

# Jeremiah 16 - Jeremiah's Lifestyle & Message; God Will Restore Israel

## II. Thirteen prophecies of judgment upon Judah (Jer 2:1—25:38)

(1) Nine general prophecies of judgment that include offers of repentance (Jer 2:1—19:15)

(H) Eighth message: God imposes restrictions on Jeremiah concerning marriage, mourning, and merriness (Jer 16:1—17:27)

(a) Restrictions (16:1-9)

(i) Marriage (16:1-4)

(ii) Mourning (16:5-7)

(iii) Merriness (16:8-9)

(b) Sins leading to judgment (Jer 16:10—17:27)

(i) Idolatry (16:10-13)

(ii) Restoration (16:14-21)

## Jeremiah 16

(H) Eighth message: God imposes restrictions on Jeremiah concerning marriage, mourning, and merriness (Jer 16:1—17:27)

(a) Restrictions (16:1-9)

(i) Marriage (16:1-4)

1 The word of the LORD also came to me, saying,

1 The word of the LORD also came to me saying,

1 This message from the LORD came to me:

1 The word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,

2 "You shall not take a wife for yourself nor have sons or daughters in this place."

2 "You shall not take a wife for yourself nor have sons or daughters in this place."

2 "You are not to take a wife, nor are you to have sons or daughters in this place."

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.

- That is a blow, particularly to a Jew. This is very unusual. In Israel specifically, but in general in the Middle East, being married was normal and having children was part of one's goal in life (Lev 1:28; 2:18; Deut 7:14).

— It is more than just the marriage thing, it is buried in the passage, in which Jeremiah is admonished to withdraw from the daily life. He is not to marry, he is not to have children, he

is not to celebrate joy nor grief with these people. God is instructing him to demonstrate his lack of identity with their culture to demonstrate his awareness that it is over; they are going into captivity.

3 For this is what the LORD says concerning the sons and daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who give birth to them, and their fathers who father them in this land:

3 For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bear them, and their fathers who beget them in this land:

3 For this is what the LORD says about the sons and daughters who are born in this place, about their mothers who give birth to them, and about their fathers who father them in this land:

3 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;

4 "They will die of deadly diseases, they will not be mourned or buried; they will be like dung on the surface of the ground. And they will perish by sword and famine, and their dead bodies will become food for the birds of the sky and for the animals of the earth."

4 "They will die of deadly diseases, they will not be lamented or buried; they will be as dung on the surface of the ground and come to an end by sword and famine, and their carcasses will become food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth."

4 "They'll die of deadly diseases. People won't mourn for them, nor will they be buried. They'll be dung on the surface of the ground, and they'll come to an end with the sword and with famine. Their dead bodies will be food for the birds of the sky and the animals of the land."

4 They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; *but* they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

#### (ii) Mourning (16:5-7)

5 For this is what the LORD says: "Do not enter a house of mourning, or go to mourn or to console them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people," declares the LORD, "*and My favor and compassion.*"

5 For thus says the LORD, "Do not enter a house of mourning, or go to lament or to console them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people," declares the LORD, "*My lovingkindness and compassion.*"

5 For this is what the LORD says: "Don't go to a house where there is mourning, don't go to lament, nor to express sorrow to them. For I've taken my peace away from this people," declares the LORD, "as well as gracious love and compassion.

5 For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.

6 Both great people and small will die in this land; they will not be buried, *people* will not mourn for them, nor will anyone make cuts on himself or have his head shaved for them.

6 Both great men and small will die in this land; they will not be buried, they will not be lamented, nor will anyone gash himself or shave his head for them.

6 Both the most and the least important people will die in this land, and they won't be buried. People won't mourn for them. They won't cut themselves, nor will they shave their heads for them.

6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them:

7 *People* will not break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort anyone for the dead, nor give them a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or mother.

7 Men will not break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort anyone for the dead, nor give them a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or mother.

7 They won't break bread for the mourner to be consoled for the dead. They won't give anyone the cup of consolation to drink for his father or mother.

7 Neither shall *men* tear *themselves* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother.

- Bread + cup = mourning for dead

(iii) Merriness (16:8-9)

8 Moreover, you shall not go into a house of feasting to sit with them to eat and drink."

8 Moreover you shall not go into a house of feasting to sit with them to eat and drink."

8 Don't go to a banquet to sit with people to eat and drink."

8 Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink.

9 For this is what the LORD of armies, the God of Israel says: "Behold, I am going to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your time, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of joy, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride.

9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I am going to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your time, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride.

9 For this is what the LORD of the Heavenly Armies, the God of Israel, says: "In this place I'm about to bring an end to the sounds of happiness and rejoicing, the sounds of the bridegroom and the bride. I'll do it in front of your eyes and in your time.

**9** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in 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.

- Jeremiah gets his point across. God is upset, it is coming near term, it is coming on the people, so don't have children because there is just going to be more carcasses on the battlefield.

— This idea of not being buried is particularly offensive to the Jewish mind, because one of the things they focused on was to be buried properly. To be unburied was a form of shame.

- This idea of cutting themselves and making themselves bald were practices that they obviously practiced there (Jer 41:5; 47:5; Ezek 7:18; Amos 8:10; Micah 1:16), but they were also forbidden under the Torah (Lev 19:28; 21:5; Deut 14:1-2).

— These are classical Canaanite forms of expression, to cut yourselves and to make yourself bald, and to tear your clothes. All these things were expressions of grief. They were forbidden to be done. Jeremiah is saying that they won't do that, because it is over.

— Jeremiah's withdrawal both from the joy and the grief is intended by God to be a sign to them that He is serious, that it is about to happen, God's messenger is not partaking.

#### (b) Sins leading to judgment (Jer 16:10—17:27)

##### (i) Idolatry (16:10-13)

**10** "Now it will happen that, when you tell this people all these words, they will say to you, 'For what reason has the LORD declared all this great disaster against us? And what is our wrongdoing, or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'

**10** "Now when you tell this people all these words, they will say to you, 'For what reason has the LORD declared all this great calamity against us? And what is our iniquity, or what is our sin which we have committed against the LORD our God?'

**10** "When you speak all these words to this people, they'll say to you, 'Why has the LORD pronounced all this disaster against us? What is our iniquity, and what is the sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?'

**10** And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

11 Then you are to say to them, '*It is* because your forefathers have abandoned Me,' declares the LORD, 'and have followed other gods, and served and worshiped them; but they have abandoned Me and have not kept My Law.

11 Then you are to say to them, '*It is* because your forefathers have forsaken Me,' declares the LORD, 'and have followed other gods and served them and bowed down to them; but Me they have forsaken and have not kept My law.

11 Then say to them, 'It is because your ancestors abandoned me,' declares the LORD. 'They followed other gods, served them, worshipped them, abandoned me, and didn't keep my Law.

11 Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

12 You too have done evil, *even* more than your forefathers; for behold, each one of you is following the stubbornness of his own evil heart, without listening to Me.

12 You too have done evil, *even* more than your forefathers; for behold, you are each one walking according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart, without listening to Me.

12 You have done even more evil than your ancestors, and each one of you is stubbornly following his own evil desires, refusing to listen to me.

12 And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

13 So I will hurl you off this land to the land which you have not known, *neither* you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, because I will show you no compassion.'

13 So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will grant you no favor.'

13 I'll throw you out of this land into a land neither you nor your ancestors have known. There you will serve other gods day and night, and I'll show you no favor.'

13 Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour. - It is like God is saying, "You want to serve other gods, great, I will send you to a land where all they do is worship them day and night."

— Babylon, the seat of idolatry...the name Babylon is almost synonymous with idolatry. It is rather ironic that they were sent to a place for seventy years where the worship of idols was enforced.

(ii) Restoration (16:14-21)

**14** "Therefore behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,'

**14** "Therefore behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,'

**14** "Therefore, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought up the Israelites from the land of Egypt.'

**14** Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

- Throughout Jewish history, the Exodus has been considered the high point of Jewish history. But after the final regathering, this will change. In the future, it will be the final regathering that will become the high point of Jewish history.

**15** but, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.

**15** but, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.

**15** Rather it will be said, 'As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up from the land of the north and from all the lands to which the LORD had banished them.' I'll bring them back to their land, which I gave to their ancestors.

**15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

**16** "Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will fish for them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks.

**16** "Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will fish for them; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks.

**16** "I'm about to send many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they'll catch them. Afterwards, I'll send for many hunters and they'll hunt for them on every mountain and hill and in the crevices of the rocks.

**16** Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

- The "hunting and fishing" is the professionals of Nebuchadnezzar digging in the rocks and stuff to make sure they are enslaved. We are back to the local immediate idiom of Jeremiah's prophecy here.

17 For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their wrongdoing concealed from My eyes.

17 For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes.

17 For I am watching all their ways; they are not hidden from my sight. Their iniquity is not concealed from my eyes.

17 For mine eyes *are* upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

18 I will first repay them double for their wrongdoing and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable idols and their abominations."

18 I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable idols and with their abominations."

18 First I'll repay them double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my land with the dead bodies of their detestable images, and they have filled my inheritance with their abominations."

18 And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

- God is upset. Some of you may be bothered by the word "double" here. The word here is actually *mishneh* which means "ample" or "full." The word is an idiom meaning "proportionate" or "plenty": they won't be short the full measure.

- Lifeless forms = idols or sacrifices. Polluted body (Lev 26:30; Num 19:11)

**19** LORD, my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, To You the nations will come From the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility, and things of no benefit."

**19** O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, To You the nations will come From the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility and things of no profit."

19 LORD, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in a time of difficulty, to you the nations will come, and from the ends of the earth they'll say, "Surely our ancestors

inherited deception, things that are worthless, and in which there is no profit."

19 O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* wherein *there is* no profit.

20 Can man make gods for himself? Yet they are not gods!

20 Can a person make a god for himself? They are not gods!

20 Can a person make gods for himself? But they are not gods!

20 Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they *are* no gods?

**21** "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know— This time I will make them know My power and My might; And they will know that My name is the LORD.

**21** "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know— This time I will make them know My power and My might; And they shall know that My name is the LORD."

21 Therefore, I'm about to make them understand; this time I'll make them understand my power and strength, so they'll understand that my name is the LORD.

21 Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name *is* The LORD.

- The verses are Messianic, analogous to Is 2:1-4; 45:14; Zech 8:20-23