

etting Mad at God

Preacher: Rev. Lauren Lorincz

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00:00

Who is Jeremiah anyway and why is he complaining so much?

Jeremiah known as "the weeping prophet," famous for the "laments of Jeremiah"

10 chapters of lamenting! (laments: songs, poems, expressions of deep grief and mourning)

During Jeremiah's prophet career, Babylonians conquer Jerusalem in 587, people are exiled

Jeremiah wants to give in, knowing the people will survive in the end

Brueggemann: "Better to submit to the empire than to be destroyed by the empire . . .

[Jeremiah] can imagine the restoration of Jerusalem in radically new form."

Not a popular view, so Jeremiah gets powerful enemies and complains to God about those who persecute him

To deal with his anguish, his persecution—Jeremiah gets angry at God!

"Under the weight of your hand I sat alone, for you had filled me with indignation."

"Truly, you are like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail."

Wadi—streambed that remains dry except in the rainy season

Compare this to Exodus where God parts the Red Sea or Amos' famous "let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream"!

Jeremiah is calling God a deceitful brook, a wadi—with waters that fail, fighting words!

Getting angry at God!

Regina Brett, columnist for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, author of *God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours*

Wonders if she can get angry at God (breast cancer at 41), meets a Jesuit priest, Father Jim:

"He told me that God wants a real, authentic, genuine relationship with us, the same kind of openness and honesty you have in a good marriage."

Father Jim struggled with a job transfer "he tried to play God's happy little servant, but it wasn't working"

Began saying his "Damn Prayer"—every day until he got it out of his system

"Once the anger was gone, there was room for something else. Peace. The slate was clean.

Now God could write on it."

Or think about the famous poem "Footprints"—whether you think it's cheesy or fantastic, transformation occurs when the dreamer has a confrontation with Jesus—"Why when I have needed you most, you have not been there for me?"

Questions Jesus, a little bit of anger there?

Assurance that Christ cares and was helping all along, he was being carried

Jeremiah gets assured too, "They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you."

Both encounters are not one-sided conversations

The importance of having an honest, genuine, real relationship with God

Points to the human need to feel loved, to know that you are not alone and someone cares

To know that you can express emotions, even anger at or to the Divine

God can take us at our best and our worst, God can take our anger and our praise

Regina Brett: "God doesn't want us to be so holy we aren't human. God doesn't want fake prayers and phony praise. God wants an honest, genuine, real relationship."