



St Marylebone
Parish Church

Jeremiah 20.10-13

Friday 3rd April 2020

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In our first reading this morning, the prophet Jeremiah finds himself besieged and under suspicion.

He knows that his unflinching no-holds-barred words of prophecy will be his undoing.

Faithful to God's prompting he does not flinch from telling the people of Jerusalem what they do not want to hear.

The people want to know that everything will alright, that their God will rescue them from the dire straits in which they find themselves, but Jeremiah, tells it as it is as he awaits either exile - along with everyone who is left alive in the city - or, what seems ever more likely, certain death.

Jeremiah is all too aware that former friends and supporters have given up on him; that there is no shortage of people who are ready to denounce him – just to shut him up. Even those who were once his closest allies, he knows are waiting in the wings eager to trip him up and catch him out.

But in the midst of everything, Jeremiah has no doubt that the God whom he serves is with him; that the God to whom he has committed himself without reserve will not fail him – whatever happens to Jerusalem and its doomed people.

This is not pie-in-the-sky when we die stuff, but unshakeable hope and trust, whatever will happen to Jeremiah – be it exile or death, or exile and *then* death.

In the face of everything and everyone, Jeremiah continues wait patiently upon God and tell things as they are – even if no-one will listen.

In the face of everything and everyone, Jeremiah proclaims “But the LORD is with me - like a dread warrior”.

Others may prove fickle, turn against him, betray him, “but (he knows) they will not prevail (they cannot prevail) because (the LORD is with him)”.

Faithful Jeremiah knows, beyond any shadow of doubt, that God is with him and for him. That, whatever comes, God, like a dread warrior, has already delivered him and that all shall be wellⁱ.

Amen

ⁱ Mother Julian of Norwich, Thirteenth Showing: *“In my folly, before this time I often wondered why, by the great foreseeing wisdom of God, the onset of sin was not prevented: for then, I thought, all should have been well. This impulse [of thought] was much to be avoided, but nevertheless I mourned and sorrowed because of it, without reason and discretion. “But Jesus, who in this vision informed me of all that is needed by me, answered with these words and said: ‘It was necessary that there should be sin; but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.’ “These words were said most tenderly, showing no manner of blame to me nor to any who shall be saved.”*