

**PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY! NOTES FOR THIS WEEK: 1/25-26/2021
THIS WEEK'S STUDY: *Jeremiah Chapters 15-16***

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)
THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS112, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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+16699006833,,87858644763# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,87858644763# US (Houston)

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+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose); +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston); +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma); +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C); +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago);

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**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).
THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!**

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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+16699006833,,85309150746# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,85309150746# US (Tacoma)

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Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 For Audio & notes from previous studies - www.ptwente.com

OPENING PRAYER – Introduction

- How do the constant reminders to Judah to repent and turn to the LORD; also Jeremiah's weeping response, impact you personally?

(Psa 139:23-24) Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my; [24] And see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

- What does "God bless America, mean today in this nation? (God of Rama?)

(Mat 22:32) 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB' ? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.'

GOD IS FAITHFUL!

(2Co 1:20) For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

(Mal 3:6-7) "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

(Psa 89:14) Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.

(Heb 13:8) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not; as Thou hast been Thou forever will be. Great is Thy faithfulness!

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS! *Chisholm; Runyan - Fetke (2:49)*

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with Thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not; as Thou hast been Thou forever will be. Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed Thy hand hath provided; great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth. Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide; strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed Thy hand hath provided; great is Thy faithfulness; great is Thy faithfulness; great is Thy faithfulness! Lord, unto me!

THIS WEEK'S STUDY:

Jeremiah 15-16 – Inevitable Judgment! The Lord Will Not Relent (vs. 1-9): Jeremiah's Dejection (vs. 10-18); The LORD Reassures Jeremiah (vs. 19-21); Chapter 16 – Jeremiah's Lifestyle and Message (vs. 1-13); God Will Restore Israel (vs. 14-21)

- We see that Jeremiah is a brokenhearted man who wants to go to God to pray for his people. That was very right and fine. However, God has something interesting to say to him:

Jer 15:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth.

- The people have gone too far, and judgment must come upon them. They have gone over the borderline where there is absolutely no possibility for reprieve. They will not escape captivity. The Lord tells Jeremiah that he shouldn't think that God is not hearing his prayers. There was nothing wrong in Jeremiah's prayers. God says that even if *Moses* stood before Him, He would not listen. In Exodus 32, *Moses* was a marvelous intercessor for the people. When God threatened to destroy the people, *Moses* had stood before Him as their intercessor. God answered his prayer and spared the people. But now, even if *Moses* were acting as the intercessor for the people, it wouldn't do any good. *Samuel* was another who had prayed for the people.

Judgment had been averted again and again because of *Samuel*. But God says that even if *Samuel* were to pray now, there could be no averting of the judgment. The people had stepped across the borderline, and judgment was inevitable. We can understand why Jeremiah is giving a message of nothing but judgment.

- **Cast them out of My sight and let them go forth:** Judah will face its appointed and righteous exile out of the land.

Jer 15:2 *And it shall be, if they say to you, 'Where should we go?' then you shall tell them, 'Thus says the LORD: 'Such as are for death, to death; And such as are for the sword, to the sword; And such as are for the famine, to the famine; And such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.' "*

- **Where should we go?:** God promised in the previous verse that Judah would be cast out of His sight and would be sent forth. Now God anticipated the question, “*Where should we go?*”
- **Death... sword... famine... captivity:** Some will go to *death* (actually, plague or pestilence), some will die in battle by the *sword*, some will perish through *famine*, and the remaining will go *to the captivity*. There would be no good ways to die.

Jer 15:3 *"And I will appoint over them four forms of destruction," says the LORD: "the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.*

- **Four forms of destruction:** Additionally, and poetically speaking, there would be four ways a corpse could be dishonored after death. It could come through the *sword*, through *dogs*, through *the birds of the heavens* or through *the beasts of the earth*. It would seem as if all creation had gathered against judgment-ripe Judah to not only slay them, but to dishonor their dead bodies. For the corpse of a man to be dragged on the ground and then become carrion for bird and beast was too horrendous for an Israelite to contemplate. It was the ultimate in desecration of the dead.

Jer 15:4 *I will hand them over to trouble (make them abhorrent), to all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.*

- **I will hand them over to trouble, to all kingdoms of the earth:** What a literal fulfillment of this prophecy! Still today, Jews are scattered through every nation, and yet are not a nation; nor do they form even a colony on any part of the face of the earth. Behold the truth and the justice of God!
- **Because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah:** There were sinful kings in Judah before and after *Manasseh*, and the people themselves did not obey and seek God. Yet there was something so horrific about the sin and rebellion of *Manasseh* that made judgment inevitable, irreversible.
- **We're told of Manasseh's great sin, (2Ki 24:3-4)** *Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, [4] and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.*
- **(2 Kings 21:16)** summarized it as so: *Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.* Yet – strangely, “The monstrous *Manasseh* found personal forgiveness (2 Chron 33:12-13) *Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, [13] and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God. But his legacy remained, both in the crimes of his regime against the innocent, and in the sins he had taught his people to embrace.*
- **Manasseh was the king whose wickedness put the nation into that death dive.** There was no pulling out. Going back into the history, if you read of *Manasseh* and all of the horrible things that he did, yet in his latter years *Manasseh* repented and God forgave him. He was forgiven! Here was *Manasseh* who led the nation into this irreversible position of facing the judgment of God and still God was merciful to *Manasseh* and forgave him. What a forgiving God He is! What a glorious, merciful, forgiving God He is!

Jer 15:5 *"For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem? Or who will bemoan you? Or who will turn aside to ask how you are doing? Jer 15:6* *You have forsaken Me," says the LORD, "You have gone (and keep going) backward. Therefore I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am weary of relenting!*

- **You have gone backward.**—that's backsliding, doing it over and over again! Judah has become the reverse of what they should have been and of what God by His law would have led them forward to! He had listened to the prayers, He had responded to the intercession. But now He just says, I am just weary of it. I have had it, that is all. **I am weary of relenting!** I am just weary of withholding that judgment that

you deserve! They have come to Him over and over with their weeping and their promises to do better, but they continually go right back into the same old sin. Judah was most blind to it, but God had held back His judgment against Judah for a long, long time. They presumed upon God in *relenting* in His own judgment against them, never considering that one day He would become *weary* of it and relent no more. They had gone over the line. God is tired of it all, and He says the time has now come when He intends to judge them.

Jer 15:7 And I will winnow them with a winnowing fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children; I will destroy My people, Since they do not return from their ways.

- The work of *winnowing* used wind to scatter the chaff, separating it from the valuable grain. God would soon scatter Judah and Jerusalem into exile, as if from a *winnowing fan*.

Jer 15:8 Their widows will be increased to Me more than the sand of the seas; I will bring against them, Against the mother of the young men, A plunderer at noonday; I will cause anguish and terror to fall on them suddenly.

Jer 15:9 "She languishes who has borne seven; She has breathed her last; Her sun has gone down While it was yet day; She has been ashamed and confounded. And the remnant of them I will deliver to the sword Before their enemies," says the LORD.

- ***Their widows will be increased to Me more than the sand of the seas:*** Considering the destruction and judgment to come upon Judah, God mentioned all the **widows** that would come forth from those slain in battle and exile.
- ***She languishes who has borne seven:*** Bearing seven children would normally be considered a sign of great blessing, complete happiness – something of a perfect family. Now even that woman suffers and perishes; ***she has been ashamed and confounded*** by the great judgment of God to come upon Judah.
- ***She has breathed her last, Her sun has gone down While it was yet day;*** a phrase for death, the departing of a person's spirit from their body, is one of the definitions of death in the Bible. It is talking about Jerusalem in a figurative sense.

Jeremiah's Dejection - Complaint

Jer 15:10 Woe is me, my mother, That you have borne me, A man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent for interest, Nor have men lent to me for interest. Every one of them curses me.

- Jeremiah responds to this statement of God's severe judgment that is coming. ***Jeremiah had become cursed by the people because of his declaring of what God was going to do.*** He was saying, "If you do not turn God is going to bring judgment and famine upon this place." And now as they are experiencing this famine, they start cursing Jeremiah. ***Woe is me that my mother have borne me.*** I have only done what God told me to do, I have not really done evil, yet everyone is cursing me. Like Job, he wondered if it would be better if he was never born.
- ***A man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth:*** The ***woe*** of Jeremiah lay primarily in the fact that he continually battled for the message God gave him to proclaim. His work as a prophet was filled with ***strife*** and ***contention*** that seemed to be set against ***the whole earth***.
- ***This is one of Jeremiah's most moving confessions.*** He was complaining of loneliness. His greatness lay in his sensitive nature that felt acute pain for his people and their doom. The hopelessness of the nation's situation and his own difficulties of his position weighed on him. One of the greatest trials to which the people of God are subject, in trying to serve their Master, is **non-success!**

Jer 15:11 The LORD said: "Surely it will be well with your remnant; Surely I will cause the enemy to intercede with you In the time of adversity and in the time of affliction.

- Jeremiah is saying, "***Woe is me, horrible things are going to happen, and I am an innocent man.***" And the LORD said, Jeremiah, it will be okay with you." In Jeremiah chapters 39-40, We will see God's faithfulness in protecting and freeing Jeremiah from the Babylonians. The guard said that he could do whatever you want. God kept His word to the prophet. We can notice there is no release from his calling: only a renewing of it.

Jer 15:12 Can anyone break iron, The northern iron and the bronze?

- ***The Babylonians are coming in the strength*** of iron and steel. You will not be able to stand against them. Though God said He would take care of His prophet Jeremiah in the coming crisis, it did not mean that the fate of Judah generally had changed. The weapons of Babylon – made with strong ***northern iron and the bronze*** – would surely come against them.

Jer 15:13 *Your wealth and your treasures I will give as plunder without price, Because of all your sins, Throughout your territories.*

Jer 15:14 *And I will make you cross over with your enemies Into a land which you do not know; For a fire is kindled in My anger, Which shall burn upon you."*

- God, again, is pronouncing the judgment that is going to come against the nation because they have forsaken the LORD. And Jeremiah responds to that and says; *I will make you cross over with your enemies into a land which you do not know*: Not only was the judgment and conquest of Judah certain, but they would also be exiled from their land into the unknown land of their enemies.

Jer 15:15 *O LORD, You know; Remember me and visit me, And take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In Your enduring patience, do not take me away. Know that for Your sake I have suffered rebuke.*

- Jeremiah saying, *"It is because of You, it is for Your sake that I have suffered* this rebuke and this reproach and all that is befallen me as I have prophesied what You told me to say. Lord, they have heaped all of this abuse upon me."
- **When you come as a servant of God with the Word of God to the worldly crowd, will likely turn upon you.**, which should not be taken as a personal offense. They do not even know you. But they do not like what you are saying. They do not want to hear that and so they will turn upon the servant that is speaking the Word of God. Thus, they did with Jeremiah, as will be done with you if you go forth to rebuke the evil of the world in the name of Jesus.

Jer 15:16 *Your words were found, and I ate (devoured, consumed) them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name (I'm a born again Christian), O LORD God of hosts.*

- As Jeremiah continued to plead his case before God, **he declared to God his great love for and focus upon God's word.** Jeremiah first *found* God's *Word*; neither neglecting nor taking it for granted. He then *ate* God's Word; taking it in as food for the soul and receiving refreshment and nourishment from it.
- **Jeremiah then regarded God's Word as *the joy and rejoicing of his heart!*** He delighted upon the Word of God and did so in his innermost being!
- **You have called me.** I have been *called by Your name* and thus Your word was comfort, it was strength, it was *the joy and the rejoicing of my heart* as I devoured Your word. The word of God will always have that effect if you will just really devour the word of God you will find that it will become *the joy and rejoicing of your heart!*
- (**Job 23:12**) *I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth More than my necessary food.* The word of God is to our souls what our necessary food is to our bodies; it sustains the spiritual life and strengthens us for the actions of life; it is that which we cannot subsist without, and which nothing else can make up the want of: and we ought therefore so to esteem it, to take pains for it, hunger after it, feed upon it with delight, and nourish our souls with it; and this will be our rejoicing in the day of evil, as it was with Job.
- **We may see a secret of Jeremiah here, that His outer life, consisting in his perpetual faithful ministry, was due to his inward love of the word which he preached!** Jeremiah found his consolation in it. He ate it and he digested it and it became a part of him. How we need to get into the Word of God today, not just a little surface learning of a few rules, or just a little guideline of a few steps to take. We need to digest it so that it becomes part of our being. It will bring joy and rejoicing to the heart just as it did for Jeremiah. Only the Word of God can do this. Does God's word really bring joy and rejoicing into my heart? Now?

Jer 15:17 *I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers (God's people!), Nor did I rejoice; I sat alone (intimacy with the LORD is so important) because of Your hand, For You have filled me with indignation.*

- **Because of God's hand on Jeremiah, he was ostracized** even from his family. His own family turned against him. *I sat alone because of Your hand*: The separation from *the mockers* meant that there were times when the prophet *sat alone*, out of obedience and integrity to God and His Word. This is an important reminder to each of us as we minister in obedience! We can anticipate this more and more in our future.

Jer 15:18 *Why is my pain perpetual And my wound incurable, Which refuses to be healed? Will You surely be to me like an unreliable stream, As waters that fail?*

- **LORD, why do I have to go through all of this misery** when I am only seeking to serve You! I am only seeking to do what You have told me to do. And yet the pain that I experience, the wounds incurable.

- Now he said, “LORD, were You being truthful with me? I am going through all these things.” He was put in the dungeon. He was given just bread and water, just survival in the dungeon. It appeared that God maybe was not keeping His word. Jeremiah had a true trust in God and connection to His Word, yet this did not remove the crisis. There were still times when his pain seemed *perpetual* and he feared God might not be faithful to him – as *an unreliable stream*. This was a genuine challenge to Jeremiah’s faith in God’s goodness and power. God, You are my only hope! Will Your fail me? Will we remember this when genuine challenges come our way?

Jer 15:19 Therefore thus says the LORD: "If you return, Then I will bring you back; You shall stand before Me; If you take out the precious (the doubt - utter what is precious, and not what is worthless) from the vile, You shall be as My mouth. Let them return to you, But you must not return to them.

Jer 15:20 And I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall; And they will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you (victory, not immunity, is promised to Jeremiah); For I am with you to save you And deliver you," says the LORD.

- ***If you return, then I will bring you back:*** Jeremiah, you need to repent of everything you have been thinking of My failing you! But God is saying that it’s impossible for any His promises to fail! So repent of that, Jeremiah! Despite the current rejection and the coming crisis there remained a promise of restoration. If he rejected the temptation to regard God as uncaring or unreliable and continued to *take out the precious from the vile*, to find God’s goodness even the hard times, he would continue to be a spokesman for God. He must recover his temper, and be reconciled to his work, and friends with it again, and not quarrel with it any more as he had done. He must *return*, must shake off these distrustful discontented thoughts and passions, and not give way to them, **must regain the peaceable possession and enjoyment of himself, and resolve to be easy.**
- ***He must distinguish between some and others of those he preached to: take out the precious from the vile.*** The righteous are the precious be they ever so mean and poor; the wicked are the vile be they ever so rich and great. In our congregations these are mixed, wheat and chaff in the same floor; we cannot distinguish them by name, but we must by character, and must give to each a portion, **speaking comfort to precious saints and terror to vile sinners, neither making the heart of the righteous, sad nor strengthening the hands of the wicked**, but rightly dividing the word of truth. Ministers must take those whom they see to be *precious* into their bosoms, and **not sit alone** as Jeremiah did, but **keep up conversation with those** they may properly minister to.
- ***Let them return to you, but you must not return to them: Jeremiah you stand and not yield in a humble and loving way.*** It was important for Jeremiah **to remain unmovable**, a prophet of God. The people of God could *return* to him, but he must not move from his place to accommodate them. Jeremiah must do the utmost he can, in his preaching, to bring people up to the mind of God; he must tell them they must, at their peril, comply with that. ***You must not return to them.*** Do not compliment them, nor comply with them, nor think to make the matter easier to them than the word of God has made it.” **Men's hearts and lives must come up to God's law and comply with that, for God's law will never come down to them nor comply with them!**
- ***The heartening promises remind Jeremiah of his opening ministry call, almost word for word (Jer 1:18-19) For behold, I have made you this day A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls against the whole land—Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land. [19] They will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you," says the LORD, "to deliver you."*** They offer nothing easy. But the strength that they speak of, and the undefeated outcome, will be the glory of Jeremiah’s ministry.
- ***God says, “You just stay on the firing line, and I will take care of you.”*** The final victory, Jeremiah, will be yours. They will fight against you. There will be times when it seems like they are prevailing, but **the final victory is yours! Be faithful!**

Jer 15:21 "I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, And I will redeem you from the grip of the terrible (deliver you from the grasp of the cruel). "

- ***If Jeremiah remained steadfast in his position as God’s prophet, God would make him strong and unconquerable.*** God would fulfill His promise to *deliver from the hand of the wicked* and *to redeem from the grip of the terrible*. The promise of deliverance is expressed in three significant Old Testament verbs of deliverance: *Save* - bringing out of those under restraint into a broad place; *Deliver*: “Pictures the activity of one who snatches his prey from the grasp of a powerful possessor; *Redeem*: liberation from the possession of another by the giving up of a ransom...it came to refer to acts of deliverance in daily life.

Jer 16:1 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying, Jer 16:2 "You shall not (shall never) take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place."

- All the way through the book of Jeremiah, *the word of the LORD came unto me saying*. I would imagine that it had to be pretty clear for him to remain unmarried.
- **The word of the LORD came saying, you are not to take a wife.** God told Jeremiah not to marry because of the calamities and his singleness and his not having children was to be used as an illustrated message to the people.
- **Jeremiah, "You are not to take a wife and have sons and daughters in this place."** Because those children that are here, the daughters and the sons that are born, their mothers and their fathers are all of them to be destroyed. They are going to die grievous deaths and they will not be lamented neither shall they be buried. There is going to be wholesale slaughter by the Babylonians. And those that are not slaughtered will be taken away as captives and the carcasses of the people will just be left to rot there in the ruins of Jerusalem. You are not to take a wife or have children to subject them to the terror that is going to befall the city of Jerusalem.
- **God gave Jeremiah a unique command, one that went against the general will of God** for His people and against the strong cultural traditions of the Jewish people. Jeremiah was commanded to neither take a wife nor to have sons or daughters. In ancient Jewish culture and still among many observant Jews today, it was a shame and a dishonor to be single and childless. Marriage and childbearing were expected.

Jeremiah's obedience to God's command would attract attention! Designed to deliver the message!

Jer 16:3 For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them and their fathers who begot them in this land:

Jer 16:4 "They shall die gruesome deaths; they shall not be lamented nor shall they be buried, but they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be meat for the birds of heaven and for the beasts of the earth."

- ***They shall die gruesome deaths:*** This was God's reason for the unusual command to Jeremiah. The present time was so filled with distress and coming crisis that it was wise for Jeremiah to not marry or have children. Jeremiah's being denied a wife and children would be a warning that the family life of the nation was to be completely disrupted.

Jer 16:5 For thus says the LORD: "Do not enter the house of mourning, nor go to lament or bemoan them (do not go to mourn or show sympathy, because I have withdrawn my blessing,) ; for I have taken away My peace from this people," says the LORD, "lovingkindness and mercies.

Jer 16:6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land. They shall not be buried; neither shall men lament for them, cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them.

- **It was normal to mourn and lament with others in the time of death.** Yet because God had *taken away His peace from this people*, Jeremiah was not to join with others in their formal expressions of mourning. Jeremiah would be denied the blessing of serving the sorrowing.
- ***Both the great and the small shall die in this land:*** Jeremiah was to stay away from occasions of mourning with others as a sign of the great calamity to come upon Judah, when death would be so widespread that the dead ***shall not be buried; neither shall men lament for them.***
- ***Cut themselves*** (rites of self-mutilation), ***nor make themselves bald for them:*** When the coming judgment struck Judah, none of the mourning practices would be observed. Not those that were culturally accepted (***break bread in mourning for them***) nor those that were disobedient imitations of pagan rituals for the dead (***cut themselves***).

Jer 16:7 Nor shall men break bread in mourning for them, to comfort them for the dead; nor shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or their mother.

- **Different cultures they have different practices.** In India, when the husband dies they have the fires and they throw the body on to cremate it, then if she is a good faithful wife she jumps into the bonfire herself. It is just part of their customs. People that do these strange things in their mourning or in their showing of grief, the various cultural things whereby people show their grief. Here he is referring to other actions of people tearing themselves in mourning to comfort them for the dead.
- ***Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink.*** Doctors today often give person sedation when a love one has died to calm them down and they will sedate them. They are not to give them this cup

of consolation to drink for their fathers or for their mothers. Even to the present day quite often after the funeral they have a feast. The friends bring in the food and you go in and have a time of fellowshiping and feasting.

Jer 16:8 Also you shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and drink."

- **Jeremiah, in your days these things are going to cease in the land.** There will be no more parties. There will be no more voices of gladness or of the bridegroom or the bride in the marriage celebrations. Just as Jeremiah was commanded to detach himself from normal family relationships and expressions of public mourning, so he was also to detach himself from public celebrations. All these were done as signs of the coming judgment.

Jer 16:9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will cause to cease from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

- **When the crisis of judgment came upon Judah there were be no gladness or wedding celebrations.** As a sign, Jeremiah was to live in his present day as if that judgment had already come.

Jer 16:10 "And it shall be, when you show (he is showing, not just saying God's message) this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us? Or what is our iniquity? Or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'

- **Jeremiah is to lay this heavy trip on them** of the slaughter and their carcasses lying there being devoured by the birds and the animals with no mourning and no lamenting. The people will say, "What have we done, what is our sin, what is our iniquity that God would do these kind of things to us?"
- **Why has the LORD pronounced all this great disaster against us:** Several times in the Book of Jeremiah, the LORD anticipated this question from the people and leaders of Judah and was concerned to answer it. It was important to God that they do not regard the calamity as misfortune or bad luck; they needed to see that it was a just response to their sin and rebellion. **Always a tendency toward blame shifting!**

Jer 16:11 then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers have forsaken Me,' says the LORD; 'they have walked after other gods and have served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and not kept My law.

- **The answer to the question, why has God allowed this:** is *because they have forsaken Me. They have turned their backs on God.* God watches over His children. God cares for His children. But you can take yourself out of the place of God's protection and you can, in that place, become a prey to the enemy. So, they had removed themselves from God's place of protection. They had forsaken the Law of God and they had forsaken God. This coming conquest and exile of Judah was not due to the sin of only one generation. It was hardened rebellion over several generations that brought Judah to their soon-to-come judgment.

Jer 16:12 And you have done worse than your fathers, for behold, each one follows the dictates of his own evil heart, so that no one listens to Me (every one of you follows his stubborn, evil will, refusing to listen to Me).

- **Jer 16:13 Therefore I will** The sins of their fathers were enough to made them liable for judgment, but beyond that they added their own guilt. To the sins of their fathers (idolatry and rejection of the LORD's ways), they also worshipped self in a significant way. Your fathers actually served other gods, but you have done worse than your fathers because, they followed their wicked fantasies, seeking to actualize the wicked fantasies of their hearts and forsaking the LORD, not listening to God.

cast you out of this land into a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.'

- **They have turned their backs on God, and God is going to turn their back on them.** They have forsaken God, God is going to forsake them. Because of the collective guilt of their fathers and their own generation, conquest and exile were sure to come. **There you shall serve other gods day and night:** "There Jeremiah ironically assures them that they will have the opportunity of indulging their desire for pagan worship day and night.

The Lord Will Restore Israel

Jer 16:14 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that it shall no more be said, 'The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,'

Jer 16:15 but, 'The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.

- ***Therefore, behold the days are coming:*** The previous word from Jeremiah was about as dark as could be, with God promising *I will not show you favor* in the land of their coming exile. Yet as if God could not help Himself, that word of despair is immediately followed by a wonderful and gracious promise.
- **God always holds out hope for the future!** A miracle of God's grace! The one key aspect to the Christian faith is **the hope that God gives**. He has just spoken of the tremendous darkness that they are facing. The future is totally bleak, just as dark as you can possibly imagine. The enemy is going to come. They are going to be slain, their carcasses devoured by the animals, the residue of the people that are not slain will be taken away to Babylon. This dark, dark picture of the future; but then He goes out beyond that. **God is still going to extend His grace and His mercy unto their children** or children's children, and they will come back from this captivity. They will be restored by God into the land.
- **This is a necessity because the Messiah is not yet come. God has to bring them back.** God promises them that they will come back. They always spoke about the LORD that brought us out of Egypt. That was always the identifying thing for the LORD. The LORD that brought us out of Egypt. He created the nation by bringing us out of Egypt.
- ***For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.*** So, the LORD is always holding out that hope for the future. Again, the earth, the world, is facing a very bleak future. There is going to be a time of great tribulation come upon this earth such as the earth has ever seen before or will ever see again. In all of history there has never been a time of such desolation and devastation, death and destruction as is to come upon the earth in the future. The Bible speaks a lot of these days of God's cataclysmic judgment that are coming. But the LORD does not end the story there. This will be followed by the glorious return of Jesus Christ and the establishing of the kingdom of God and righteous shall cover the earth as waters do cover the sea and there will be no more death, there will be no more sorrow, there will be no more pain, no more suffering, the former things will pass away, everything becomes new. The glorious day of the LORD that is going to come! But before it comes there is going to be darkness and desolation.

Jer 16:16 "Behold, I will send for many fishermen," says the LORD, "and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

Jer 16:17 For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes (He sees! He knows!).

- ***I will send for many fishermen:*** These were fishers of men, but in a negative sense. God would send metaphorical *fishermen* and *hunters* upon His rebellious people to capture them for the promised judgment and exile. They could not hide from the God whose *eyes were on all their ways*. The idea is sort of like a dragnet. When the Babylonians come they will try to hide from them. They will hide in the caves and they will flee but the Babylonians will search out for them. They are going to find them and destroy them. God has seen, you cannot hide from God.

Jer 16:18 And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols."

- **Forsaking the Law of God, forsaking God.** They were offering sacrifices unto these pagan idols. They had built altars to these gods on the tops of the hills. And here are the mountains of the LORD and they are covered with these pagan idols and these worship centers and the people offering their sacrifices.
- ***I will repay double or I will repay them exactly what they deserve for their wickedness and their sin, not so much double as it was proportional. The punishment fit the crime."*** ***Because they have defiled My land:*** This explained one reason why exile was an appropriate answer to Judah's deeply sinful condition. Because they **defiled** the LORD's land, they would be cast out of that land for a season. **To whom much is given, much is required!**

Jer 16:19 O LORD, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth (the Kingdom Age) and say, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things.

Jer 16:20 Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods?

- Despite the gloom of Judah's condition and their impending judgment, Jeremiah still found strength and refuge in the LORD!

- ***The Gentiles shall come to You:*** Here is an interesting prophecy of the Gentiles coming from the ends of the earth and recognizing that the gods that they are worshipping are false and empty. Whereas the Jewish people have turned from the true and the living God, the Gentiles will come from the ends of the earth and recognize that He is truly Jehovah.
- **An even greater work!** Not only would God fulfill the promise to restore His own people from their exile. God promised to draw *the Gentiles* unto Himself, drawing them *from the ends of the earth*.
- **The result of God's judgment on the Jews** will be the end of idolatry; even some Gentiles, witnessing the severity, will renounce idols. After the return from Babylon, this was partly fulfilled as the Jews entirely and permanently renounced idols, and many Gentiles turned from their idols to Jehovah. However, the complete fulfillment will come in the final restoration of Israel (*cf. Isa 2:1-4; 49:6; 60:3*).
- ***Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthless and unprofitable things:*** This would be the repentant testimony of the Gentiles drawn to the LORD. They would see the vanity of their idols and *unprofitable things*.
- **Can any be so silly, and so preposterously absurd?** Interesting, man making a god, isn't it? And how often we see men making their own gods. Yes, fallen man is capable of anything that is base, mean, vile, and wicked, till influenced and converted by the grace of Christ.

Jer 16:21 "Therefore behold, I will this once (at this time) cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD.

- **God promised a mighty revelation of His power and greatness to the Gentiles!** This promise was fulfilled in the display of God's power and love through the work of Jesus and the ongoing presentation of that message. ***They shall know that My name is the LORD:*** In that way the nations would come to know that His name was Yahweh. But a name denoted one's character, and the very name Yahweh denoted a wide range of attributes not least of which as His power to save. (*cf. Ezekiel – know that I am the LORD – 63 X*)
- ***(Rom 12:1-2) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. [2] And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***

Closing Prayer