



Run with the Horses – The Pursuit for Manhood.

“So, Jeremiah, if you’re worn out in this footrace with men, what makes you think you can race against horses?”
– Jeremiah 12:5

We long to live life to the fullest. We desire to merge freedom and spontaneity with purpose and meaning. Why then do we, as men, often find our lives boring, adventure-less, and fighting addiction to medicate our pain? Or else so busy, so full of chaos, but still devoid of fulfillment? How do we learn to risk, to trust, to pursue wholeness and excellence—to run with the horses in the midst of life? More is known of the life of Jeremiah than any other prophet, and his life is far more significant than his teaching. This study will be a model of manhood as portrayed by the prophet Jeremiah.

Imagination – the ability to see what is real but unseen (II Cor. 4:1,2)

Highland Colony Men’s Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

A Man uses his imagination to move through the journey to manhood.

May 30, 2019

Bible Verses: Jeremiah 12:5; Psalm 119:32; Jeremiah 18:1-12; II Corinthians 4:1,2; Hebrews 11:1-3; Job 39:19-25

Resources: *Run with the Horses – The Quest for Life at Its Best* by Eugene H. Peterson

Music: Secretariat Trailer
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKmuvjL2cVw>

Video: Secretariat: "What Do You Think"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=US6IP5QK1bw>
He laughs at fear, afraid of nothing scene - Secretariat
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8gwABZHETs>

Meet Jeremiah

- _____ → The nation of Israel was split after the death of Solomon. His son Rehoboam was set to become the next king. One of Solomon’s servants, Jeroboam rebelled. The ten tribes of the north rejected Rehoboam and embraced the leadership of Jeroboam. The two tribes of the south—Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to King Rehoboam. The result of tribal discord and political unrest resulted in the split.
- _____ → Jeremiah 1-12 cover the prophecy during the reign of Josiah. He warned Judah and called her to repentance (Jer. 3:6, 12-13, 22-23). He exposed the moral rottenness of the people (7:1-26). He warned them of coming judgments if they would not return to God. He especially warned them of the danger from the north. He told them that the avengers would come like a raging lion (4:6-13). Jeremiah’s chief enemies were the priests and the prophets (26:7,8). They had a large following among the people. It is sad to notice that the principal opposition to the message of God came from the professedly religious people.

Jeremiah – MASTER OF IMAGINATION.

- _____ → Jeremiah’s imagination shows us how God permeates everything around us, shows us what our lives look like from the inside, and forces us to examine what we suppose we are doing and what God is doing in us.
- _____ → God was asking: “How can I get these people to take me seriously, right where they are?” “How can I get them to see the continuities between what I did in Abraham and Moses and David and what they are now?” How can I get them out of their tedious egos into my glorious will here and now?”
- _____ → The great masters of imagination train us to see the whole—not in fragments but in context, with all the connections. They connect the visible and the invisible, the *this* with the *that*.
- _____ → One of the essential ministries in nurturing the life of faith (Hebrews 11:1-3). Jeremiah’s imagination saw at the potter house the beauty of each piece as a reflection of every human being. The brute fact of the clay, lumpish and inert, shaped for a purpose by the hands of the potter, and then, as it took shape, the realization of the uniquely designed individuality and wide-ranging usefulness it would acquire as a finished pot. God shapes us for his eternal purposes and he begins right here.

Jeremiah – WHAT DO YOU SEE?

- _____ → Jeremiah knew all about broken people. He knew about spoiled vessels—men and women with impurities and blemishes that resist the shaping hand of the creator. He saw clearly in the potters work the imperfections, failures. He saw clearly the sin, rebellion, self-will, wandering of the people.
- _____ → Watching the potter, Jeremiah saw how God doesn’t throw away what is spoiled. Just as the potter would simply start over and use the same clay to make another pot, God kneads and presses, pushes and pulls. The creative work of God starts over again, patiently, skillfully.
- _____ → The people refuse to respond, to participate, to willingly involve themselves in the shaping purposes of God. Jeremiah’s message was meant to make the people responsive to God’s mercy in shaping lives into what is useful and beautiful. In such a setting even his judgments will be seen to be mercies.

IMAGINATION – GOD THE POTTER.

- _____ → This is one of Jeremiah’s most powerful sermons. The image of the potter captured the attention of people of faith everywhere. Jeremiah experienced it before he preached it.
- _____ → The first words that Jeremiah heard from God was “Before I shaped you in the womb” (Jer. 1:5). The verb “shaped” is *yatzar*. The Hebrew word of potter is *yotzer*. The word by which Jeremiah first learned to understand his own life, *yatzar* is the word which is now used to let people understand their lives: God shaped Jeremiah; God is shaping the people.
- _____ → All truth must be experienced personally before it is complete, before its authentic. Jeremiah experienced his life as the created work of God. The life of faith is very physical. Being a Christian is very much a matter of the flesh—of space and time and things. It means being thrown on the potter’s wheel and shaped, our entire selves, into something useful and beautiful. And when we are not useful or beautiful we are reshaped. Painful, but worth it.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Do you have an active imagination?
2. What people or circumstances has God used to show you his path?
3. How active are you in seeking God for fresh vision and new dreams?

Bible Verses – The Message

Jeremiah 12:5 - ⁵ "So, Jeremiah, if you're worn out in this footrace with men, what makes you think you can race against horses? And if you can't keep your wits during times of calm, what's going to happen when troubles break loose like the Jordan in flood?

Psalms 119:32 - ³² I'll run the course you lay out for me if you'll just show me how.

Jeremiah 18:1-12 - ¹ God told Jeremiah, ² "Up on your feet! Go to the potter's house. When you get there, I'll tell you what I have to say." ³ So I went to the potter's house, and sure enough, the potter was there, working away at his wheel. ⁴ Whenever the pot the potter was working on turned out badly, as sometimes happens when you are working with clay, the potter would simply start over and use the same clay to make another pot. ⁵ Then God's Message came to me: ⁶ "Can't I do just as this potter does, people of Israel?" God's Decree! "Watch this potter. In the same way that this potter works his clay, I work on you, people of Israel. ⁷ At any moment I may decide to pull up a people or a country by the roots and get rid of them. ⁸ But if they repent of their wicked lives, I will think twice and start over with them. ⁹ At another time I might decide to plant a people or country, ¹⁰ but if they don't cooperate and won't listen to me, I will think again and give up on the plans I had for them. ¹¹ "So, tell the people of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem my Message: 'Danger! I'm shaping doom against you, laying plans against you. Turn back from your doomed way of life. Straighten out your lives.' ¹² "But they'll just say, 'Why should we? What's the point? We'll live just the way we've always lived, doom or no doom.'"

II Corinthians 4:1,2 - ¹ Since God has so generously let us in on what he is doing, we're not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times. ² We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. And we don't twist God's Word to suit ourselves. Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see and judge for themselves in the presence of God.

Hebrews 11:1-3 - ¹ The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. ² The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd. ³ By faith, we see the world called into existence by God's word, what we see created by what we don't see.

Job 39:19-25 - ¹⁹ "Are you the one who gave the horse his prowess and adorned him with a shimmering mane? ²⁰ Did you create him to prance proudly and strike terror with his royal snorts? ²¹ He paws the ground fiercely, eager and spirited, then charges into the fray. ²² He laughs at danger, fearless, doesn't shy away from the sword. ²³ The banging and clanging of quiver and lance don't faze him. ²⁴ He quivers with excitement, and at the trumpet blast races off at a gallop. ²⁵ At the sound of the trumpet he neighs mightily, smelling the excitement of battle from a long way off, catching the rolling thunder of the war cries.

Philip K. Hardin, M.A., M.Div.

Director of Business & Professional Outreach, Intl. - Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Licensed Professional Counselor, and Certified Life Coach
563 Johnson Avenue – Fairhope, Alabama 36532
Phone: 601-925-0707

Email: phil@bpointl.org

Webpage: www.bpointl.org

RUN WITH HORSES



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– Jeremiah 12:5 (The Message)*

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Psalm 119:32; Jeremiah 18:1-12

Meet Jeremiah

1. **North & South Kingdoms** → The nation of Israel was split after the death of Solomon. His son Rehoboam was set to become the next king. One of Solomon's servants, Jeroboam rebelled. The ten tribes of the north rejected Rehoboam and embraced the leadership of Jeroboam. The two tribes of the south—Judah and Benjamin remained loyal to King Rehoboam. The result of tribal discord and political unrest resulted in the split.
2. **"The Lord said to me"** → Jeremiah 1-12 cover the prophecy during the reign of Josiah. He warned Judah and called her to repentance (Jer. 3:6, 12-13, 22-23). He exposed the moral rottenness of the people (7:1-26). He warned them of coming judgments if they would not return to God. He especially warned them of the danger from the north. He told them that the avengers would come like a raging lion (4:6-13). Jeremiah's chief enemies were the priests and the prophets (26:7,8). They had a large following among the people. It is sad to notice that the principal opposition to the message of God came from the professedly religious people.

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1. **Reality of God** → Jeremiah's imagination shows us how God permeates everything around us, shows us what our lives look like from the inside, and forces us to examine what we suppose we are doing and what God is doing in us.
2. **Be on the Alert** → God was asking: "How can I get these people to take me seriously, right where they are?" "How can I get them to see the continuities between what I did in Abraham and Moses and David and what they are now?" How can I get them out of their tedious egos into my glorious will here and now?"
3. **Connection** → The great masters of imagination train us to see the whole—not in fragments but in context, with all the connections. They connect the visible and the invisible, the *this* with the *that*.
4. **Imagination** → One of the essential ministries in nurturing the life of faith (Hebrews 11:1-3). Jeremiah's imagination saw at the potter house the beauty of each piece as a reflection of every human being. The brute fact of the clay, lumpish and inert, shaped for a purpose by the hands of the potter, and then, as it took shape, the realization of the uniquely designed individuality and wide-ranging usefulness it would acquire as a finished pot. God shapes us for his eternal purposes and he begins right here.

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2. **God doesn't give up** → Watching the potter, Jeremiah saw how God doesn't throw away what is spoiled. Just as the potter would simply start over and use the same clay to make another pot, God kneads and presses, pushes and pulls. The creative work of God starts over again, patiently, skillfully.
3. **HOPE & WARNING** → The people refuse to respond, to participate, to willingly involve themselves in the shaping purposes of God. Jeremiah's message was meant to make the people responsive to God's mercy in shaping lives into what is useful and beautiful. In such a setting even his judgments will be seen to be mercies.

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1. **EXPERIENCE** → This is one of Jeremiah's most powerful sermons. The image of the potter captured the attention of people of faith everywhere. Jeremiah experienced it before he preached it.
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