



WHOSE GOD IS HE?

KEY SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 42:1-4, Matthew 27:45-53, Hebrews 4:14-16,
Hebrews 10:19-23

Troublesome times abounded in the lives of the Israelites, often because of their disobedience. Ups and downs were all around, and it was no different during the time of the prophet Jeremiah. One day as I was reading Jeremiah 42, a particular section really saddened me. And it wasn't because of the people's troubles.

It was because they felt so far away from God when they just didn't need to.

The people had come to Jeremiah in order to petition him to pray on their behalf. *"Please hear our petition and pray to the LORD your God for this entire remnant. For as you now see, though we were once many, now only a few are left. Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do"* (Jeremiah 42:2-3).

Jerusalem had fallen and the people were being overtaken by the Babylonians. They wanted to run to Egypt, and they needed a "Go" or "Don't go" answer. They did the right thing by asking for God's direction. And maybe they felt far away because they knew they had been disobedient. The sad thing that jumped out at me was this: did you notice that they kept saying "your" God? They were acting as though God wasn't their very own. Instead, they were acting as if Jeremiah had the only connection to the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and they desperately wanted the prophet to use that connection to find out what they were supposed to do.

Jeremiah agreed to do so, but he didn't stop there. When he replied to the people, he said, *"I have heard you."* He then went on to say, *"I will certainly pray to the LORD your God as you have requested; I will tell you everything the LORD says and will keep nothing back from you"* (Jeremiah 42:4).

Jeremiah made sure to let his response be a reminder that his God was also the people's God. And He still is.

One of my favorite parts of the crucifixion story is the tearing of the temple curtain. Not only is it one of my favorites because of what it signifies—access to God for every believer—but because

(continued)

"...so we can know our value, live with purpose, and make a difference...**In that order.**"



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God did it. The curtain split from top to bottom. God wanted there to be no mistake that He was, and is, the people's God. Access is not just for the priests of old. Access is not just for today's pastors and Bible study leaders. Access is for every person who believes in what the sacrifice of His Son Jesus provided.

So it saddens me to read the verses in Jeremiah. They were written thousands of years ago, but they are still so very true today. Echoed in words like, "I don't feel like I can come back to God until I get my life cleaned up" or "I really need the pastor to pray for me," there is still evidence that God seems distant to some, even many. Unreachable. Untouchable. He's just the pastor's God. He's just the Bible study leader's God. He can't really be mine, too. Can He?

Yes. Yes. And yes again. And it is all because of Jesus.

Let the book of Hebrews settle the issue of whose God He is.

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

"Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from the guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:19-23).

God is our God. God is my God. God is your God. All because of Jesus.

No curtain. No separation. All access. All confidence. Not guilty. Not alone. Always hopeful. Always welcome.

Amen and amen.

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