

## How Can You Contend with Horses?

Text: Jeremiah 12:5

Scripture Reading: Jer. 12:1-17

Theme: Growing out of our anxieties

### I. The question and the answer

A. Jeremiah's question: Why do the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer?

1. Jeremiah trusts God and knows that God sees his heart. God knows that the prophet has believed the promise that He would send a Savior to redeem those who truly believe and trust in Him (Jer. 5:3a, 16). Jeremiah was saved and knew it.
2. The wicked may enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, but will face eternal judgment unless they repent and trust God for their salvation (Jer. 5:17).

B. God's answer: These little stresses and frustrations come to strengthen you to prepare you to witness My judgments to come—including those against your nation, your leaders, and even your family.

### II. The problems and the process

A. James 1:2-4

1. Pressure produces patience ("cheerful endurance")
2. Patience is not the end result--let it have its "perfect work"

B. Romans 5:1-5

1. Pressure produces patience
2. Patience produces experience (proof of our salvation/Fruit of the Spirit)
3. Experience produces hope (confidence in God's plan)
4. Hope in the gracious, loving God will never disappoint us

C. 2 Peter 1:2-9

1. God provides faith to face the corruption of the world
2. To faith we must add virtue (excellence, valor, "manliness")
3. To virtue we must add knowledge of the Word and the world
4. To knowledge we must add temperance (self-control, continence)
5. Only then are we ready for patience
6. To patience we must add godliness (piety, holiness--experience)
7. To godliness we must add brotherly kindness (fraternal affection)
8. Then we are ready for charity (Godly unconditional love)
9. At this point we will be fruitful and profitable for God no matter what happens

### III. The self-examination and determination

A. Are our lives controlled by the frustrations and injustices around us?

B. What must each of us do to follow the path to confidence and blessing?

The answer is the Provider. All these things that are added or produced in our lives must come from God. Our reliance on Him must be total and passionate.