



©2019 Ginger Hertenstein

SERMON TITLE: *Mighty God: The Life & Times of Jeremiah*

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 31:15-25

DATE: December 15, 2019

Check out the service at [www.fpcd.org](http://www.fpcd.org).

### *Advent Three*

*Madrigals for Christmas*, A Collection of Readings & Songs  
Presented by the FPCD Choir, Nydia Thorpe, Director

### *Meditation by Pastor Ginger*

This Scripture from Jeremiah expresses our hopes and fears. "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight."

In Jeremiah's time the fears were the exile; the losses; the enemy. Their hope was God was still with them, keeping faithfulness, redeeming their losses.

What are our hopes and fears as we shop, or go to work, or do life in our families and in the community?

You can hear Jeremiah's hopes and fears. He loved his people and listened with care for God's messages to them.

Their fears were reflected in Rachel's cry. The Lord *heard her cry*. Rachel's cry echoes our own cries for our children and the Lord hears. Rachel was Jacob's wife. She lived way before the time when Herod attacked the children in Bethlehem. That tells us that Rachel's weeping is over the generations, including ours. She reflects God's heart and God's knowledge of our needs.

We humans have the need to belong; the need to be a part of a community, the need to be understood by God. We need to feel safe in the culture around us.

People were not feeling safe at all in the exile, thus the sorrow. Yet with God there is always hope. You cannot fall too far that God cannot pick you up.

Jeremiah heard that with God, sorrow does not mean the end—not at all! God says lift your head. Do not weep any longer. I will reward you. And so he does.

God gives a wondrous gift. He gave us a way to see God. God gave us a way of recovery and rescue. God still loves us even when we sin. Thus Jesus, his Son, comes to rescue us. Jesus is for every single person who seeks him.

No family would be more humble than Jesus' family. He arrived in a stall surrounded by animals with shepherds in

attendance. He slept on a bed of hay in a feeding trough, clothed by strips of cloth, stars for his nightlight. Compare that to our desires—a decorated nursery, prenatal care, good doctors. Yet a host of angels joyfully announced his birth, far superior to the trappings we think important.

The angels continue to announce his birth today as powers and dominions bow before him.

It is an unbelievably stunning plan. Why did God do this? To rescue us from an enemy too strong for us, the enemy of unbelief. To meet our hopes and fears . . . Rachel's weeping for her children expresses our hopes and fears. But God says,

*"Do not weep any longer for I will reward you."*

Just imagine today, taking those words in and having them lift you up. Add to them the words, *"There is hope for your future."*

The choir sang about that hope today.

Jeremiah refers to the problem across the ages: it is hard to see God and follow God obediently.

Once, my husband traveled to Canada to attend a heavy equipment auction, outside over several days. Everyone was complaining about a tiny bug called "no-see-ems." He made fun of his friend for swatting at the "no-see-ems." "You can't see them; they must not exist. It is in your head." His friend got mad—"you get bit and you will know it's true."

When God proclaimed these words of hope through Jeremiah, it was hard to see that God was real. People looked around at all the hurt and defeat—*we don't see God; he hasn't been around here!* Even though God had spoken for years through the prophets, it was hard to see and respond to God. "He hasn't been around here." But now a new day has arrived.

Now God speaks to us through a Son. We can see the Son. Even when life is painful and rough. The Son puts flesh on God and we see him.

It is the most wonderful hope for your future. Do not weep any longer, for God gives you joy.

Wonderful; Counselor; Mighty God. Embrace His Joy.

AMEN