn't it?
 - There is a God in heaven. He truly loves us. And he is at work in our lives.
 - What might he have in store for you? What might he want for you? What difference might he be planning to make in your life?
 - And what are you asking him to do?
- That's the central question of the morning: What are you asking God to do in your life this year?

[Neil Story]: Here's what got me thinking about it.

- I was on vacation at the start of the summer, talking with my friend Neil—who's actually one of our global mission partners.
- During one conversation, I asked him which passages of Scripture have had the biggest impact on him over the course of his life.
 - Some of you are making a mental note never to ask me on vacation.
 - I promise we had a good time.
- Anyway, it was striking that Neil went back to a verse from his childhood.
 - When he was a wee boy, there was a verse that hung on the wall of his family's kitchen—he'd see it every day.

Jeremiah 33:3:

*Call to me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things,
which you do not know.*

- It sparked something in his imagination—about the power, beauty, and adventure of life with God...
- And it sparked something in the wee boy in me too...

Who is this God and what are these great and mighty things that I do not know?!

[Rosie Story]: As I was thinking about all this, my wife, Rosie, told me something I didn't know about the night each of our kids were born.

- It's funny, isn't it, how you can know someone for so long and yet still be finding out new things about them.
- Rosie told me that when the intensity, drama, and chaos of delivery had passed...
 - Everyone else has gone home and the silence of the wee hours has come.
 - She'd sit there, hold these miraculous creatures in her palms, look at them with immeasurable love, and get curious.
 - Who is this little person that has just joined our world and changed it forever?
 - What will they be like? Who will they become? What will they experience? What will they go on to do?
 - Looking at these tiny babies, she knew that there was so much more to them than what was in front of her—and she couldn't wait to get to know them.
- And then, in our conversation, Rosie said: "I've come to feel the same way about God..."
 - We behold him, but there's so much more to him than we know—and so much more he may yet do.

Call to me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

- That's why we're asking: What do you want God to do in your life this year?

[Transition]: As we each think about our answer, let's look at our verse more closely.

[CONTEXT]

- **[Jerusalem]**
 - When God speaks these words, we're in the sixth century BC, and God's people are not in a good spot.
 - Nebuchadnezzar—the king of Babylon—has surrounded Jerusalem, and the city is about to be destroyed.
 - It's a terrible moment in their history—the lowest of the low.
- **[Jeremiah]**
 - Jeremiah's personal situation isn't much better—he is in prison.
 - Not because Nebuchadnezzar has put him there.
 - But because Zedekiah—the king of God's people—has put him there.
 - Jeremiah told the king the truth—that surrender was the only way to survive.
 - The king didn't like that answer so he threw Jeremiah in prison.
 - And it's there in this prison cell that the word of the Lord comes—offering great and mighty things.

[Transition]: But what exactly are these great and mighty things?

[CONTENT]

First, let's consider the words themselves.

1. [Great]

- **"Great"** is one of the words the Bible repeatedly uses to describe God himself.
 - Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised (**Ps 145:3**).
 - The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods (**Ps 95:3**).
 - Great is our Lord, and mighty in power (**Ps 147:5**).
- God is great—which means he can do "great things": powerful, amazing, extraordinary things.

2. [Mighty]

- The word translated **"mighty"** is a little more unexpected.
 - It doesn't mean powerful in quite the way we might think.
 - In fact, some translations—including our pew Bibles—translate it as "hidden": **great and hidden things that you have not known (ESV)**.
- That sounds strange to us:
 - "Mighty" and "hidden" don't seem to mean the same thing at all!
 - But the Hebrew word brings these two ideas together:¹
 - It's used to describe a fortified city—a city enclosed behind high, impenetrable walls.
 - Such a city was "mighty" because it was "hidden" behind its walls—no one could enter it, or even see what was inside.
- So when these two words—"great" and "mighty"—are paired together:
 - God isn't just saying, "I'll show you something impressive."
 - He's saying, "I will show you something extraordinary that you could never have seen on your own."

And we don't have to guess what those things were because God reveals them in the verses that follow.

- Yes, Jerusalem will be destroyed for its sin and rebellion...
- But then God will do a handful of great and mighty things...
 1. **God will heal them (v.6).** They will suffer but their condition isn't terminal. God will heal them, make them healthy again, make them whole.
 2. **God will bring them home (v.7).** The people will be exiled—carried into a foreign land—but that will not be their final destination. He will bring them back and allow them to rebuild.
 3. **God will forgive them (v.8).** For the sins they have committed against him. He will cleanse them and repair the broken relationship between him and his people.
 4. **God will restore their joy (v.9-13).** Jerusalem will again be filled with gladness and celebration. There will be weddings again, worship again,

shepherds counting their flocks again. The ordinary joys of life they thought were gone forever will return.

5. God will raise up a new king (v.14-16). Foreign rule will not last forever. God will establish another ruler to bring righteousness and justice to the land.

- Healing, homecoming, forgiveness, joy, a new king—it's quite something, isn't it?
 - All Jeremiah can see is a prison.
 - So God shows him great and mighty things—all of which came to pass in time.

[Transition]: And here's the thing I want us to keep in mind as we think about our question (What do you want God to do in your life this year?) ...

- Jeremiah's story isn't just ancient history; it's part of our family story.
 - The God who did all this is the same God we have today.
 - He was at work then—and he's at work today.
 - He did great and mighty things then—and he does great and mighty things today.
- So don't miss the words at the start of the verse: **Call to me...**
 - God invites us to ask...
 - What do you want God to do in your life this year?

[CONSEQUENCE]

Maybe you want him to do one of the things he did for his people long ago.

[Healing]

- Maybe you need **healing** from the damage of your sin.
 - An addiction. Pornography. Anger. Dishonesty.
 - It began small, but now you've made a bigger mess than you ever thought possible.
 - Maybe this is the year healing begins—the year you tell the truth, ask for help, step out of hiding, and get a fresh start.
- Or maybe you need **healing** from damage done to you.
 - Abuse. Betrayal. Abandonment. Words that still haunt you.
 - Maybe this is the year healing begins—the year these wounds no longer define you.

[Homecoming]

- Maybe you need to **come home**.
 - Maybe you've wandered from your faith, or perhaps you're just going through the motions.
 - You remember being close to God, but it feels like your best spiritual days are behind you.
- The God of Jeremiah 33 brings exiles home.

- Maybe this is the year to return.
- Get honest with God and with a few trusted friends—and go deeper than ever before.

[Forgiveness]

- Maybe this is the year you receive God's **forgiveness**.
 - Perhaps for the first time.
 - Enjoy the freedom of being honest about your failures.
 - And find that he responds with grace—forgiving you full and free for anything that you've done.
 - Or perhaps you're already a Christian, but it's time to let go of that guilt you've been carrying around.
 - You've confessed your sin, and God's forgiven it—but you keep re-opening the case.
 - Maybe this year you put down the debt Jesus has already paid.

[Joy]

- Or maybe it's time to ask God for **joy**.
 - Us Presbyterians can be a bit squeamish about this—like it's not holy to ask for things that would make us happy.
 - But Jeremiah's vision includes lovebirds who get married; shepherds who find joy and fulfillment in their work; laughter, celebration, and gratitude.
 - God doesn't merely promise that his people will survive—maybe this is the year you begin to feel alive again.

Ask him for those things, or ask him for something else...

- A child, a calling, a relationship...
- What comes to your heart and mind?

But whatever it is—ask for something!

- Some of us have no answer bc **we haven't really thought about it**. Maybe we don't pray that much and when we do it's all a little sleepy, generic, and safe.
- Maybe some of us have no answer because **it hurts too much to hope**.
 - You've been disappointed before.
 - Now you feel trapped—in your marriage, job, habit, or grief.
 - Jeremiah understood something about feeling trapped—he was in prison with no way out.
 - But God met him there.
 - The walls around him weren't a problem to God.
 - Don't confuse your inability to see with God's inability to act.
 - You might not see it, but he can show you hidden things.

[Transition]: How can we be sure? What gives us confidence to ask? How can we know that the God who answered Jeremiah will answer us?

[THE CLOSE]

- Because God kept all the promises of this chapter—including the most important promise to raise up a new king.
- A Savior from David's line—a Savior we know as Jesus.
 - When sin appeared to have ruined everything, he carried it to the cross.
 - Then God raised him from the dead—so Jesus is alive.
 - He is still at work.
 - He is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think (Eph 3:20).
 - And this same great and mighty Jesus—he loves us.

[CONCLUSION]

- It turns out that in God's economy, we are not the ones who hold our children.
- We are the children—and he holds us fast.
 - He knows who we are.
 - He has beautiful plans for what we will become.
 - And he will be with us through every experience.
- So what are you asking him to do in your life this year?

*Call to him, and he will answer you, and show you great and mighty things,
that you have not known.*

RESOURCES AND ENDNOTES

Resources

This list contains some of the resources that were used to prepare this sermon series. Check them out if you want to dig a little deeper.

- H. B. Charles, Jr., *God's Unblocked Number*.
- Derek Kidner, *The Message of Jeremiah*.
- Logos Bible Software.
- John L. Mackay, *Jeremiah Volume 2 (Chapters 21-52)*.
- Matthew H. Patton, *Jeremiah*.

Endnotes

¹ I owe this insight to H. B. Charles, Jr., *God's Unblocked Number*, accessed [here](#) on 8/14/26.