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| **Opposition to the Message**  *Promise: Christ will sustain us and deliver us from evil.* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Jeremiah 11:18-20; Psalm 54; James 3:13—4:10; Mark 9:30-37 (18th Sunday after Pentecost, Pr. 20), 9/22/24)  *But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter* – v. 19  **Lead In –** When Jesus was rejected in His hometown of Nazareth, He uttered these words, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household” (Mk 6:4). Certainly, Jesus had in mind a prophet like Jeremiah. Jeremiah’s hometown was Anathoth. And in our Old Testament Reading we learn of God’s warning to Jeremiah that his hometown village was plotting to kill him. But for the warning, Jeremiah’s career might have been prematurely ended. And why was there such animosity against Jeremiah? They didn’t like the message, so they were endeavoring to shoot the messenger…   1. **The Weeping Prophet’s Message to Judah**    1. Jeremiah’s ministry, at least threefold…    2. Seemingly speaking against the temple in Jerusalem…    3. Glimpse into the pain of difficulty of God’s servant… 2. **Prophets Like Jeremiah Prefigure Word Made Flesh**    1. Jesus’ message echoed that of the prophets…    2. He did not go over especially well in his hometown…    3. Indeed, like a lamb He was led to the slaughter… 3. **The Hope That Sustains Us**    1. Knowing where this difficult path leads…    2. Realizing the company we are in…    3. Things are going according to script, so we know...   **Final Word –** Yes, it is true, they sometimes shoot the messenger when they don’t like the message. This can mean literally putting the messenger to death. More often it means the possibility of being ridiculed, maligned, hated, and marginalized. So why would we have anything to do with the message? Because if we receive it, it will save us. And if we receive it, we will know it can save others. And with the message received, we will have God’s love shed abroad in our hearts, resulting in a compassion and love for others who desperately need the only real hope there is in the world. Truly receiving His love results in a compulsion to share this love with others. Even when there is opposition. Or, perhaps better, especially when there is opposition.  **Dt 28:15** But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.  **Dt 28:36** The Lord will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone.  **Je 7:8-11** “Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—only to go on doing all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord.  **Je 31:31** Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah | **Jeremiah 11:18-20 ESV**  *Attempt to Silence God’s Messenger*  18The Lord made it known to me and I knew;     then you showed me their deeds.  19But I was like a gentle lamb     led to the slaughter.  I did not know it was against me     they devised schemes, saying, “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,     let us cut him off from the land of the living,     that his name be remembered no more.”  20But, O Lord of hosts, who judges righteously,     who tests the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them,     for to you have I committed my cause.  **Je 15:10** Woe is me, my mother, that you bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me.  **Je 18:20** Should good be repaid with evil? Yet they have dug a pit for my life. Remember how I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away your wrath from them.  **Je 20:7c-8** I have become a laughingstock all the day; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, “Violence and destruction!” For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long.  **Jn 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.  **He 1:1-2** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.  **Mk 1:14-15** Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”  **Mk 15:58** “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’”  **Is 53:7** He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.  **Jn 1:29** “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”  **Mt 7:14** For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life.  **Mt 5:12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.  **The Closer to Punishment** the more obstinate the unrepentant become. They double down in their rebellion.  **Because Jesus died and rose again: Ro 6:4-5** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. |