

15. TIME TO WAKE UP!

What wakes you up in the morning? It could be a prayer call from the local mosque. May be it's an alarm clock. Perhaps the approaching daylight, a nearby cockerel, or you've simply had enough sleep!

Do you like getting up in the morning? On these cold winter days, it seems nicer to stay wrapped up on the bed. Under your sheet you may think immediately of the challenges and difficulties of the day ahead. It could be easier to stay in bed and let the world just happen. 'Do I really have to get up'?

Jeremiah was one of God's people in the past. He suffered a lot because of what he believed. When he was feeling 'down' - and it seems that was quite often - he always tried to look beyond the events of his world. He wanted to see what God was doing behind the scenes. He knew that the Sovereign Lord God was far more important than any earthly ruler and could even make their oppressive actions serve to advance his own overarching purpose.

Jeremiah accepted darkness, weariness, hardship, obstacles and painful experiences, as all coming, directly or indirectly, from the hand of God. He responded with faith, not in fatalism. He saw that running through all of his sufferings was the rich seam of God's grace. 'If I'm alive enough to grumble at what's happening, God has at the very least saved my life!' Wake up and be thankful.

I hear a number of people complaining about life. "My employer has done this". "The government has done that". "I don't have enough work to meet the bills". Our newspapers trumpet this everyday. Perhaps we need to call to our minds Jeremiah's secret of confidence?

He wrote: I remember my bitterness. My soul is downcast. Yet, "I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is his faithfulness".

Daily life is much better when your first two thoughts on waking up are: 'God has given me another day here to live for Jesus. And I'm going to make the most of it, to honour him'.