***Jeremiah 20:1-18 Now Pashhur the son of Immer, the priest who was also chief governor in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. 2Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the Lord. 3And it happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, “The Lord has not called your name Pashhur, but Magor-Missabib. 4For thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes shall see it. I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon and slay them with the sword. 5Moreover I will deliver all the wealth of this city, all its produce, and all its precious things; all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them, and carry them to Babylon. 6And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied lies.’ 7O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me. 8For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, “Violence and plunder!” Because the word of the Lord was made to me A reproach and a derision daily. 9Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not. 10For I heard many mocking: “Fear on every side!” “Report,” they say, “and we will report it!” All my acquaintances watched for my stumbling, saying, “Perhaps he can be induced; Then we will prevail against him, And we will take our revenge on him.” 11But the Lord is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten. 12But, O Lord of hosts, You who test the righteous, And see the mind and heart, Let me see Your vengeance on them; For I have pleaded my cause before You. 13Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord! For He has delivered the life of the poor From the hand of evildoers. 14Cursed be the day in which I was born! Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me! 15Let the man be cursed
Who brought news to my father, saying, “A male child has been born to you!” Making him very glad. 16And let that man be like the cities Which the Lord overthrew, and did not relent;
Let him hear the cry in the morning And the shouting at noon, 17Because he did not kill me from the womb, That my mother might have been my grave, And her womb always enlarged with me. 18Why did I come forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow, That my days should be consumed with shame?***

We’re back with Jeremiah this evening, as he endures persecution for the ministry that God has laid upon him. Most of us will never endure imprisonment or beatings for our faith, but persecution takes many forms and can come from many places. One of the most common is persecution by family and close friends, murmurings about your faith and your dedication to your faith. Make no mistake. This is evil just as Jeremiah was suffering.

 Verse 1 *Now Pashhur the son of Immer, the priest who was also chief governor in the house of the Lord, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.* Pashur is not the high priest of the Temple and he is not biologically the son of Immer. Instead, as is common in Jewish society, Pashur is the son of Melchiah, but is the head of one of the divisions in the Temple – this division being the division of Immer. He would be on duty when the division of Immer was on duty in the Temple. He’d be considered a son or follower of the Immer course. 1 Chronicles 9:12 names Melchiah and 1 Chronicles 24 names Immer. Pashur was an overseer or type of captain in the temple. This is similar to the chief priests of Jesus time. As a result, his authority allowed him to arrest false prophets or those he considered to be a disturbance to the peace of the Temple. While on duty, Pashur is the acting ruler or commander of the Temple as Jeremiah is speaking.

 Verse 2 *Then Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the Lord.* Pashur heard the prophecies of Jeremiah, the miseries to come, the pending overthrow of Jerusalem and he considered this causing a disturbance, so he seized Jeremiah and placed him in prison or the stocks for speaking false prophecy. It’s likely, as was the practice of that day, that Jeremiah was beaten and scourged before being thrown into the prison and chained in stocks, likely fitting across the shoulders and around the neck or chained to the wall.

 Verse 3-5 *And it happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, “The Lord has not called your name Pashhur, but Magor-Missabib. 4For thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes shall see it. I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive to Babylon and slay them with the sword. 5Moreover I will deliver all the wealth of this city, all its produce, and all its precious things; all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them, and carry them to Babylon.* Pashur now brings Jeremiah out of the prison on the next day. Jeremiah makes a prophetic pronouncement against Pashur. God calls him ***Magor-missabib,*** meaning terror all around. God has changed Pashur’s name and his circumstances. Pashur is comfortable and powerful, but soon he will have terror all around him and he will be a terror even to himself. God will deliver all Judah into the hand of Babylon, he will deliver all the treasure, strength, and all precious things to Babylon. The men of war, the craftsmanship of the people, all the fine buildings – whatever the people place value on will be given into the hands of the enemy.

 Verse 6 *And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied lies.* Jeremiah 29:26, names other officials of the Temple and we know that king Jehoiachin has already been taken into captivity. This suggests that Pashur was taken in the first captivity.

 Verse 7 *O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me.* Theologians widely agree that the word deceived is an improper understanding. Jeremiah was persuaded by God. God is stronger. His will is done and we do well to surrender to that will. This carries the idea that Jeremiah did not desire the office of prophet and would have gladly declined if there had been a choice. Jeremiah did not think himself qualified and was humbled that God would choose him. Any true shepherd of God, any true pastor, is humbled that God would choose him. God qualifies the called. He does not call the qualified, that we may not boast, but realize that it is all Him and we are only submissive and surrendered to His will. People hate him. He is the object of derision, scorn, and mocking. Given another choice, he would not have chosen this path.

 Verse 8-9 *For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, “Violence and plunder!” Because the word of the Lord was made to me A reproach and a derision daily. 9Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.” But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.* Jeremiah prophesied violence and plunder. Of course, we have been studying that now for 19 chapters. On account of this declaring what people do not want to hear and what does not tickle their ears, he is now seen as a false prophet and an enemy – a disturbance to the Temple. So, he said within himself, I simply won’t speak of God or this prophecy anymore. People don’t want to hear it, so I won’t say it anymore. But then the word of God burned in him. This has the idea of glowing red hot within Jeremiah’s heart and desperately needed a vent. The word seemed to be in his bones, penetrating completely. Hebrews 4:12 says *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* His own heart convicted him and he grew weary of holding back until he couldn’t anymore.

Verses 10-11 *For I heard many mocking: “Fear on every side!” “Report,” they say, “and we will report it!” All my acquaintances watched for my stumbling, saying, “Perhaps he can be induced; Then we will prevail against him, And we will take our revenge on him.” 11But the Lord is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.* Many slandered and mocked Jeremiah for the truth God gave him. They mocked him with the name given to Pashur earlier - ***magor-missabib.*** This is like Psalm 31:13. Word for word. People were plotting against his life. People pretending to be his friends and those openly his enemies are against him. They say – Report! Tell us where the terror all around is and we will report it and believe it! They watch for Jeremiah’s stumbling or giving in to sin so they can prevail against him. Jeremiah says – But the Lord is with me. God is protecting him from the enemies and their plans. He is mighty and awesome. He will cause them to stumble and they will not prevail. Recall in Jeremiah 1, God told Jeremiah – *Be not afraid of their faces; for I am with thee to deliver thee.* Jeremiah now leans into this promise, knowing that God is faithful to keep His promises. The persecutors will not prevail. Instead, they will stumble and be made greatly ashamed. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten, by themselves or people in the future. It will be an everlasting reproach.

Verses 12-13 *But, O Lord of hosts, You who test the righteous, And see the mind and heart, Let me see Your vengeance on them; For I have pleaded my cause before You. 13Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord! For He has delivered the life of the poor From the hand of evildoers.* God tests the righteous and knows the mind and heart. Let me see Your judgement and Your will be done on them Lord. I have pleaded my case openly – this holds the idea that Jeremiah has laid out his case and he knows that God is a perfectly just Judge and there will be perfect justice. Now, Jeremiah takes it up to a higher level. Not only will I wait for justice, but I will praise and sing while I wait for justice. He moves from prayer to praise. No doubts surround him any longer. He is confident in Who God Is. He chooses Joy. Jeremiah praises God for delivering his soul from distress and the hand of the evildoers, particularly Pashur. No one will gain the upper hand on God’s anointed.

Verse 14 *Cursed be the day in which I was born! Let the day not be blessed in which my mother bore me!* This seems like a sudden shift from praises to curses, but we must recall that we are not witnessing a straightline conversation here, taking only minutes. This prophecy may have taken place over several hours or days. Recall, Jeremiah, as any human, may sweep across emotions. He has now become very sad. Let not the day that my mother bore me be a cause for celebration!

Verses 15-18 *Let the man be cursed Who brought news to my father, saying, “A male child has been born to you!” Making him very glad. 16And let that man be like the cities Which the Lord overthrew, and did not relent; Let him hear the cry in the morning And the shouting at noon, 17Because he did not kill me from the womb, That my mother might have been my grave, And her womb always enlarged with me. 18Why did I come forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow, That my days should be consumed with shame?* Jeremiah continues with his melancholy lament. Let the man be cursed. Jeremiah laments the day he was born. Let that man be like cities, Sodom and Gomorrah that God overthrew and left desolate. Let him hear the cry in the morning of enemies charging and attacking and shouting as they break through. Because that man did not slay me when I was born. Jeremiah is very bitter in his soul from all the persecution and hatred, the mocking and abuse he is receiving. Though we may pretend, many of us have been bitter and sad in the soul for various reasons. This just makes Jeremiah all the more real and relatable.

And so we will leave Jeremiah tonight as Babylon draws ever closer. He has been persecuted. He is hated. He is plotted against. Still, he is faithful and brings God’s word. To not do so would be burning in his heart and aching in his bones. May we have that same urgency to bring the Truth of Jesus to all we encounter. God is still calling us to speak and teach. Are we speaking the truth or are we wearying ourselves resisting? God knows. Let’s be bold and speak.