



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 4: Exclusive

Suggested Week of Use: June 25, 2023

Core Passage: Jeremiah 12:1-13

News Story Summary

Minnesota resident, Geraldine Tyler, 94, owed \$15,000 in property taxes and associated fines related to a condo she owned. Because of the unpaid taxes, the county seized her condo and sold it to recoup the \$15,000. However, the property sold for \$40,000. When the government kept the additional \$25,000, Tyler decided to sue. Her lawyers argued that the Fifth Amendment's "Takings Clause" prohibits the government from taking property worth more than what is owed by the owner. As the case made its way through the courts, Tyler lost each time. However, the United States Supreme Court recently issued a unanimous decision in her favor, affirming that her constitutional rights had been violated. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote, "The taxpayer must render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, but no more." Tyler's lawyers also argued that Minnesota had violated the Eighth Amendment, which prohibits excessive fines for crimes. The Supreme Court justices agreed.

For more about this story, search "Grandmother wins at Supreme Court."

Focus Attention

To supplement the Engage activities, write *That's not fair!* on the board. Invite volunteers to recall times when they've made that comment. Say: *We often see things in life that aren't fair and wish we could make them right.* Share the story about Geraldine Tyler's fight with the state of Minnesota. Facilitate a brief discussion about how this story reflects fairness and justice. Say: *We love to hear stories where unfair situations are made right. But that doesn't always happen.* Explain that in today's session Jeremiah raised some serious questions to God about what he considered unfair situations. Encourage the group to identify ways Jeremiah's situation mirrors our world today—and how we can be God's agents for change.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind the group of Geraldine Tyler's situation. Ask: *What kept her going after the losses in lower courts?* Encourage the group to share their thoughts on what Jeremiah learned from questioning God about the unfairness he saw. Ask: *What does Jeremiah's example teach us about trusting God, even when it seems like the wicked are getting away with sin?* Say: *Geraldine's situation was made right, but we have to wait on God's timing for justice to be meted out.* Challenge adults to work for justice when they can and to trust God's timing and justice in the situations they can't change. Urge them to stay faithful to Him, even when things don't seem fair.