



Jeremiah 32:16-44

“Is There Anything Too Difficult for God?”

16 " Now when I had delivered the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying:

17 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.

18 'You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them -- the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

19 'You are great in counsel and mighty in work, for your eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings.

20 'You have set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, to this day, and in Israel and among other men; and You have made Yourself a name, as it is this day.

21 'You have brought Your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror;

22 'You have given them this land, of which You swore to their fathers to give them -- "a land flowing with milk and honey."

23 'And they came in and took possession of it, but they have not obeyed Your voice or walked in Your law. They have done nothing of all that You commanded them to do; therefore You have caused all this calamity to come upon them.

24 'Look, the siege mounds! They have come to the city to take it; and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who fight against it, because of the sword and famine and pestilence. What You have spoken has happened; there You see it!

25 'And You have said to me, O Lord GOD, "Buy the field for money, and take witnesses"! -- yet the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.' "

26 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

27 "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?

28 "Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it.

29 'And the Chaldeans who fight against this city shall come and set fire to this city and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs they have offered incense to Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke Me to anger;

30 'because the children of Israel and the children of Judah have done only evil before Me from their youth. For the children of Israel have provoked Me only to anger with the work of their hands,' says the LORD.

31 'For this city has been to Me a provocation of My anger and My fury from the day that they built it, even to this day; so I will remove it from before My face

32 'because of all the evil of the children of Israel and the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger -- they, their kings, their princes, their priests, their prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

33 'And they have turned to Me the back, and not the face; though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive instruction.

34 'But they set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to defile it.

35 'And they built the high places of Baal which are in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, which I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.'

36 " Now therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, 'It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence':

37 'Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely.

38 'They shall be My people, and I will be their God;

39 'then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them.

40 'And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

41 'Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.'

42 " For thus says the LORD: 'Just as I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them.

43 'And fields will be bought in this land of which you say, "It is desolate, without man or beast; it has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans."

44 'Men will buy fields for money, sign deeds and seal them, and take witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South; for I will cause their captives to return,' says the LORD."

How many times have you looked at something and thought that's IMPOSSIBLE? I think often when we use that phrase we actually mean I can't do it, or I don't think I can do it, or It's difficult so I'm not going to bother trying. For instance, I once confidently told a math tutor that finding the value of X was impossible, after he solved it I said, *well it may not be impossible for you, but it is for me*. To this day, I still firmly believe that algebra is actually impossible.

But here I want to talk about the primary meaning of the word "impossible" as it we find it in the Dictionary - "*not able to occur, exist, or be done.*" Because I am sure that at times, even while he was receiving amazing promises from God about what would happen in the future, the Hebrew word for "impossible" – *pala* – meaning "too difficult" must have gone through his head at times.

He had been given a promise by God of a coming time of restoration, when everything would be set right in the land, and between God and his people, when in turth '**They would be HIS people, and HE would be their God**' when there would be harvests and gladness and worship and rejoicing. And yet where was Jeremiah? He was in prison in a city under siege by the armies of Babylon. The noise of war was everywhere and the air was filled with the smell of death. Even as he penned these words he probably could have felt the vibrations of Babylon's battering rams reduced the city walls. Outside of the city Jerusalem the whole land of Judah was filled from end to end with the weeping of prisoners being herded together for the long walk to Babylon, and the cries of mothers crying for their deceased children. As the background to a message of hope and a promise of restoration this wasn't exactly encouraging.

So what does Jeremiah do? He does what all of God's people should do in a time of trouble, he prays - and as he does so, he goes over all the ways in which God has proven that HE is the God for whom nothing is *pala*. And incidentally, in doing so he shows us how important that most neglected part of our own prayers – Adoration – actually is! How receive reassurance as we praise God in our prayers.

He prays to God confessing:

- 1) The Lord's omnipotence, He created everything, the heavens and the earth
- 2) The Lord's sovereignty, He confesses that God is the one providentially orders everything nothing escapes his attention
- 3) The Lord's Mercy, He is the redeemer who delivered Israel from Egypt, showing that the mightiest nation on earth at the time and their Gods were powerless against him.
- 4) The Lord's Goodness, He is the one who brought them into the promised land established them as a nation, and sustained them, despite their continuous rebellion
- 5) And the Lord's truthfulness, How they are now reaping the whirlwind of judgment he warned them about again and again.

It's only as he recounts of all those things, that he can for a moment make any sense out of a command, to buy a field as though everything was perfect when the Babylonian siege mounds are at the city walls, and it looks like the end of Judah, that they would be wiped out, just like the Northern Tribes had been wiped out by Assyria in 722 BC

But Jeremiah was by no means the first believer to wonder if something God promised was – *pala* - too hard

God's redemptive plans usually start by doing something impossible

Gen. 18:10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?'

14 "Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

And that was just the way God started his great work of building up his people!

Well the Lord answers Jeremiah according to His prayers and starts out by confirming that He had indeed plan to hand over Jerusalem to the Babylonians and that city would be taken by the sword, by fire, and by pestilence (that is by disease).

That must have been a discouragement to Jeremiah. Just as Abraham hoped that the difficulty of God's promise to give him a son in his old age might be mitigated a little by making that Son ISHMAEL, the son of Sarah's much younger handmaid, Jeremiah must have hoped that the promise of restoration might come about via Jerusalem being given a last minute reprieve and the people being allowed to stay in the land. But it was not to be. God explains to Jeremiah why it HAD to be done HIS way starting with the complete destruction of the City and the removal of the people from the Land:

For generations now, since the time of Solomon over 400 years before they had been filling the city and the surrounding country with idolatry, they had even brought idols into the Temple itself.

They had even gone so far as to burn their infant sons and daughters alive in sacrifices to the Canaanite God Molech. Something the Lord says HE, the true God, would never have commanded them to do. In fact the hideous irony is that, God sacrificed His own son Jesus precisely so that He might deliver the children of His people from having to pass through eternal fire.

And he said, I was always telling them to stop and to repent. Jeremiah Himself could testify all too well that God had sent them prophets and made clear His will to them, but they WOULD NOT listen, would not repent.

That was why first the land needed to be cleansed, the abominations swept away and the people sent into exile.

Then and only then could the time of the new covenant come in, which He summarizes gloriously in verses 38-40 ***"They shall be My people, and I will be their God; 'then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me."***

This was the great New Covenant promise that God gives to believers and their children – The promise that the Apostles would refer to in verses like Acts 2:39 ***"For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."***

And which the Lord made possible by sending His own Son Jesus to die for their sins, and to give them the gift of His Spirit to indwell them.

Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Now this is all impossible for men, but that is how God saves!

I think we often glibly read the words, in John 3:16 ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*** without for a moment considering how many impossibilities the Lord purposely built into His ultimate act of redemption in the Sacrifice.

A virgin had to give to give birth to a baby who was both the Son of God and the Son of Man

That child then had to grow up and live a perfect life without sin, when no one had been able to do that since Adam's fall.

He had to Perform miracles to prove He was who He said He was

He had to Take the sins of all His people upon Himself

He had Pay for them in full on the Cross

He Then Rise again from the dead and ascend into Heaven

And yet that is exactly what Jesus did, He had to, because it was only by doing what was impossible for man that we could be saved.

Jesus actually pointed that out to the apostles, after showing the rich young ruler how far he'd actually come from keeping God's commandments the apostles ask

Luke 18:26 And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?"

27 But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Applications:

1) Christians, all of this should show how supremely foolish we are to think that any problem we have, any need we have, is too hard for God. I sometimes marvel that my first inclination is to depend upon my own pathetic resources before I even consider asking for help from the Creator of heaven and earth. Or how often I treat something going on in my life, as either too hard even for God, or to insignificant to be worthy of His attention. Have you ever stopped to consider that Creating the Universe from Nothing and taking away your headache is equally simple to an omnipotent God. Nothing is too difficult. For Him.

“Well may the saint trust such a God! He is worthy of implicit confidence. Nothing is too hard for Him. If God were stinted in might and had a limit to His strength we might well despair. But seeing that He is dothed with omnipotence, no prayer is too hard for Him to answer, no need too great for Him to supply, no passion too strong for Him to subdue; no temptation too powerful for Him to deliver from, no misery too deep for Him to relieve. “The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps. 27:1). “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Eph. 3:20, 21).” – AW PINK

2) It should also reassure us even the miracle of your salvation is also not too hard for Him, no matter who you are, where you are or what you have done. Your salvation is impossible, it requires a miracle, that that which is spiritually dead be brought to life. And yet He does it again and again.

Ephesians 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.
4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

So the idea that anyone salvation is too hard, is equally laughable.

3) Now there is one thing that is genuinely impossible:

To be saved anyway other than through Faith in Jesus

Heb 11:6 "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."