

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY! NOTES FOR THIS WEEK: 12/14-12/15/2020
THIS WEEK'S STUDY: *Jeremiah Chapter 5:14-6:30*

Monday 7pm 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 - Mon 7 pm!

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484

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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763>

Tuesday 7am 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 - Tues 7 am!

Join Zoom Meeting -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=TK5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

Meeting ID: 853 0915 0746 - Passcode: 715340

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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

Gloria in excelsius deo – Glory in the highest to God! (*Latin*); Glory be to God on High! (*English*)

Angels We Have Heard On High - Chris Tomlin (3:44)

*Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains Gloria in excelsius deo. Gloria in excelsius deo*

*Shepherds why this jubilee Why your joyous strains prolong What the gladsome tidings be, Which
inspire your heavenly song? Gloria in excelsius deo. Gloria in excelsius deo*

*Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing Come adore on bended knee Christ
our Lord, the newborn king Gloria in excelsius deo (4X)*

Review:

Jer 5:10 "Go up on her walls and destroy, But do not make a complete end. Take away her branches,

For they are not the LORD's. Jer 5:11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah Have dealt very treacherously with Me," says the LORD. Jer 5:12 They have lied about the LORD, And said, "It is not He. Neither will evil come upon us, Nor shall we see sword or famine. Jer 5:13 And the prophets become wind, For the word (of the LORD) is not in them. (peace, peace, when there is no peace!) Thus shall it be done to them."

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Jeremiah 5:14 – The LORD Proclaims Judgment; Impending Destruction from the North

Jer 5:14 Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts: "Because you speak this word, Behold, I will make My words in your mouth fire, And this people wood, And it shall devour them. Mat 21:33, 39 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. [39] So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him

- **Jeremiah's word was going to become like fire.** The people were going to be like *wood* and the word of the LORD through Jeremiah was going to *devour them*. Whenever you start prophesying the truth you are going to encounter resistance. People do not want to hear the truth. They love the words of the false prophets, that they are all right. They don't want to hear, "You have to repent, you have to change, or you are going to be destroyed, the judgment of God is going to come." Jesus said in (*Mt. 21:33, 39*) God had sent His prophets to the people, but they mistreated the prophets. They beat the prophets. God finally sent His only begotten Son and they crucified Him!

Jer 5:15 Behold, I will bring a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel," says the LORD. "It is a mighty nation, It is an ancient nation, A nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say. Jer 5:16 Their quiver is like an open tomb; They are all mighty men. Jer 5:17 And they shall eat up your harvest and your bread, Which your sons and daughters should eat. They shall eat up your flocks and your herds; They shall eat up your vines and your fig trees; They shall destroy your fortified cities, In which you trust, with the sword.

- **Behold, I will bring a nation against you from afar...they shall eat up your flocks and herds.** Jeremiah repeated the promise that God would bring a mighty army of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem, later fulfilled by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar. They are going to destroy your walled cities, they are going to eat up your harvest, the things you and your children should be enjoying.
- **Their quiver ... open tomb:** The *mighty men* of the enemy would be invincible because their quivers would be filled with death-dealing arrows, always bringing more destruction. Every arrow could be depended on to slay someone.

Jer 5:18 "Nevertheless in those days," says the LORD, "I will not make a complete end of you.

- **I will not make a complete end of you:** The **gracious promise is again repeated!** (Repeated in *Jer. 4:27; 5:10; 30:11*) Though devastating judgment would come to Judah and Jerusalem, God would not forsake His covenant people and would bring restoration.

Jer 5:19 And it will be when you say, 'Why does the LORD our God do all these things to us?' then you shall answer them, 'Just as you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve aliens in a land that is not

yours.'

- *God* gave them this *land*, but they turned from *God* and were serving strange *gods*. Because of that, *God* said, you will be strangers in a *land*, and you will serve the strangers. You will become the slaves of the Babylonians in a land that is not yours. It is so typical, when they have turned so completely against *God*, living so totally opposed to the things of *God*, such a complete immoral life and when the judgment of *God* comes they say, “*Why does the LORD our God do all these thing to us?*” Because you have not walked in the ways of the *LORD*, you have been walking after your own hearts and flesh, serving *foreign gods*, the *gods* of the flesh. *So, you shall serve aliens in a land that is not yours.'*

Jer 5:20 "Declare this in the house of Jacob And proclaim it in Judah, saying, Jer 5:21 'Hear this now, O foolish people, Without understanding, Who have eyes and see not, And who have ears and hear not: Jer 5:22 Do you not fear Me?' says the LORD. 'Will you not tremble at My presence, Who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea, By a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss to and fro, Yet they cannot prevail; Though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it.

- ***Declare this...proclaim it!*** God says to speak to the people, tell them to hear this, the word of the LORD, people who have eyes, but *they do not see, ears but they don't hear*. Their eyes are closed to God their ears are closed to the things of God.
- ***Hear this now, O foolish people:*** Through Jeremiah, God spoke to Judah and Jerusalem, exposing their spiritual and moral foolishness in resisting and rejecting Him.
- ***Do you not fear Me?'* says the LORD** They have no *fear of God* in their heart. That is one of the greatest problems with people today, they no longer have *the fear of God* in their heart! If they really had the fear of God in their heart they could not do the things that they do. How much do I really *fear* the LORD? Do I really have the *fear of God* in my heart?
- ***Though its waves toss to and fro, yet they cannot prevail.*** The illustration of the ocean and the sand. I am the One who has established the boundaries of the sea, and the boundaries for man, and man is passing over the boundaries. The waters of the sea continually pound upon the sand, yet the sand remains, and the sea remains within its bounds. If the *ocean cannot prevail against the sand*, God's people will never *prevail* in their rebellion against Him.

Jer 5:23 But this people has a defiant and rebellious heart; They have revolted and departed.

- ***God's people did not learn the lesson*** that nature clearly teaches – that it is foolish to fight against God. *They have revolted and departed*. They were revolting against the boundaries that God had set for propriety, for decency. They are rebellious and revolted and have gone over the line, over the mark. How *defiant* and *rebellious* is my heart? **Are our hearts?**

Jer 5:24 They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest." Jer 5:25 Your iniquities have turned these things away, And your sins have withheld good from you.

- ***Your iniquities... your sins:*** “The two words used here for Israel's breaches of covenant are common in the OT. Israel had both wandered away from Yahweh and failed to reach the goal set for her.” Don't blame God when judgment comes!!
- ***Your sins have withheld good from you.*** This is an interesting verse, your sins have withheld good things from you. They had no knowledge that God is the One that has given the former and latter rains, our harvest, the One that is taking care of us. Because now of their sin they are hurting themselves. The good things that God desires to do for them, He cannot do because of their sin. Any present occurrence of this in my life? **Are my sins withholding good things of the LORD from me?**

Jer 5:26 'For among My people are found wicked men; They lie in wait as one who sets snares; They set a trap; They catch men.

- ***Wicked men today*** who are seeking to ***set snares and traps*** for you. Many ***traps*** are ***set*** for you as a child of God in the world today – television, movies, sports. You get snared and trapped. It is so easy to let pollution enter in. Satan is setting a ***trap*** for you because whatever a man sows he is going to reap. If you sow to the flesh, then to the flesh you are going to reap corruption.

Jer 5:27 As a cage is full of birds, So their houses are full of deceit. Therefore they have become great and grown rich.

- ***Becoming great and growing very rich from*** drug dealing, pornography and polluting the minds of people. They have caught them in the trap. One thing about that kind of pollution, once you get trapped you want more and more, becoming a victim, making them ***rich***.

Jer 5:28 They have grown fat, they are sleek; Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; They do not plead the cause, The cause of the fatherless; Yet they prosper, And the right of the needy they do not defend. (Eze 16:49) Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

- ***They do not plead the cause, the cause of the fatherless:*** Instead of taking advantage of the weak and needy, these wicked men should have used their positions of power and influence to do good for them.
- ***They are wicked, yet they prosper.*** They have no real interest in the orphan, in the needy. Their prosperity was not from the blessing of God. It was the result of their own sinful ambition and enterprise – and therefore invited the judgment of God.

Jer 5:29 Shall I not punish them for these things?' says the LORD. 'Shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this?'

- ***Can I let these things go by? Can I just overlook these things?*** The answer is no. A righteous, holy God must judge the iniquity and sin of man, or He is no longer righteous, holy and just! He is longsuffering and though He allows and tolerates so much, the judgment of God must come on sin and idolatry!

Jer 5:30 "An astonishing and horrible thing Has been committed in the land:

- ***These were strong words***, introducing something that was truly ***horrible*** in the eyes of God. There is also, filled with wonder that people can be so evil, so corrupt, so deceiving, so hypocritical, filled with hypocrisy. As God saw then, and as we see now, how can such ***astonishing and horrible*** practices, in the name of God, be done? You just think, that cannot be, not in America. Surely that cannot be. And yet it is.

Jer 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule by their own power; And My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?

- ***The priests were ruling over the people, prophesying the lies***, capturing people with them. The people loved the ***false prophets***. They loved to hear that everything is going to be all right. The people loved to have it so. They loved to hear these ***false prophets***, saying that God will not punish evil. They loved to hear that everything is okay.
- ***But what will you do in the end?*** They were loving to hear the fact that they were going to destroy Babylon. The prophets were saying, “As the LORD liveth, Babylon shall fall, fall before your forces. The people loved to hear that, but it was a lie. Jeremiah said, “***What will you do in the end*** when the arrows are falling in the city, surrounded by the Babylonian armies, cutting off all food and supplies? When the walls are being broken down and the troops are pouring through the breeches, knocking on your door, speaking in a language which you don’t understand. When you are carried away as a slave to Babylon, taken from your wife and your children?
- ***You have trusted in lies, making them your hope.*** But now we have come ***to the end*** and the truth is revealed. You have forsaken God and God has forsaken you. It was only a surface kind

of relationship, it was not with your whole heart. Now the truth is revealed but it is too late, you are captive at the end.

- **Good question!** What are you going to do “in the end”, as we appear to be quickly approaching Jesus’ second coming?

Impending Disaster for Jerusalem

Jer 6:1 "O you children of Benjamin, Gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, And set up a signal-fire in Beth Haccerem; For disaster appears out of the north, And great destruction.

- **God is about to judge the nation of Judah for turning their backs upon Him and worshipping and turning themselves to worship idols.** The city and the country were at this time secure and under no apprehension of danger, but the prophet tells them that they shall shortly be invaded by a foreign power, an army from *the north*, which shall lay all waste. The *blowing of the trumpet* was always the sound of the alarm. At the approach of the enemy, at the beginning of the battle there would be the *blowing of the trumpet*. The *trumpet* blasts could be heard from a long distance.
- **Light the signal fires and blow the trumpet in Tekoa.** The building of fires, *signal fires* could easily be seen twenty miles away, immediately giving the alarm of danger. Warn the people that the enemy is approaching and on the way. He appears *out of the north* and he is bringing *great destruction*.

Jer 6:2 I have likened the daughter of Zion To a lovely and delicate woman. Jer 6:3 The shepherds with their flocks shall come to her. They shall pitch their tents against her all around. Each one shall pasture in his own place."

- **The daughter of Zion.** Judah liked to think of themselves as beautiful and refined. A *lovely and delicate woman*, not being accustomed to hardship, can't stand before an invading army, described here *as shepherds with their flocks*. Jerusalem would be terribly mismatched in the coming invasion. The invading army is about to spoil and waste all the fertile fields round about the city, while engaged in the siege.

Jer 6:4 "Prepare war against her; Arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe to us, for the day goes away, For the shadows of the evening are lengthening. Jer 6:5 Arise, and let us go by night, And let us destroy her palaces."

- **Prepare war against her;** for *He is the Lord of hosts*, that has all hosts at His command. He has said that the day of His judgment is coming. He is speaking to Babylon, to be used as His instrument of judgment.
- **Woe to us, for the day goes away, for the shadows of the evening are lengthening:** God reminded Judah that time was running out. Even though this judgment would not come for many years, it's being made certain the invasion was much closer than they thought. The enemy confidently expects to be very successful: "*Let us go*, and let us *destroy her palaces* and make ourselves masters of the wealth that is in them, not to fulfill God's counsels, but that they eagerly gather their own treasures, to attack even at the unlikely times of noon and at night. Yet, it was God thereby serving His own purposes!

Jer 6:6 For thus has the LORD of hosts said: "Cut down trees, And build a mound against Jerusalem. This is the city to be punished. She is full of oppression in her midst. Jer 6:7 As a fountain wells up with water, So she wells up with her wickedness. Violence and plundering are heard in her. Before Me continually are grief and wounds.

- **Cut down the trees and build a mound.** *Jerusalem* is to be besieged, by the Babylonians, doing the LORD's work of *punishment*. The walls are to be destroyed. *Cut down* the *trees* to make these battering rams and to make these towers to assault the walls of *Jerusalem*

- *She is full of oppression in her midst:* Jerusalem's lack of love for God was demonstrated by a lack of care and concern for their fellow man.
- *As a fountain...She wells up with her wickedness...violence and plundering:* Like degenerate Sodom, there was always a fresh supply of evil *welling up* like poison within her and overflowing into her streets.

Jer 6:8 Be instructed, O Jerusalem, Lest My soul depart from you; Lest I make you desolate, A land not inhabited."

- **It's amazing to consider the mercy of God!** Even when the people have gone so far away from God, set and established in their ways of evil, yet God still **extends to them His hand of mercy. All He asks is that they turn.** Even though Judah was about as low spiritually as a people you would ever come across. Yet God is still merciful. He is still offering to them His forgiveness and pardon. He will still fight against their enemies if they will turn to Him. **As with the nation so it is with individuals.** May we keep that in mind as we pray for the lost!
- **Do any of the descriptions of Zion, the daughter of Zion, Jerusalem, presently apply to you.** You have turned your back on God. You are not walking fully in the ways of the Lord. Still the Lord has not given up on you. He is still pleading with you, stretching out His hand of mercy toward you inviting you to come and be sheltered in His love, to be washed and cleansed that He might defend you that you might become His child.

Jer 6:9 Thus says the LORD of hosts: "They shall thoroughly glean as a vine the remnant of Israel; As a grape-gatherer, put your hand back into the branches."

- **Judah is going to be plucked clean as a vineyard.** Babylon will be the gleaner of Israel, picking Israel bare. There will be nothing left when the enemy is through. They will be stripped, and nothing will remain.

Jer 6:10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, That they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised, And they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it.

- **To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear?** We sense the frustration of the prophet; he speaks, but no one listens. Their ears are not spiritual, as if their ears were *circumcised* – and they regard God's word as *a reproach*, something to be ashamed of and avoided. They have no ear towards God, only an *ear* to the things of the flesh. There is no desire to hear the voice of God or the things of the Spirit. It is possible to close your ears to God so often, so completely, that you cannot hear the voice of God anymore. That is where Judah had come. They had crossed the line, their *ears* were *uncircumcised* and therefore *they cannot* hear.
- **The word of the LORD is a reproach to them, They have no delight in it:** They began to scoff at the word of God. They speak derisively of the word of God. That is always an extreme danger signal when you see a person who scoffs at the word of God. It is a sign of danger. People who have no delight at all in God's word. Do I truly delight in His Word?

Jer 6:11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD. I am weary of holding it in. "I will pour it out on the children outside, And on the assembly of young men together; For even the husband shall be taken with the wife, The aged with him who is full of days. Jer 6:12 And their houses shall be turned over to others, Fields and wives together; For I will stretch out My hand Against the inhabitants of the land," says the LORD.

- **I am full of the fury of the LORD. I am weary of holding it in.** Jeremiah was seeing these people as a rebellious stubborn people against God. This righteous indignation raised within him and he said that he was *weary of holding it in*. All this pent-up anger at the people who were so blasphemous, living such wretched lives.

- *I will pour it out... I will stretch out My hand Against the inhabitants of the land.* God's word is like a fire burning in Jeremiah. He warns them it is going to be utter devastation. Your families are going to be torn apart. Your houses are going to be turned to others. Your wives are going to be taken by others. Your fields will be taken by others for God is going to *stretch out His hand against the people in the land.*

Jer 6:13 "Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely.

- *Everyone is given to covetousness;* God says it is wrong. You should not try to take advantage of other people. There is so much covetousness in our land today. It is wrong and God sees it. He says that all was filled with covetousness. Everyone was looking out for himself. No one was interested in the needs of others, but all were just looking out for themselves. *Everyone dealing falsely.* There was just a total corruption in the land.

Jer 6:14 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace.

- *There was a reformation on the surface.* There was a little healing, The wounds were being dressed as though they were not serious. *People* were *saying "Peace," when there was no peace.*
- *As long as your life is at war with God there is no peace and there can be no peace.* Judah was not right with God. There cannot be *peace*. Yet their prophets were prophesying peace and prosperity! There are times when God's word to His people is not *peace*, but *"repent" and "prepare for judgment."*
- *We know that there is to be a peace movement lead by the Antichrist,* and they will be declaring, Peace, peace. But things can change overnight! Because things can change so rapidly on a global scale, it means that you should always just live right with the Lord. Don't take any chances. Don't say, "Well I am really planning to change, one of these days I am going to really settle down and get right with God." No, No! I want to live before the Lord each day as God would have me to live. I don't want to be playing around or playing games with God.

Jer 6:15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the LORD.

- *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?* Idolatry and *abomination* are always tied together in the Bible. Were they *ashamed* with their *abominations*, their worship of these idols? No, they had become complacent. Their hearts were so hardened that there was no shame!
- *They were not at all ashamed:* For all of Judah's many sins, they were not genuinely *ashamed at all; nor did they know how to blush.* It was as if the normal workings of the conscience were damaged or burned over, and *they were not ashamed* as they should be.
- *Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down.* Their destruction has been announced. The judgment has been announced. But even at that point God is still pleading.

Jer 6:16 Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'

- *Stand in the ways and see,* in the ways, in the crossroads! Here's the LORD in the middle of all of this, speaking out! Look around *and see*. Consider the destination of the way or road you are on! Where do it take you? Where will you end up? How close is your way to the old paths?
- *And ask for the old paths, where the good way is,* God directs Judah! That is God's *path*. The *old*, tried and true *path*, with its good destination, which is so important! It must be realized, there is only one in human history. What He is saying is, you need to ask for the *paths* that you

have inherited from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah. Those *old paths* where **there is health and blessings!** The things that God has established, and God has blessed. Everything else is a cycle of destruction and harm and judgment that brings a world of people back to God's old way. It always ends up back there because it has to! It's the way we've been designed to live.

- **The secret is to recognize that truth** when I'm in rebellion to God and **make that choice as soon as I can, so I don't have to go through the whole judgment phase!** God always wins in this in the cycle. And it is His love that causes it to be so. Come back to that zeal that you had for the things for God; that hunger and **desire that you had for the things of the LORD, the old path and walk in the old path.**
- **Then you will find rest for your souls.** What peace, what contentment, what rest when you *walk in* fellowship with God. That life of commitment is so great. You will just find *rest for your souls*. That *rest* of just walking with God; a life of just commitment to God knowing that God is in control, wanting God to be in control, wanting to do just what God wants you to do not exactly knowing what it is but open to it whatever it may be. Taking one day at a time just as God guides and directs you step out and it is a great life of *rest for your soul*. This is a reward that can't be matched by anything. *(Mat 11:29): Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*
- **Find rest for your soul!** What good is it to partake of all of the sin of the world, and to experience its limited, short season of pleasure, if there is no *rest for your souls*? One day, every human being comes to a place where if they listen to God and the conviction of the Spirit, there will be a longing for the rest in my soul. I headed my own way and then one day, you say, I must have *rest for my soul!* I cannot live another day **without rest for my soul!**
- **Ultimately, it elevates itself and it becomes the great valued thing** for our very survival! And the **key is to recognize it for the valuable thing it is now, before we fall prey to all of the lies concerning sin** that are put before us in all of these things that they try to tempt us away from the lone place of rest in our souls.
- **But they said, 'We will not walk in it.** God is saying to be reasonable. Take a look what is going on, take a look what is happening and come back to the *old path*. It is the *good way*, you know it is, *walk in that path*. The *path of rest* and peace. **But they said, We will not walk in it!** It is deliberate rebellion against God. **We will not** do it!
- **Maybe some of you are standing at a crossroads in your life, right now.** Look around from where you are. This is not only for the church. This is for you, for me! God is so gracious, even in an evil culture, to stoop down and say, Look around! Choose *the old path*, that well-worn, that many a pilgrim has walked! The path of blessing! And *walk in it*, He says, and you'll find *rest for your soul*. **Here is the LORD saying, here is the path, choose wisely!**

Jer 6:17 Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'

- The obedient prophets were saying, "***Listen, the trumpet is sounding,*** the enemy is invading, you are going down the tubes. ***Listen to the sound*** of warning." ***But they said, We will not listen! That rebellion against God!***

Jer 6:18 Therefore hear, you nations, And know, O congregation, what is among them.

- God spoke to both the *nations* (Gentiles) and *congregation*, warning them of the *calamity* to come upon His people.

Jer 6:19 Hear, O earth! Behold, I will certainly bring calamity on this people— The fruit of their thoughts, Because they have not heeded My words Nor My law, but rejected it.

- ***Hear, O earth!*** God just has to talk to the earth. They would not listen to God, they would not heed His law, but they rejected the law of God.
- ***I will certainly bring calamity on this people – the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not heeded My words:*** This was an important aspect of the guilt of God's people. They did not heed

the word of God, and therefore became corrupt in their thinking. The coming *calamity* was *the fruit of their thoughts*. Be careful what you think about and what you put in your mind because you reap the fruit of your mind. If you are sowing into your mind the things of the flesh and filth that is exactly what is going to come out of your life.

Jer 6:20 For what purpose to Me Comes frankincense from Sheba, And sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, Nor your sacrifices sweet to Me."

- **God does not want you to just have religious observances.** He wants you to come into a living relationship with Him, not the substitution of a religious observances, even including *sweet* and expensive *offerings*. He wants you to love Him from your heart, to serve Him from your heart, out of a heart of love seeking such to serve Him. They were going through their righteous ritual routines, but their hearts were far from God.

Jer 6:21 Therefore thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, And the fathers and the sons together shall fall on them. The neighbor and his friend shall perish."

- **Therefore, "Because of this, this is what is going to happen."** God's gracious warnings, always telling people in advance, because of their sinful activities, the result that is going to take place. The *stumbling blocks*, using the Babylonians (through vs. 26) as His instrument, are going to *fall, on the father and son, the friends and neighbors*. None would escape it.

Jer 6:22 Thus says the LORD: "Behold, a people comes from the north country, And a great nation will be raised from the farthest parts of the earth."

- **A people comes from the north country, and a nation will be raised ...farthest parts of the earth:** God again warned Judah that the Babylonians would come to be the messengers of God's judgment against them. The troops are coming! They are well-trained and powerful.

Jer 6:23 They will lay hold on bow and spear; They are cruel and have no mercy; Their voice roars like the sea; And they ride on horses, As men of war set in array against you, O daughter of Zion."

- **They are cruel and have no mercy!** Now God had all kinds of mercy, but you are going to be facing an enemy that has no mercy. If you turn your life over to Satan, **he has no mercy. He is out to destroy, having no mercy.** How thankful am I for the mercy of God?

Jer 6:24 We have heard the report of it; Our hands grow feeble. Anguish has taken hold of us, Pain as of a woman in labor. Jer 6:25 Do not go out into the field, Nor walk by the way. Because of the sword of the enemy, Fear is on every side

- **The coming Babylonian army would bring terrible misery,** and Judah would react with *anguish, pain, fear,* and *mourning*. Judah was unequal to the encounter as a weak, defenseless woman in the pangs of childbirth before a powerful, fully equipped, well-trained army. If you leave the protection of the walled city you are going to be destroyed by the *enemy*. If you go out into the fields or try to take the path to a neighboring village there is danger.

Jer 6:26 O daughter of my people, Dress in sackcloth And roll about in ashes! Make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation; For the plunderer will suddenly come upon us.

- **O daughter of my people, Dress in sackcloth.** Here again, God calling them to repentance. God is calling them to return, the warning of God. Turn again. God still is pleading with them.
- **And roll about in ashes! Make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation; For the plunderer will suddenly come upon us.** That is the sign of contrition, of godly

sorrow, of repentance, putting on this sackcloth and putting on ashes. God says, “**Roll about in the ashes**, don’t put just a little ash on your forehead, but wallow in them.”

Jer 6:27 *"I have set you as an assayer and a fortress among My people, That you may know and test their way.*

- **God sent Jeremiah to assess the spiritual condition** of God’s people and to do it from a position of strength (*a fortress*). Figuratively, the prophet was like an *assayer*, metal working testing and refining precious metals.

Jer 6:28 *They are all stubborn rebels (rebellious of the rebellions), walking as slanderers. They are bronze and iron, They are all corrupters;*

- **They are bronze and iron, they are all corrupters:** What an indictment against the people of God. Filled with slander, revolting against God, hard as iron against the things of God. They are totally corrupt, in fact, *they are all corrupters!* The people of God were not like a soft metal, like silver or gold that could be refined and purified, instead they were hard like *bronze and iron*.

Jer 6:29 *The bellows blow fiercely, The lead (refining agent) is consumed by the fire; The smelter refines in vain, For the wicked are not drawn off.*

- **The bellows blow fiercely, the lead is consumed:** The fire was as hot as the bellows could make it and the refining agent, *lead*, was consumed – yet the supposedly precious metal was not refined.
- **The smelter refines in vain, for the wicked are not drawn off:** Despite the best efforts of the *smelter* – God’s prophets such as Jeremiah – the wicked among God’s people did not repent and thereby be *drawn off*, purified, in the sense of making a purer people of God.

Jer 6:30 *People will call them rejected (reprobate) silver, Because the LORD has rejected them."*

- **At the end of it all, everyone knew that Judah was disapproved by God** and in the sense of sparing them from judgment, they *the LORD has rejected them*. This picture of the prophet’s words as a refiner’s fire makes its point not only by its vivid detail but by its tragic outcome. For it demonstrates the people of Judah are not, so to speak, precious metal marred by some impurities, but base metal from which nothing of worth can be extracted.
- **The picture used here is as follows:** Judah was like the metal, claiming to be precious (such as gold or silver); Like a precious metal, Judah was tested and refined with fire; Lead was put in to act as flux, to draw the impurities to itself; The Prophet Jeremiah was like the bellows, used to create an intense heat; **Yet Israel – the supposed precious metal – was so hard and impure that the refining work was useless.**
- **Here God says that they just did not pass the test of the fire.** It turned out that it was lead and not silver and it was consumed by the fire. Thus they are reprobate silver of no value because the Lord has rejected them, the works: the burning of incense, the burnt offerings and so forth, God rejected it, didn’t pass.
- **What about your works? What is the motive in your heart?** Are you doing all for the Lord? The Bible says, (*1Co 11:31*) *For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.*
- May our works come from a heart of love as Paul said, (*2Co 5:14a*) *For the love of Christ compels us,* May that be the constraining motivation for the things that we do for God. The Bible says, (*Col 3:17*) *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.* Live for His glory, and then when the test comes it will be lasting and you will enter into the eternal rewards and glory of our Lord.

Closing Prayer