



“The Agony: Is God Our Enemy?” Lamentations 2

There’s a story that I’ve told before from the pulpit that I think is so helpful that I must share it again. For those of you who’ve heard it before, hopefully it helps you to apply more to the text today. And, if you haven’t heard it before, I trust it’ll help you as well. It’s the story about a professor with his college students. In college, you get to your class and you are given a syllabus for the semester. It’s something that tells you all your homework assignments and when you are going to have quizzes and tests. This professor had given that syllabus to the students, but then came the day when the first paper was due. While the majority of students turned in the paper, there was a good percentage of students who hadn’t. So, the professor decided to give the students some time to make it up without penalty. Then came the date for the next paper due. Interestingly, there were more students who didn’t have the paper complete. And, the professor decided to give another extension. Finally, by the third paper due, the professor somehow knew that the majority of students didn’t have it done. The professor called out to one student, and that student, without a care, said he didn’t have it done. The professor had his gradebook open, and in front of the class said, “F.” Immediately the student chimed in and said, “NOT FAIR!” And the professor responded by saying, “You want what is fair?” And then he went back to the previous paper and wrote an “F” in that line, too. Then the professor asked the class, “Does anyone else want what is fair?” Funny. No one raised their hands.

I’m giving you this story because it helps us to see how we humans abuse grace. Instead of being grateful and amazed and instead of that grace compelling us to live right, in our sinfulness, we become presumptuous with grace. We say, “Well, God doesn’t seem to care that I’m sinning. He’s not punishing me. So, I’m good and he’s good!” This is what it was like in ancient Israel. God had called them out as his own special people. God decided to reveal his special glory to the world through the nation of Israel and even in the nation through the tabernacle and the sacrifices. Through prophets, God spoke to the nation. Through priests, God showed that he was merciful. Through kings, God gave protection. And in times of prosperity, God pointed them to the fact that obedience mattered. God himself then spoke to the nation of Israel, telling them of their greatness. And specifically, God spoke of the greatness of Jerusalem because he revealed his glory there. In Psalm 48:1-3, we read, **“¹ Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain, ² beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. ³ Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress.”¹**

Jerusalem is great. Why? Because of God. It’s his city. It’s been set apart by him. God has protected it and made himself known through it. When you read Psalm 48, you get this idea that Zion is invincible! And the Israelites seemed to think it was so invincible that their obedience didn’t matter. The Israelites missed the point that Zion was great because God is greater. They decided to turn their gaze from God,

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 48:1–3.

and they focused on the gifts of God instead of God himself. They treated God like a lucky rabbit's foot. They kept the tabernacle, the office of the priest and the role of king; but in all arenas, they denied God and worshipped other things. Instead of trusting God, they trusted rituals, and they thought they were fine because Zion is invincible. Once we get to Jeremiah and Ezekiel's days, they tell us that the prophets would cry out "'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14; Ezek. 13:10). People were living delusional lives. They were abusing the kindnesses of God, thinking rituals and the temple could save them. Is God's grace simply a license to sin?

Well, then the nation of Babylon came and utterly destroyed Jerusalem and took captive Israel. The people of Israel were shocked awake from their delusion and their presumption. They realized that they had been denying God, and began to turn to him; but then the punishment kept coming in waves. Where they knew they had sinned and broken covenant with God, they were also confused because now God seemed to be their enemy. And what we see in the book of Lamentations is the deep emotion and confusion that represents the people of Israel.

What we have in each of these chapter poems are statements of what is known to be true, but also statements of confusion. Isn't this what happens in our own lives as well? We know what *is* true, but we still don't know *why* the things are happening the way they are. And bridging the gap between our knowledge and our experience, the Scriptures call us to trust the Lord. Even when it feels like he's our enemy, we must recognize he is our only hope. Nothing else in life can save. Only God can save.

So, as I said last week, the big question of the book is, **"Is God just and compassionate?" In answering that question, chapter 2 tells us that "God is our only hope."** Now, as I say this, you could already be thinking, "This chapter is very discouraging." And, in my study this past week, it almost felt like some of the things said were at least bordering on blaspheming God. But the more I studied, the more I realized that part of lament is to lay our burdens before the Lord and bring them to the light. To put it another way, if I don't verbalize my burdens to the Lord and state them in brutal honesty, then I won't see him as the Savior of those things because I keep those things hidden.

So here in Lamentations 2, we see declarations of pain

With this, let's pray as we move into Lamentations 2.

Israel has been ignoring God, but they think they're completely secure. Obviously, they were wrong. And now there's destruction and confusion. This chapter describes Jerusalem's lament in three noticeable sections: **1) Jerusalem's ruinous decline, 2) The Poet's Sympathetic Response, 3) Zion's Cry.**

Let's start with the first section:

1. Discover Jerusalem's ruinous decline (vv. 1-10).

What we discover in verses 1-10 are descriptive details of what happened when Babylon took over Jerusalem and enslaved the people of Israel. While there's a lot of emotional phrases here, I think of these words more like words from a commentator – someone who's looking on and describing the pain. In these verses, notice some key phrases and words as we read. Words that relate to going "down," and words like "wrath" and "anger." Also notice how many times pronouns related to "the Lord" are mentioned.

2 How the Lord in his anger has set the daughter of Zion under a cloud! He has cast down from heaven to earth the splendor of Israel; he has not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger. ² The Lord has swallowed up without mercy all the habitations of Jacob; in his wrath he has broken down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he has brought down to the ground in dishonor the kingdom and its rulers. ³ He has cut down in fierce anger all the might of Israel; he has withdrawn from them his right hand in the face of the enemy; he has burned like a flaming fire in Jacob, consuming all around. ⁴ He has bent his bow like an enemy, with his right hand set like a foe; and he has killed all who were delightful in our eyes in the tent of the daughter of Zion; he has poured out his fury like fire. ⁵ The Lord has become like an enemy; he has swallowed up Israel; he has swallowed up all its palaces; he has laid in ruins its strongholds, and he has multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation. ⁶ He has laid waste his booth like a garden, laid in ruins his meeting place; the Lord has made Zion forget festival and Sabbath, and in his fierce indignation has spurned king and priest. ⁷ The Lord has scorned his altar, disowned his sanctuary; he has delivered into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they raised a clamor in the house of the Lord as on the day of festival. ⁸ The Lord determined to lay in ruins the wall of the daughter of Zion; he stretched out the measuring line; he did not restrain his hand from destroying; he caused rampart and wall to lament; they languished together. ⁹ Her gates have sunk into the ground; he has ruined and broken her bars; her king and princes are among the nations; the law is no more, and her prophets find no vision from the Lord. ¹⁰ The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground in silence; they have thrown dust on their heads and put on sackcloth; the young women of Jerusalem have bowed their heads to the ground. ²

I am not going to go verse-by-verse this morning. Instead, I want to do a fly-over to give the big idea that's being communicated here. The title of this sermon is "The Agony: God is our enemy." One commentator I read wrote this of chapter 2: **"The real enemy whose onslaught had reduced Jerusalem to rubble was the Lord God himself. The first eight verses pound our ears with a relentless salvo of twenty-eight verbs portraying destruction on a blockbuster scale, and every one has God as the subject. 'He' is repeated in almost every line. And after the crushing bombardment, nothing is left but deathly silence in the dust (10)"** (Wright, p. 77).

How do we square this with our belief about God? This is the tension that the people are living in, and it's a tension that God wants the people to grapple with. Another two words that are closely defined are highlighted quite a bit in this chapter, and in these first ten verses. The words are "anger" and "wrath." You'll also see "fury" and "without mercy."

But the Poet isn't simply content stating that God is acting like an enemy and is angry. He details what God is doing in his anger and fury. And, just like in the first poem, this poem starts with the word "how." If you recall last week, I stated that this Hebrew word isn't simply asking a question. It's a word used in funerals, implying sorrow, confusion and questioning. And, in the first verse, the author describes the

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), La 2:1–10.

scenario: **2** How the Lord in his anger has set the daughter of Zion under a cloud! He has cast down from heaven to earth the splendor of Israel; he has not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger.³

The poet uses the term “daughter of Zion” in order to describe the relationship of Israel to God’s city and then also to God himself. So, the poet is continuing this idea of Jerusalem being a woman. And there’s a closeness of relationship to the Lord. How could a father ever cause his daughter down from heaven to earth?

The idea of “casting down” is throughout these ten verses. Listen to the various ways the Poet refers to God’s punishment as bringing things down. Verse 2: God broke down the strongholds. He brought down to the ground the kingdom and its rulers. Verse 3: He cut down the might of Israel. He burned Jacob. Verse 5: He laid the strongholds in ruins. Verse 6: He laid waste. Verse 8: He laid in ruins the wall and destroyed. Verse 9: The gates sunk to the ground. Verse 10: Elders sit on the ground in silence. The young women have bowed their heads to the ground.

If God is their friend here, then who needs enemies? That’s why the poet says in verse 5, “The Lord has become like an enemy.” It is interesting it says “like” an enemy. The word “like” seems to signify that he’s not actually one, but he seems to act like one – and , he seems to be acting like the greatest enemy of all. But how is he acting like an enemy? There are several things we see in these ten verses, but I want to highlight three. God has come across as an enemy by denouncing the priests, the kings and the prophets.

The Lord denounces the Temple and Priests. In verse 1, he says the Lord has covered them with the cloud of his anger. In Israel’s past, God’s cloud signified his presence with them for mercy, leading them through the wilderness. Now, the cloud is God’s presence in wrath and anger. And this cloud is driving them to the dust. Now, while there are various ways the Poet describes the destruction, I do want to highlight three key ways the Poet describes the destruction. First, he highlights the destruction of the temple and the priesthood. Before Israel entered into land and had kings, God was its King. And God came down on the tabernacle. Remember the Fighter Verse from this past week: “Be strong and courageous, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” God was speaking to the people who had a new leader, Joshua. Even though Moses died, God would be with the people and work through the tabernacle and its sacrifices – reminding them of his faithfulness to forgive and to also protect them.

As we learned last month, the tabernacle and the temple signified much about the character of God and what we were created for as humans. It was central to Israelite worship and for the people to know that they were “right” with God. The tabernacle and then the temple last for a long period of time, and then in the destruction of Jerusalem then came the destruction of the temple and then no need for any priests. Verse 1 says that God has not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger. Biblically, the footstool referred to the ark of the covenant. This is the box that spoke to God’s promise, and annually, blood was placed on this box to plead for forgiveness for sins. If God disregards the covenant that means there’s no hope for forgiveness for them. In addition, in verse 6, we’re told that he laid waste his booth like a garden and laid in ruins his meeting place. The Poet refers to the glorious Solomonic temple as a booth, but in comparison to God’s power, the Temple is like a unsteady booth in a field. He lays it to waste. And, as a result, the festivals and Sabbaths are no more, and God has spurned the priest. The priest mediated for the people. Now, God is saying there’s no one to mediate on their behalf. So, it makes sense that in verse one, the poet says that God has hurled down the splendor of Israel from

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), La 2:1.

heaven to earth, and in verse 7, God has scorned the altar and disowned the sanctuary. In essence, the Poet is saying that God has cut the ties of Jerusalem with heaven. They're left in their sins. He leaves them alone.

God denounces the Kingdom and Kings. Not only does God denounce the priesthood. He denounces the kingdom and the king. Verse 2, houses are torn down, strongholds are torn down. The kingdom and its rulers are brought down in dishonor. Verse 3: the might of Israel is torn down, and God doesn't fight for them anymore. Verse 4: God actually fights against them. He kills. He burns. Verse 5: he swallows up the palaces. He ruins strongholds. Verse 6: God spurns King. Verse 7: God delivers the walls to the enemy. The ramparts and walls lament. Verse 9: Gates sunk in the ground and the bars are ruined. Kings and princes are scattered.

All of this signifies that they are politically devastated. In verse 3, you read that the Lord withdrew his right hand. Just like the cloud was a sign previously of God's mercy during the times of Exodus; so, God's right hand was a sign of God's protection and care over the people as he defeated the Egyptians at the time of the crossing of the Red Sea. Exodus 15:6 says, **"6 Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy."**⁴ What is God's right hand doing now? Shattering Judah. Shattering Jacob. Shattering Jerusalem. Shattering Israel. All of these terms refer to God's special covenants with a special people. How have they become the enemy of God?

The type of destruction God is bringing about is complete. God gives over Jerusalem to the enemies by ensuring the walls fall and the barred entrances are exposed and tumble down. God himself fights against Jerusalem. And pours fury out like a fire. He rejects the Kings and all the people suffer as well: from the elders of the city to the young women. Everyone is brought low.

And, this is indeed what happened. In 2 Kings 24 and Jeremiah 52, we're told of the capture of the last king of Judah: Zedekiah. He had tried to escape the Babylonians by fleeing from Jerusalem with his sons, but he and his sons were caught. As a punishment from the Babylonians, his sons were murdered in front of his eyes right before they plucked his eyes out. Zedekiah was put in chains, never heard of again. An earlier king, Jehoiachin, was taken away and exiled in an earlier invasion (597 BC). While exiled and later released, he never returned to Israel.

Now, with no Kings, there's no law. So, we see God's destruction of the priesthood who were to teach. And there is no king who is supposed to model and apply the law. People are left devastated. Finally, we see

God denounces the prophets. It's a short statement, but an important one. The prophets, priests and kings came together as a unity for the good of Israel. And in verse 9, we're told that the prophets find no vision from the LORD. Many prophets had false visions. Many prophets lied. They cried out "peace, peace," when there was no peace. They didn't have God speaking to them. So, we have in these first ten verses a description of God cutting ties with Israel, so-to-speak. He no longer speaks through prophets, the priesthood or through the kingdom and kings. Not only that, God is fighting against them. And, as a result, the people are brought down to the ground completely.

How can this be? This is how Lamentations 2 begins: how?! In these ten verses, the Poet simply states reality. The Poet doesn't sugarcoat God's sovereignty. Many in our day would say that God couldn't act

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ex 15:6.

in this kind of way. But here in Lamentations, we read that God is over all events, even these destructions. Now, we have to be careful, Ventura. This doesn't mean that every event in our day that is a travesty is a direct result of God punishing. We don't have divine revelation on events today. What we do know in the Babylonian captivity is that it was the case.

And the Poet presses this by saying in verse 8 that the Lord determined this and stretched out the measuring line. The measuring line was used to build, but here he says it's for destruction. The measuring line involves planning. What we see from the Poet is that God's anger and wrath isn't flippant fury. It's not a parent who is annoyed and flies off the handle. When we look at the Scriptures we see that God was extremely patient with the people of Israel. And, God warned them over and over and over again. All the way back in Deuteronomy 28, God said that if they refused to obey him, curses would come upon them. He said a people would come to pursue them and destroy them. Verse 47-49 say, **"⁴⁷ Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, ⁴⁸ therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you. ⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand. . ."**⁵

From that point, through the prophets, God continually warned. Even in Jeremiah's day, in Jeremiah 18, God told them what he would do and called them to turn from their wickedness, but then we're told the people say it's in vain to do so. They were presumptuous about God's grace to them. But now they are experiencing the fullness of pain.

At this point, we move into verses 11-19, and these verses are written in first person. In chapter 1, Lady Zion has asked for someone to notice her, and the Poet comes to her with a response.

2. Hear the Poet's Sympathetic Response (vv. 11-19).

¹¹ My eyes are spent with weeping; my stomach churns; my bile is poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babies faint in the streets of the city. ¹² They cry to their mothers, "Where is bread and wine?" as they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers' bosom. ¹³ What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is vast as the sea; who can heal you? ¹⁴ Your prophets have seen for you false and deceptive visions; they have not exposed your iniquity to restore your fortunes, but have seen for you oracles that are false and misleading. ¹⁵ All who pass along the way clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem: "Is this the city that was called the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth?" ¹⁶ All your enemies rail against you; they hiss, they gnash their teeth, they cry: "We have swallowed her! Ah, this is the day we longed for; now we have it; we see it!" ¹⁷ The Lord has done what he purposed; he has carried out his word, which he commanded long ago; he has thrown down without pity; he has made the enemy rejoice over you and exalted the might of your foes. ¹⁸ Their heart cried to the Lord. O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears stream down like a torrent

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Dt 28:47-49.

day and night! Give yourself no rest, your eyes no respite! ¹⁹ “Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint for hunger at the head of every street.” ⁶

The Poet can't simply act as though he's a commentator on the news, stating horrific facts. Instead, in moving into the first person he expresses how he himself feels about this. He sees Lady Zion's destruction and says that the horrors are so bad and the emotional pain is so horrible he can't help but throw up. Imagine a war-torn country. No homes. No shelter. No food. Children, who once had food are now crying to their moms for something, asking where's food and drink? Then, get this picture in your mind, moms don't even have nourishment enough to be able to feed their infants. The child is held close to the mom's chest. The mom weeps because as the child tries to get some type of milk, the baby dies.

In the midst of this, the enemies are yelling with joy outside the city – gloating over the destruction and even the death of the babies. In Jerusalem, this happened. And somehow, they even know of the Psalm that speaks of the perfection of beauty and glory of the earth that Jerusalem was. But they're glad they've destroyed it. In addition, the Poet affirms that the Lord ultimately brought this about.

The Poet knows no pain like this. You know, many times when we try to comfort people, we often try to find a scenario in our lives or someone we know, that might be close to the hurting person's pain. And while that doesn't bring ultimate comfort, sometimes it can bring some because we can at least think, "If someone else made it, I can, too." But the Poet admits the depth of pain. At this point, there's a great lesson for us. If we are going to come alongside people in pain, we can't try to silence it or ignore the pain. Recognize the depth of it. Confess with them the greatness of the wounds they're experiencing. This is a sign of loving understanding for the person, but it's also a sign of trust in God that he has to be the one who is going to bring rescue.

Now, as I say this, some people could say, "Yeah, in my pain, you don't understand and you never will. So, please listen to Pastor Timothy and never give me counsel." Hold on a second, I didn't say "never give counsel." The Poet still boldly gives counsel. He affirms the great grief. He affirms the sorrow. He even affirms the Lord has planned this and brought it about. But in a shocking turn of events, at the end of verse 18 and also in verse 19, the Poet calls for Lady Zion to cry out day and night to the Lord. Pour your heart out and plead for mercy to the Lord. And at the end of verse 19, he essentially says, "If you won't do this for yourself, at least do it for your children!" Listen, we often need to hear counsel from others because God works through people to speak his truth to one another. If you're hurting and in pain, I hope you haven't isolated yourself and kept you from listening to the counsel of others who are seeking the Lord. I hope you don't think that you alone know what's best. I hope you trust that the Spirit is at work through believers to minister to believers and point to God's truth – telling you things you need to hear, even if you don't like them initially.

Think about it. This counsel from the Poet is shocking. Lady Zion wants someone to notice. God gives her someone and what he says probably would make her groan. Why would Lady Zion turn to God who has brought this about? Remember last week's sermon? Lady Zion confesses that she knows this has come about because of her sin, but the punishment simply seems too severe. We still don't see this poem relieving the tensions of figuring out how God's justice works in this kind of anger. But what we do have

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), La 2:11–19.

from the Poet is a call to the woman to see that the Lord is her only hope. While it seems like he is her enemy, he is the covenant-keeping God, and he would respond in mercy if the woman would truly humble herself before him.

And, how we need this kind of counsel often in our lives. We try to figure God out or know *why* he does certain things in our lives, but what we need to do is focus on what the Scriptures tell us to be true and then pray to the Lord that we would live in light of what he's told us – trusting that in the darkness and in the light, he's always good. So now, at this point, in the poem, we hear Lady Zion's response in verse 20-23: ²⁰ Look, O Lord, and see! With whom have you dealt thus? Should women eat the fruit of their womb, the children of their tender care? Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord? ²¹ In the dust of the streets lie the young and the old; my young women and my young men have fallen by the sword; you have killed them in the day of your anger, slaughtering without pity. ²² You summoned as if to a festival day my terrors on every side, and on the day of the anger of the Lord no one escaped or survived; those whom I held and raised my enemy destroyed. ⁷

3. Listen to Lady Zion's Cry (vv. 20-23).

Does the woman take the Poet's counsel? Not technically. An essential component of prayer is to ask. There's no asking. Instead, she states. Look. Is there any pain as significant than this? It seems as though the pain was even worse than the Poet acknowledges. Women at their children because of the starvation. Prophets and priests were killed. Young and old die and are slaughtered without pity. And this all happens at the hands of enemies who are treating this murder like a festival.

In stating this, I think she is tacitly calling for mercy, but she doesn't get to the point of asking. After all, she knows this is the day of the anger of the Lord. This is prophesied as a time when God would punish his enemies. So, is there hope for Zion? Some of you read this chapter and you think, "Please preach on how God is just in this?!" And, you may want everything understandable with a nice, neat bow. You know what? Lamentations doesn't wrap it all up nice like that. There may be another sermon for that. **But One of the purposes of Lamentations is to call us to faith. Faith in our covenant-keeping Lord bridges the gap between what we know to be true and the painful confusion of our experiences.**

So, is God just? Well, Zion at least confesses somewhat that God is. But, is God compassionate? The Poet believes so. But Lady Zion still needs to be brought to confess this. If she has faith, it's weak. She obviously **knows that only the Lord can save, but will the Lord save her?** At this point, all I can say is praise God for someone coming alongside having faith and pressing her to trust the Lord!

Now, what does this have to do with us? As I think of prophets, priests and kings rejected; I can't help but think of Jesus, who is the prophet who came to declare God's message of rescue to the world. He is *the priest* who was also the sacrifice and now is in heaven ascended mediating for all who trust in him. And, Jesus is the King of kings, and his kingdom will never fail. Because Jesus took the wrath of God on the cross, he restores all that wrath takes away: kingdom, priesthood and prophecy. This is what we have, Ventura! Praise God for his mercy and grace to us!

We know this. When Jesus came to this earth, he said he didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. And now, God calls all men everywhere to repent. Do you realize that we live in times of great grace and mercy? God is patient with us in this world, and many people

⁷ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), La 2:20–22.

(maybe even you?) are interpreting that patience as a sign that God's ok with where you're at and how you don't relate to him. You play church or think your morality is good enough, but you look to other things for identity, hope, life and satisfaction. Can those things save you in the end? No, the Bible says they'll all come tumbling down. Turn to Jesus.

Others of you are experiencing pain and you're wanting God to defend himself for what's happened, but he's calling you to trust him. If Jesus sacrificed himself and bore an eternity's worth of punishment on himself on the cross, and if he also is the greatest King and prophet and mediator for anyone who comes to him, can you trust that God is good despite not having all the answers? And, if you think you've gone too far and God has utterly rejected you, think again. I pray I'm like the Poet right now. God says "now is the time of salvation!" God says that those who come to him, he will not cast out. He welcomes you in mercy! Don't wait.

But if you do reject, please be warned. I need to speak like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Did you know that the day of the Lord is coming? In that day, Jesus says he's going to separate those who trust him from those who refuse him. And in that day, those who refuse will be judged. All the thoughts and intents of your heart – all the works you spoke and all the ideas you've cherished that were sinful – will be brought to account, and you will be judged before God for all of that.

Some you here might shun this, but there could be some here who will finally take God seriously in hearing this. Because here's the reality, you don't have to be judged for your sins. Jesus came 2,000 years ago to take the judgment of all your sins on himself so that you can actually be reconciled with God and have eternal life with him. You have hope and purpose and protection in Jesus who is your King and Priest. Only God can save, and Jesus does just that. Will you listen to the Prophet Jesus and trust him as your Savior?

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