

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY! NOTES FOR THIS WEEK: 12/21-22/2020  
THIS WEEK'S STUDY: *Jeremiah Chapters 7-8*

**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**

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,87858644763# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,87858644763# US (Houston)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87858644763?pwd=b25tUzhkaTE0UzIrSnpkVmZEWGJVQT09>

**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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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85309150746?pwd=TK5oVjN0TzdpWjE3UC9Oam05a21uQT09>

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## **OPENING PRAYER – Introduction**

### **Merry Christmas!**

**O HOLY NIGHT – P. Cappeau – Shea (3:30)**

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining. It is the night of the dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices For yonder breaks a new glorious morn. Fall on your knees. O hear the angels' voices. O night divine, O night when Christ was born. O night divine, oh night, when Christ was born!*

*Truly He taught us to love one another, His law is love and His gospel is peace. Chains he shall break, for the slave is our brother. And in his name, all oppression shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, let all within us praise His holy, name. Fall on your knees. O hear the angels' voices. O night divine, O night when Christ was born. O night divine. Oh night, when Christ was born!*

### **Review:**

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

*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.*

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

## **THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Jeremiah 7-8 – Trusting in Lying Words; Judgment on Obscene Religion; The Perils of False Teaching**

*Evil in the Land – Judgment being prophesied - But, "Amend your ways"!*

*Jer 7:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, (Jer 1:1-2) The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, [2] to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. (2Ch 34:1, 3, 8) Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. [3] For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. [8] In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. (2Ch 35:1, 19) Now Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month. [19] In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah (fifth year of Jeremiah's ministry) this Passover was kept.*

- **It is likely that it was at the time of the Passover feast (2 Ch 35)** that chapter 7 takes place as the people were gathering in the temple of the LORD, the temple that had been rebuilt and restored. It was in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, which would have been Jeremiah's fifth year of his ministry. He is likely around 20 years old.
- **People were gathering from all over the land to worship God there in the temple.** Many of them seeing it in its refurbished state for the first time. It was an awesome building, the architecture and the structure was extremely beautiful it was ornate it was covered with gold and it was just a very beautiful building and as they were coming into the gates there was a hushed awe as they said, "**Oh the temple of the LORD, oh the temple of LORD!**"

*Jer 7:2 "Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!' "*

*Jer 7:3 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.*

- **Jeremiah was to go down and proclaim there this word,** as the people were entering into the temple. They thought that now that the temple was restored that it would provide safety and security for them from their enemies, trusting in the fact that we have this temple of the LORD and we can live pretty much any way we want. About 25 years later, (*Jer 26*) Jeremiah also preached the same message at the temple gate in the first year of the reign of Jehoiakim. Jeremiah was attacked and threatened with death.
- **No! Your security is not in the temple, but amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place:** The LORD is saying to them, "If you want to dwell in this place, if you want to have safety here then don't trust in the temple but amend your ways and your doings, change your lifestyles."

*Jer 7:4 Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.'*

- **You are trusting in a false hope. This building will not save you.** You are coming to worship at this building will not save you. What you need for **salvation is a change of life, a change of your ways, a change of your doings.** You are trusting in lying words if you are trusting in anything for your salvation other than the LORD ship of Jesus Christ in your lives. Obeying him and following him. Today some say, "I go to church! Or "I'm a conservative! Or "I'm Calvary Chapel! None of these things make one right from God apart from truth faith and true repentance.

*Jer 7:5 "For if you thoroughly amend, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, Jer 7:6 if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, Jer 7:7 then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.*

- ***Not just amend, but thoroughly amend...thoroughly execute judgment in your ways and your doings!*** That is if you will be fair and honest. That is what God is saying to you. Be fair with people, do not take advantage of people. Be fair, be honest in your dealings with people. The courts of ancient Judah had become corrupt and honest judgment could not be found there.
- ***If you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.*** Do not take advantage of people who are poor, weak, who have no one to defend them. Do not take advantage of those who are in distress. If a person is going through bad times there are a lot of people who come and prey upon them, taking advantage of their misfortune. ***and do not shed innocent blood in this place,*** There were just a lot of murders and killings, including the passing of the children through the fire, that were going on in Jerusalem.
- ***or walk after other gods to your hurt.*** If you worship and serve the true and the living God, it will always be for your good. Conversely, you cannot serve and worship a false god without becoming a worse person. Man becomes like the gods he worships. If you have made your own god like yourself but less than yourself, to worship that god is degrading, you are going down. You are worshipping God ***to your own hurt.*** To worship these false gods is to be on the road down. It will ultimately destroy you. He rebukes them for worshipping these gods to their own detriment.
- ***If you will put aside these false gods, if you will thoroughly amend your ways, if you will be honest, if you will be fair, if you will just, if you start living right.*** Put aside these senseless killings and so forth and if you will not walk after these other gods to ***your own hurt, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.***

***Jer 7:8 "Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit.***

- ***Do not trust in lying words.*** Do not think that attendance at church is going to be a substitute for a righteous holy life. It just does not work that way. ***Thoroughly change your ways. Live the life that is pleasing to God, a life of purity, a life of holiness. Deny the flesh, the old life, and the old nature. Take up your cross and follow Jesus*** and then you will have true security in Christ in whom you abide.

***Jer 7:9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, Jer 7:10 and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'?***

- ***Because we come into the temple we are then free to do all these other horrible and abominable things.*** We have done our duty, we came to church on Sunday and now party time until next Sunday. The ***LORD*** says, "No, it does not work that way, you are trusting ***in lying words.***" And to think that just because you come into the house that is called by the name of the ***LORD***, that you can just go and live how you please and that God has freed you to do such things. Not so! The idea is much the same here. They were thinking that somehow they were free to do these things. "We are delivered to do these things," they said. This was the same spirit of the practice of later Roman Catholic granting of indulgences, a totally ungodly practice.

***Jer 7:11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it," says the LORD.***

- ***Do you think that you can find safety like a bunch of thieves who gather together and feel safe because they are in their den?*** Do you make my house a place you feel safe from the consequences of your sin? Do you think you can escape the consequences of your sin just because you are in the house of God? The ***LORD*** sees! I see you, says the ***LORD!*** You are not hiding! Through Jeremiah, God wanted His people to know that He did see their hidden, secret sins. Do we ever think He does not see us and everything we think or do?

***Jer 7:12 "But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.***

- ***The Assyrians had conquered the Northern Kingdom, about 100 years earlier.*** The people had been taken away captive and the city was just in ruins. God told them to go and look at Shiloh, ***where I set my name at the first.*** This is where the tabernacle of Jehovah was first erected when they came into the land. See what happened to Shiloh. It was not a place of security. It did not cover their wickedness. Shiloh was destroyed twice over – once by the Philistines and once when the Assyrians carried the northern tribes into captivity. Jeremiah was telling them to go to ***Shiloh***, the place where God is not.

***Jer 7:13 And now, because you have done all these works," says the LORD, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer,***

- **What happened to Shiloh is going to happen here.** It did happen. This temple of Jehovah that they were talking about was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586B.C. It was razed to the ground and the people were taken away captive to Babylon. As it happened to those in Shiloh, so it happened to those in Jerusalem and for the selfsame reason. They turned their back on the true and the living God. They began to serve and to worship other gods. Judah's greatest sin was ignoring the word of God, so plainly and persistently brought to them. This made them without excuse.

***Jer 7:14 therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. Jer 7:15 And I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren—the whole posterity of Ephraim.***

- **God promised to bring the same judgment to Jerusalem** that came upon Shiloh. God used Shiloh as a lesson. Look what happened to a place of spiritual privilege and glory when they forgot about Me. The same will happen to you if you do not turn again to Me. The lesson should be sealed in our heart: no matter how much spiritual progress, or privilege, or glory one might have, it can all be turned to nothing if we stop listening to God and cultivating our relationship with Him.

***Jer 7:16 "Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not hear you. (Gen 6:3a) And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." (Psa 103:9) He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. (Rom 1:23-24) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. [24] Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,***

- **This is a heavy, heavy statement!** God is saying to **Jeremiah** not to pray anymore for them. Do not intercede for them, do not cry in prayer for them because I will not hear you. It is possible for people to go so far in their rebellion against God that they come to a hopeless state where God says to them, "Don't pray anymore, don't intercede, **I will not hear you.**" The sermon at the temple gates was likely finished. Now God spoke to Jeremiah about the hardened people. They were past prayer; God simply told Jeremiah, **for I will not hear you.** Their day of grace is past, their sins are full, the decree is now gone forth, and it is irreversible, therefore pray not for this **rejected** people.

***Jer 7:17 Do you not see what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? Jer 7:18 The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.***

- God is saying to Jeremiah, "**Do you see what they are doing there?**" Whole family were involved in this pagan worship of Ashteroth. What a pity that so few families show such zeal for the worship of God as those apostate Israelites did for that of their idols! The children would gather the sticks, the fathers would make the fire and the wives would fix the dough to make these little cakes to offer to this pagan goddess, **the queen of heaven** whose title sets off alarm bells for anyone who knows the book of Jeremiah. The **queen of heaven** was the Babylonian Ishtar, wife of Molech, god of heaven (both of which were thought to be connected sexual reproduction, hence, temple prostitution), identified with the moon, the planet Venus, whose worship, similar to the cults of the Canaanite goddesses, Asherah, Ashteroth and Anath, was probably introduced into Judah by the apostate king, Manasseh.

***Jer 7:19 Do they provoke Me to anger?" says the LORD. "Do they not provoke themselves, to the shame of their own faces?"***

- **They are just bringing confusion upon themselves.** It was true that the sins of Judah **provoked the LORD to anger**, but it was also true that **their sins provoked themselves to open shame.** It does not really **hurt** God in the sense that you are bringing God down or making Him any less than what He is. It is hurting you. Your rejection, your sinning and all, it does not really take away from God, it does not destroy God, but it surely does destroy you. **You do these things to your own hurt.**

***Jer 7:20 Therefore thus says the LORD GOD: "Behold, My anger and My fury will be poured out on this place—on man and on beast, on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground. And it will burn and not be quenched."***

- **God's answer to the provoking of His anger.** God says, **My fury will be poured out and this place is going to be burned.** Today on the excavations on the hill of Ophel, on the south side of Jerusalem, you can see a layer of ash, four to six inches thick in the strata. The ash is the result of the burning of the city of

Jerusalem by the Babylonian army shortly after Jeremiah made these prophecies. Evidence to the faithfulness of God to keep His word. They will burn this place God said, and He did!

***Jer 7:21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat.***

- Now the burnt offerings were supposed to be that everything was burned. Nothing was kept for the people. When you offered a burnt offering, that was the offering of sacrifice of consecration. **"LORD, I am consecrating myself completely."** So, the burnt offering, as opposed to the *peace* offering, was to be totally burned, nothing was to come back. God says to Judah, these offerings of consecration, you might as well eat the flesh yourself. It is no value to offer these burnt offerings to Me unless you are really consecrating your life."

***Jer 7:22 For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. Jer 7:23 But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.'***

- ***Obey My Voice!*** The LORD said that when they first came out I did not talk to them about sacrifices, but about obedience. I gave them the rules, saying, **"Obey My voice."** To keep the Law of God is to your benefit, it is good. It is the right way to live. It is true when you get into the Law. The commandment of God came first and then when the people did not obey God, He gave them then the Law of sacrifices. Here is what you are to do to cover the sin. Here is how to make your way back to God, here is how to make the covering for your evil and then the sacrifices came.
- ***Their sacrifices were in vain because they were not pursuing holiness!*** If you are just doing your sacrifices while thinking, I will just go out tomorrow and do it again then I will just decimate my flock and live it up. It is not going to work. God is saying, eat it yourself! Do not bother giving it to Me. I do not want it, it is of no value! Your burnt offerings are meaningless, you might as well go ahead and eat it yourself. It will be well if people will be obedient, just following the commandments of the **LORD**.

***Jer 7:24 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward.***

- ***The people started out in a close relationship with God but sadly they went backward, not continuing forward in their relationship with God.*** Oh, that God would inspire our hearts to press *forward* into the things of the **LORD**, to a deeper consecration, to a greater commitment to God and always pressing on closer and closer to the **LORD**, rather than moving away and saying, "How much can I get by with and how much can I do without losing fellowship? Is it all right to do this, how close to the line can I live, where do I cross over? Oh God help us! Let us forget the line, let us move so close to God we are not even concerned about lines. Let us press in. They were going ***backward, not forward*** in the things of God.

***Jer 7:25 Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. Jer 7:26 Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.***

- ***They did worse than their fathers.*** Each generation was a little worse than the preceding generation. As I look around right now from the time that I was a kid, each generation has become progressively worse. The kids are doing things now today that we would not have dreamed of doing even in our wildest moments. TV, movies and the screen of cell phones (available pornography in the hands of kindergartners!) and devices has had a tremendous effect on bringing a lowered standard and greater opportunities for sin.

***Jer 7:27 "Therefore you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not obey you. You shall also call to them, but they will not answer you. Jer 7:28 "So you shall say to them, 'This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD their God nor receive correction. Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.***

- ***Speak all these words...they will not listen!*** Here is the tragedy of Jeremiah's ministry; God said, "You are to be there, you are to warn them, but they are not going to listen to you. God knows the people's heart are hard, that they will not listen, but He is still faithful to warn. He does not just let them go without a warning and this total faithfulness of God is seen. He will not let you destroy yourself without warning you about what you are doing. This nation is no longer listening to God and does not obey God. They will not receive God's instruction.

***Jer 7:29 Cut off your hair and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on the desolate heights; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath.'***

- **The hair, the Nazarite vow, of consecration to God, was to let your hair grow.** These were to be a people who were consecrated to God, a nation set apart from all other nations. The long hair of the Nazarite was the sign of his vow of dedication and consecration of his life to God. Now the **LORD** is saying to **cut off your hair**, to get rid of it because really you are no longer dedicated to God. You have broken your vows of consecration.

### ***The Valley of Slaughter***

***Jer 7:30 For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight," says the LORD. "They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it.***

- **The people and priests of Judah were so insensitive to the honor of the LORD that they set up idols in the very house of the LORD,** the temple even establishing this alter to Baal!

***Jer 7:31 And they have built the high places of Tophet (toph is drum), which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.***

- **Worse than the idolatry in the temple was the actual human sacrifice** carried out right in the region of Jerusalem. This was surely the greatest instance that ever was of the power of Satan in the children of disobedience, and of the degeneracy and corruption of the human nature! This valley of **Hinnom** is the place where they built these altars unto Molech. It is there in the valley of **Hinnom** that they would have these pagan festivals. The **LORD** is talking about how they built there these **high places**, which were places of worship **of Tophet**.
- **Judah was heavily engaged in their worship of Ashteroth and Molech, the queen and king of heaven.** The worship really of sex, mastered by sex, dominated by their sexual passions, having much sexual promiscuity, fornication, and adultery. Wherever you have a society where they have lax moral values, where you have a lot of sexual activity, and that feeling of freedom for sexual activity, you also have a lot of venereal disease as well as unwanted babies, which were offered in the worship of Molech, placing them on Molech's red hot arms, as a sacrifice.
- **Which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart:** Unlike many of the Canaanite deities, The **LORD** never commanded human sacrifice. God could say that it never did **come into His heart** to ask such a thing as child sacrifice! It totally went against His nature.

***Jer 7:32 "Therefore behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "when it will no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Tophet until there is no room. Jer 7:33 The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. And no one will frighten them away.***

- **When the Babylonians come and when the city is destroyed they will cast the carcasses in the valley until the valley will have not room to bury all of the dead.** It will be called **the Valley of Slaughter**. You have slaughtered your children and now your bodies and your carcasses will lie there out in the open, being food for scavenger birds with **no one to frighten them away**.

***Jer 7:34 Then I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For the land shall be desolate.***

- **For the land shall be desolate:** When **judgment** came upon Judah, all happiness and hope had departed from the land. No more would there be **the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness**.
- **You would not hearken to God. You worshipped these other gods to your own hurt.** You would not listen, you hardened your neck, you moved away from God, but you are doing it to your **own hurt**. It is going to **hurt** you in the long run. You are the one that will suffer. God is faithful, He is always faithful. He always warns of His impending **judgment**. It is up to you if you listen or not, whether you take heed or not. God is saying to these people in this corrupted state, If you will thoroughly change your ways, **Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place**. Then you will not be conquered, I will be your defense.
- **The LORD is speaking to us in this message!** We are not to trust in flimsy and empty hopes or in a lie. Thinking that because we go to church or support a church or whatever, it is all okay to live and do our own thing. The **LORD** is saying, **"I want you to live righteously, moving forward into a relationship with and toward Me and not away."**

***Jer 8:1 "At that time," says the LORD, "they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves.***

- **When a prominent or wealthy person died**, they often buried some of their possessions with them. The burial spots became treasure troves for the treasure hunters. The place that they would dig to find treasure would often be in the graves of the dead, like King Tut of Egypt. It was not an uncommon practice for a conquering force to open the graves. The idea would not be to desecrate the skeleton but to get the treasure, in so doing they would pull the bones out and scatter the bones there on the ground.

***Jer 8:2 They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and which they have worshiped.***

- **The bones will just be scattered out on the ground**, under the sun to be bleached in that hot desert sun. The irony of it though, is that one of the indictments that God had against Judah was that they had turned from the worship of God and they were worshipping idols and false gods. God's people had adopted these pagan practices. They began to worship the creation of God, they worshipped the stars, they worshipped the host of heaven, the constellations, they worshipped the sun, they worshipped the moon like the pagan nations around them. They developed a love for these pagan religions. They began to serve these false gods, they began to walk after these gods, they began to seek after them and finally they worshipped them.
- **They shall not be gathered nor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth.** At that time, the siege by Babylon and the destruction by Babylon will be so severe, the times will be so hard that death will be preferable to life. They would rather die than live under the hardships that will be forced upon them by the Babylonians.

***Jer 8:3 Then death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of those who remain of this evil family, who remain in all the places where I have driven them," says the LORD of hosts.***

- **The misery of the residue that survived the Babylonian invasion would be worse than life.** Death would look to them like a welcome relief. The survivors of the Babylonian invasion would be forced refugees, exiled out of the Promised Land into foreign lands.

### ***Sin and Treachery***

***Jer 8:4 "Moreover you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "Will they fall and not rise? Will one turn away and not return?"***

- **The natural thing if you fall down is to get up.** When a child falls and he is lying there, you say, "Get up." That is the natural thing. If you go straying off the natural thing is to return. Now the **LORD** is saying they are not natural. They have fallen into this idolatry, but they have not come out of it. They did not really rise out of the practices. They have strayed from the path of the **LORD**, but they will not return to the path of the **LORD**. There was no sign of repentance.

***Jer 8:5 Why has this people slidden back, Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit, They refuse to return.***

- **Why...people slidden back... in a perpetual backsliding:** The natural thing would be for them to come back to God when they see what the worship of these false gods has brought them to, when they see the destruction, the desolation, the horror that it has brought, surely they would turn back to God. Surely it would cause them to really seek the **LORD**. But the **LORD** is astonished that in spite of all the **judgment** that is coming there is not really a seeking God or a returning to God.
- **They hold fast to deceit. They refuse to return.** Their hard impenitent heart. That is something that is hard for us to grasp who have come to that place of repentance and sorrow for our sin and asked God to forgive us and when we have been brought into fellowship with God it is hard for us to understand a person who is so obdurate in his stance against God who refuses to repent, who goes on in spite of the fact that God has begun many times **judgment** in their lives, yet they just harden their hearts rather than turn in repentance to the **LORD**. Thus, with the nation of Judah. If he falls he stands up again. If he turns aside, he returns, "But why don't they return," God said, "to me." They have been deceived and they hang on to it.

***Jer 8:6 I listened and heard, But they do not speak aright. No man repented of his wickedness, Saying, 'What have I done?' Everyone turned to his own course, As the horse rushes into the battle.***

- **God was listening for people to begin to express sorrow and grief over their sin and over their wickedness!** God listens to us! We so need to keep that in mind! (*Mal 3:16-17*) *Then those who feared the*

*LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So, a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name. [17] "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."* It is something that God enjoys for people just to talk about Him!

- **No man repented of his wickedness ...What have I done?** God is not willing that any should perish so He is looking for some sign of repentance, some sign of a turning from the sin. But it was not there. God was looking for this sign of repentance.
- **Everyone turned to his own course, As the horse rushes into the battle.** They just seem to be filled with madness and rushing right into death, as a horse rushes into battle. All the excitement and adrenaline and right on into the pit. Men were determined to go their own way, as determined and as energetic as *the horse* is as it *rushes into the battle*.

**Jer 8:7 "Even the stork in the heavens Knows her appointed times; And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow Observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the LORD.**

- **The LORD has planted within the birds that instinctive knowing the time.** We see the migration of the birds. We see the swallows returning to Capistrano. In fact, so regularly that on the day they are to return in March there is always a bunch of people there with their cameras to get their pictures of the swallows returning to Capistrano. God says My people should have more brains than a bird, but they do not seem to know and understand they fact that the time of God's *judgment* has come, and it is time to flee the *judgment* of God by turning your life over to God.
- **Even the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times:** It was an amazement that birds (*the stork, the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow*) all understand the seasons of the year and how they must respond to them. Migratory birds know when to come and go; where to go; the way to go and by going to their destination! Yet the people of God were ignorant; **My people do not know the judgment of the LORD.** They were worse off than birds with small brains. That is the idea that Jeremiah has here. It was in vain that they wrote the law of God, if you are not keeping the law of God.

**Jer 8:8 "How can you say, 'We are wise, And the law of the LORD is with us'? Look, the false pen of the scribe certainly works falsehood.**

- **The law of the LORD has no value if you do not keep it.** A common mistake in the Jewish mind, in that because they had the law of the *LORD* they felt that they were justified. But in *Rom 2:13* (*for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified*;
- **Having the law does not justify you.** It is in the keeping of the law which they were not doing, which they were incapable of doing. You say that you *are wise*. You say that you have *the law of the LORD*, but the law is in vain if you do not keep it. If you do not accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you do not receive the forgiveness that He purchased for you in His death upon the cross, He died in vain as far as you are concerned. It is in vain if you have not received it.
- **Look, the false pen of the scribe certainly works falsehood:** God reminded Judah that not all who study and teach the word of God do so honestly. There are some who use their *pen* to work *falsehood*, not truth.

**Jer 8:9 The wise men are ashamed, They are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD; So what wisdom do they have?**

- **They are not really wise. They are fools.** If you reject the Word of The *LORD* you are not wise, you are a fool. It is interesting how so many people today are professing to be so wise. But if you reject the Word of God you are a fool. It is the fools that has said in his heart there is no God. Jeremiah is saying, where is your wisdom? You do not keep the law of God you are a fool. Where then is the wisdom of the path that you have chosen. It is a path of death. What wisdom is really in them?

**Jer 8:10 Therefore I will give their wives to others, And their fields to those who will inherit them; Because from the least even to the greatest Everyone is given to covetousness; From the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely. (Isa 56:11) Yes, they are greedy dogs Which never have enough. And they are shepherds Who cannot understand; They all look to their own way, Every one for his own gain, From his own territory. (Isa 57:17) For the iniquity of his (backslider) covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, And he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.**

- **Therefore, I will give their wives...their fields.** Because they did not hold the word of God dear, God would take what was dear to the people of Judah and give those things to others. It was mass corruption from the false prophets to the priests to the whole nation. The whole moral climate had disintegrated. No society can continue when you have a collapse of the morals and ethics.



- **We are seeing the signs of it all around us!** We need to take note, because even as Judah could not stand because of this eroding of the moral and ethics of the society, neither can we! Pray for our nation!
- **Everyone is given to covetousness; from the prophet even to the priest everyone deals falsely:** Repeating words from (*Jer 6:13-15*), which Judah needed reminding. Hearing it one time was not enough! Jeremiah points out that selfish corruption had become so much a part of life in Judah that it could be said that *everyone deals falsely* and yet *they were not at all ashamed*.

***Jer 8:11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace.***

- **It is not really a healing it is only covering over, the sore is still there.** They are saying, “*Peace, peace.*” and here were the false prophets during the time of Jeremiah saying, “*Peace, peace,* the Babylonians will never sling a stone into this city. We are safe, we are secure, *peace, peace.*” It was giving the people a false hope, but there was no *peace*.

***Jer 8:12 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; In the time of their punishment They shall be cast down," says the LORD.***

- **They were not ashamed!** The last sign of a decadent society when it is just on its final way out is when people openly flaunt their sin before others. Here, God is saying, “*Were they ashamed when they had committed these abominations?*” No, they were not at all *ashamed*, neither would *they blush*. They were sinning without any shame or guilt at all.

***Jer 8:13 "I will surely consume them," says the LORD. "No grapes shall be on the vine, Nor figs on the fig tree, And the leaf shall fade; And the things I have given them shall pass away from them." (Vs. 8:13-9:1)*** are read by the Jews in all synagogues on the ninth of Av, end of July, beginning of August. That date is that when: Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the temple, 586 B.C.; in 70 A.D. on the same day the temple was destroyed by Titus of Rome; the Jewish massacre of the bar Kochba Revolt in 132 A.D.; Jews expelled from England; Jews banished from Spain, both World Wars began, and many other!

- **God had brought them into a fruitful land** that they might enjoy the blessings and the fruit of the land, but God is going to take it away. There will be ***no figs on the fig tree, no grapes on the vine***, there will be no grain in the fields!
- **Habakkuk who was prophesying** slightly after this period, was basically complaining about the same thing as Jeremiah. That is the deterioration of the nation, of the government, which was just disintegrating because of sin and evil and God seemed to be doing nothing about it. But after realizing what God was going to do and why, Habakkuk took the position of faith! I cannot see any possible means of survival, but I am still going to rejoice in the God of my salvation because God has provisions and resources that I know nothing about. God will take care of His own. You can trust God!

***Jer 8:14 "Why do we sit still? Assemble yourselves, And let us enter the fortified cities, And let us be silent there. For the LORD our God has put us to silence And given us water of gall to drink, Because we have sinned against the LORD.***

- **Why do we just sit still**, why don't we do something about it? This is the cry of the prophet. The prophet imagined the people of God fleeing to the fortified cities as the Babylonian invaders entered the land. They could only do so in silence, because they knew they had ignored God's warnings and invitations to repent.
- **For the LORD our God has put us to silence and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD:** When the invading army came, they would understand the greatness of their sin – but by then it would be too late.

***Jer 8:15 "We looked for peace, but no good came; And for a time of health, and there was trouble! Jer 8:16 The snorting of His horses was heard from Dan. The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of His strong ones; For they have come and devoured the land and all that is in it, The city and those who dwell in it." Jer 8:17 "For behold, I will send serpents among you, Vipers which cannot be charmed, And they shall bite you," says the LORD.***

- **We looked for peace, but no good came, only trouble!** God is going to smite them from every direction. Those in Judah who heard and believed the message of the false prophets – the message, *Peace, peace!* These deceived ones ***looked for peace, but no good came.***
- **Hearing Horses from Dan:** The horses of the cavalry units of the Babylonian army had already begun to invade the northern part of the country and they would be coming down ***from Dan.***

- *I will send serpents among you, vipers which cannot be charmed:* Likely referring to the attacking Babylonians as uncharmable, biting serpent, vipers, which cannot be charmed. The false prophets and priests had convinced the people of Judah and Jerusalem that they could find a way to maneuver around the coming *judgment*, however, they would find there was no maneuvering! To their great sorrow, it would be as though God had sent them biting serpents *which cannot be charmed*, as in the days of Moses in the wilderness.

### **Jeremiah Grieves for His People**

**Jer 8:18** *I would comfort myself in sorrow; My heart is faint in me.*

- **Jeremiah having a vision of Judah in exile**, prophetically seeing the tragedy that followed the devastating Babylonian invasion, **tries to comfort** himself against this *sorrow* and yet his *heart* was just *fainting*, failing.

**Jer 8:19** *Listen! The voice, The cry of the daughter of My people—From a far country: "Is not the LORD in Zion? Is not her King in her?" "Why have they provoked Me to anger With their carved images—With foreign idols?"*

- **God is now crying against the people.** Why have you provoked Me with your graven images, you worship of the pagan gods and with the strange vanities? And the sad cry. The *daughter of His people* no longer lived in the land God promised them. Instead, their cry was heard *from a far country*. In amazement, Jeremiah wondered how his people ended up in exile. He wondered if God had left His own land; if He no longer reigned as a *King in Zion*.
- *Why have they provoked Me to anger with their carved images – with foreign idols?* God answered Jeremiah's question with questions of His own. The problem was **not that God had abandoned** the land of Israel; the problem was **Israel had abandoned God!**

**Jer 8:20** *"The harvest is past, The summer is ended, And we are not saved!"*

- **What a tragedy!** They had gone over the line, they had gone too far. *The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and they are not saved.* The *summer* was the season of growing, ending with *harvest*. It should be a time of abundance and fulfillment. *The harvest* refers to the main cereal crop, while the *summer* refers to the grape harvest in early autumn.
- **And we are not saved!** The sad lament of conquered Judah, even into the exile. The season had come that there should be abundance in the land, yet there was not. They had to face the sad fact: *we are not saved!* This verse is that of a double failure, first of the field-crops, then of the summer fruit, heralding a winter that hardly bears thinking about, meaning that people had lost every opportunity given them by God, and now were entirely without hope." **This vivid verse has application to us as well, as we consider and pray for the lost around us!**

**Jer 8:21** *For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt. I am mourning; Astonishment has taken hold of me. (Eze 18:32) For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!" (Eze 33:11) Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'*

- **Prophetically looking into the future, Jeremiah ached with the hurt of his people.** He was in *mourning* and full of *astonishment*, because of his sympathy and love for them; yet his very message was one of God's *judgment!*

**Jer 8:22** *Is there no balm in Gilead, Is there no physician there? Why then is there no recovery For the health of the daughter of my people?*

- *Is there no balm in Gilead;* *Gilead* was the place where the gum distilling, possibly Balsam, trees grew in abundance, which is believed to be the source of the *balm of Gilead*, an herbal type of medication. *Is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?* Yes, God is able to help and to heal them. If sinners die of their wounds, their blood is upon their own heads. The blood of Christ is *balm in Gilead*, His Spirit is the Physician there, all-sufficient; so that the people may be healed but will not. Thus, men die unpardoned and unchanged, for they will not come to Christ to be saved. The tragic story of the people of God who had turned their backs of God and were experiencing the impending *judgment* and doom that would come from God.
- **May we, with the LORD's help, give earnest heed** to the things which we have heard lest we should drift from them and be destroyed. LORD, may we set aside every idol, every attraction of the things of the world that would take us away from You, that would diminish our love for You or our commitment to You and may our devotion and commitment to You be complete.

### **Closing Prayer**