

Jeremiah 30 – 31
Restoration and Salvation in Tribulation
J.D. Farag

Welcome. I want to welcome those of you online as well. So glad you're joining with us. We're making our way through Jeremiah and two chapters tonight, Lord willing, heavy on the "Lord willing."

Okay, let's get to it because we've got a lot to get to. So let's pray, and we'll just ask God to bless our time together. If you would, please join with me.

Father in heaven, thank You so much. Lord, we're just so in awe of You. And as we have just sung ♪ How Great Thou Art ♪ it doesn't even begin to express to You our love for You, our gratitude.

You are great. Who is like unto You, O God? There is none like You, O God. Lord, we deem it a profound privilege to be able to come to this, Your church, and open up Your Word and have the Holy Spirit speak into our lives.

It is life; it's the bread of life, the word of life. And, Lord, that's why we're here. We yearn for, long for, ache for, even, You to do that which only You can and satiate the need that we have that only You can meet.

So Lord, as we just humble ourselves before You tonight, would You do that for us? Will You minister to us? Lord, thank You. We love You so much. In Jesus' name, amen and amen.

All right. So beginning here in Chapter 30 and on through Chapter 33, we're turning a corner of sorts, as God now has Jeremiah prophesy about the restoration of God's people from Babylonian captivity. Everything for the most part heretofore has been a prophecy about the captivity in Babylon.

And now we kind of almost, in a way, turn this abrupt corner and sort of fast-forward to that time when God will restore His people.

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And that's really what is woven into the fabric of the two chapters before us tonight. And it's actually one of those dual prophecies, you remember?

We've talked about and seen prior these dual prophecies where you have sort of the fulfillment in part initially, but ultimately yet future when it finds its complete and ultimate fulfillment. And such as the case here, chiefly concerning Israel then and Israel yet future.

By the way, just parenthetically, let me say that the two chapters and more along with them, but Replacement Theology, false teachers want nothing to do with the chapters that we're going to study tonight. And you're going to see why; you probably already know why.

God makes it very clear in no uncertain terms that, yes, there is a spiritual Israel, as the Apostle Paul writes about in Romans Chapter 9, but this is literal Israel. This is genetic Israel if I can say it like that.

So the prophecies that we're going to see here, yet future, dual prophecies in nature are namely that of the God of Israel delivering Israel and saving Israel in the time of Jacob's trouble. And if that sounds familiar, it should because that is also known as the tribulation.

It's been aptly said that the purpose of the tribulation is for the salvation of the Jewish nation. Now, you've heard me say that - I totally stole that from somebody else. I actually put it to song. I won't to sing it. I won't do that to you tonight. We don't have time anyway.

But it really comports with the sound doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture. Because this is the time of Jacob's trouble, Israel's trouble.

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Now, you understand why Jacob is Israel? Because Jacob had 12 sons. We're going to see that here in a moment. And they would become the 12 tribes of Israel. And God changed Jacob's name to Israel from Jacob when Jacob wrestled with the Lord all night long, demanding that He bless him.

And the Lord said, I can't bless you till I first break you. That's a sermon by itself. I preached it. I won't preach it tonight again. But you understand, right, that the breaking always precedes the blessing.

So He's going to bless him and He's going to change him for the rest of his life. He would never be the same again. And the name is the nature, and He says no longer will you be Yaacob. Your name is Israel, "governed by God."

So when you, as we're going to see, read in God's Word, "the time of Jacob's trouble." Interesting; I know this is deeply profound. It's not the time of the church's trouble.

Israel's trouble. It's the 7-year tribulation for the purpose of the salvation of the Jewish nation. It is the time of Jacob's trouble, not the church's trouble.

Anyway, I didn't mean to go that far on it, but too late. I did.

Before we jump in, I think I'd be grossly remiss if I didn't point out one more thing, and it's very important. It has to do with the timing of Jeremiah's prophecy to Judah being right at the darkest moment with Babylon on the cusp of destroying Jerusalem.

And the reason this is so important is because God, in His grace and mercy, gives us His Word and His hope at the exact time that we desperately need it the most. And we're going to see that here in a moment as well.

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One more thing. I know I said one thing, but one more thing. So this is the prophetic situation, but there is a personal application and please don't miss it. Otherwise, all I'm doing up here tonight is talking about the historic situation concerning Israel at this time, though there is profound personal application.

And that personal application is this: Oftentimes God will use tribulation. He'll deem it necessary to use trials and tribulation to bring about our restoration and if need be, even salvation.

And so as we're about to see, it's a loving God who will allow the tribulation, if that's what it takes. That's what it's going to take for Israel, His people.

But God will allow it to bring us to Him, or if the case is, so be it, bring us back to Him. God will use the tribulation to do it.

Well, let's get started. You ready?

Verse 1, Jeremiah 30. **"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, "Thus speaks the Lord God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. For behold, [Verse 3] the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah."**

[Hang on to that] [There's a delineation and a distinction there that will come into play in a moment]

"My people Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it."

Okay, this is where the dual prophecy begins. This was partially fulfilled with Judah, Southern Judah, not Northern

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Israel because it was divided at this time. So it was fulfilled in part initially. And it was led by Ezra and Nehemiah in the year 520 B.C.

But here's the dual prophecy. It was ultimately fulfilled. Now you've got Israel and Judah, the northern tribes of Israel and Southern Judah. He's going to bring them back and return to the land.

Do you know when that happened? Do you know the day that that happened? May 14th, 1948. This prophecy that we just read was fulfilled.

"Now, [Verse 4], these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. "For thus says the Lord: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale?"

Now, bear with me. I'll try to explain this. This is kind of interesting, yeah?

You mean you've got a man that's pregnant? Of course, nowadays... nah, I'm sorry. I didn't want to go there. Mercy.

But what Jeremiah's describing and prophesying here is the utter horror and terror at this time in the final stages of what would end up being an 18-month Babylonian invasion.

Now, picture in your mind the Babylonians right there, at Jerusalem, at the ready. This is the 11th hour, and this is the exact time that God wants Jeremiah to record this and to give this to the people because this is the time they needed it the most.

It is so bad! The fear: Unspeakable! The trembling: Unthinkable! It's so bad that the men are weeping and wailing

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in pain like a woman who's pregnant in labor. That's how bad it is.

Now we have a saying modern-day. I think it goes something like, "All the blood ran out of my body," or something like that, when your face turns pale. Well, that's what it's talking about. It's that fear, as the Babylonians are there. And think about this. I wonder if they started to realize wow, Jeremiah was right. He's been telling us this for how many years, and now it's happening.

And the fear that comes in and sets in, the trembling. It is so intense that men - these are mighty men - are in such pain that it would resemble a woman in labor, in the labor pains, and it gets worse.

Verse 7 "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it. And it is the time of [Here it is] Jacob's trouble. But he shall be saved out of it."

Now, not "from it," "out of it" because of it. It's the tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble that will bring about the salvation. The salvation will come out of it. You'll be saved out of it.

Out of what?

That great day.

What great day?

The tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble.

In other words, the horror and terror that we just had described for us in the previous verses is nothing like that Great Day, which is the time of Jacob's trouble, the 7-year tribulation.

In fact, Jesus, sort of echoing this in *Matthew 24, verse 21* says, "**Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not**

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been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be." That's what Jeremiah just got done prophesying and saying.

[Verse 8] 'For it shall come to pass in that day,' Says the Lord of hosts, 'That I will break his yoke from your neck and will burst your bonds. Foreigners shall no more enslave them. But *[Verse 9]* they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them."

Now there is some debate about this. Is this David during the Millennium, the Kingdom Age, that 1000-year period of time where we rule and reign with Christ in the Millennial reign, the Kingdom Age on earth, by the way, in its pre-fallen state before sin entered the world?

We have that 1000-year period, the Millennial Kingdom, and we're told here that David is going to reign as their king. Is it David or is it Jesus, or is it both?

Well, if it's both, that's Wow! And let me explain the "wow" here. I want you to think through this with me.

We're going to be ruling and reigning with Christ for a thousand years. And it's been suggested, and the thought is, is that we are going to be given certain regions and areas that we will reign over in the Millennial Kingdom.

This is why it is a lot of people joke about, well, I'm going to, you know, ask for and put my bid in for Hawaii, and then somebody will snarky, will say, well, the islands may not still be there, to which I usually say, "Get the behind me Satan."

But you get the point. We're going to be ruling and reigning, and what determines what we rule and reign over will be what we did with what God called us to do in this life.

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If I was faithful with little, I'll be entrusted with much.
"To whom much has been given much is required." So what we do now in this life will determine what we do during the Millennial reign. This is why I'm putting in for Hawaii. I kind of like it here a little bit.

Can you imagine in its pre-fallen state? I don't think there's going to be cockroaches. I don't know. I'm just saying.

So where am I going with this? Think about this.

Let's just say for purposes of discussion that it is both. So we're ruling and reigning with Christ, and David is ruling and reigning in Jerusalem during the Millennium. Wow! That's what I mean by Wow!

David? No way.

Way!

So we're going to be ruling and reigning with Christ and we're going to be able to, you know, swing by while we're in the neighborhood? Hey, David, how's it going?

Oh, man, it's going great.

David, we're talking about David in the Millennium! Is that weird? Because you're looking at me weird. That is so cool! I mean, yeah, I was thinking about it today. I won't take too much time on it, but I think I need to at least mention this.

I think we have no idea what is in store for us during the Millennium. I mean, we talk about the rapture and eternity-future, the new heavens and the new earth, I mean, the more I know and learn and read and study about the Millennium, the more exciting it is to me, the more excited I get about it!

It is going to be amazing! I mean, all of these great men and women of God, they're going to be assigned and given these

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regions, if you will, these areas to rule and reign over for 1000 years. And we're going to be ruling and reigning with them! That's Wow! Just Wow!

Okay, that's it. That's all I have on that. I'll just leave you with that. Have a good night's sleep!

Verse 10. **'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the Lord, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel. For behold, I will save you from afar, and your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid. For I am with you,' says the Lord, 'to save you. Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet I will not make a complete end of you.'**

[Hang on to that] **"But I will correct you in justice and will not let you go altogether unpunished."**

I have to. I'm a just God, and I do have to correct you and discipline you, but I'm not through with you. I will not make a complete end of you. No, I'll make a complete end of them, but not you.

Now, why do I emphasize that? Because think about it. When you're really going through it, isn't the enemy right there? He serves it up a thousand times a day on a silver platter. Man, I think this is how it ends for you. I think God's through with you. I think you blew it so bad. I mean, I just... man, I don't know. You're not getting out of this one. I mean, I know God's been faithful, but not this one. This is - this is really bad.

And he gets us to believe and be deceived into thinking that it's the end of me. God's through with me.

No, I'm not through with you. I have a plan for you. And I will not make a complete end of you. Yes, I'm chastising you,

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but I chastise those whom I love. Don't despise the chastening of the Lord.

I have to correct you in justice. It's just; it's a just correction. But I love you and I'm not through with you. And I have a plan for you, and it's not over.

Verse 12 **"For thus says the Lord: 'Your affliction is incurable; your wound is severe. There is no one to plead your cause, that you may be bound up. You have no healing medicines. All your lovers [Verse 14] have forgotten you. They do not seek you for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of your iniquities because your sins have increased. Why do you cry about your affliction [Verse 15]? Your sorrow is incurable. Because of the multitude of your iniquities because your sins have increased, I have done these things to you.**

'Therefore [Verse 16] all those who devour you shall be devoured. And all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity. Those who plunder you shall become plunder, and all who prey upon you I will make a prey.

For I will [Lot of 'I wills' here, Verse 17] restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'Because they called you an outcast saying: "This is Zion; No one seeks her."

"Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; The city shall be built upon its own mound, and the palace shall remain according to its own plan. Then [Verse 19] out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of those who make merry. I will multiply them, and they shall not diminish. I

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will also glorify them [*Honor them*], and they shall not be small.

Their children also shall be as before, and their congregation shall be established before Me. And I will punish all who oppress them."

Okay, a couple of thoughts here. First of all, it is important to note that all of God's "I wills" are not meritorious, and I'll explain what I mean by that. And by the way, the enemy does not want you to hear this because this is how he gets a Christian and keeps a Christian down. Because he gets us, again, believing - it's such a deception - that our relationship with God is merit-based, meritorious. In other words, God will do this if I do that.

I don't see that here.

No, God says, first of all, you're incurable. Didn't we just get done reading the heart as deceitfully wicked? You're beyond hope. Forget about it. Okay, that was a little bit of New York, whatever.

You're beyond hope. Your heart is deceitfully wicked. You have no idea. You're incurable. There's nothing you can do. But I can, and I will.

This promise of God doing what He says I will do has nothing to do with what we do. Let me try that again. Bear with me.

Our relationship with God is not predicated upon anything that we merit or earn or deserve. We do not have a merit. And aren't you glad, by the way? Can you imagine if our relationship with God was meritorious?

I wouldn't be standing up here right now if that were the case. And you probably wouldn't be sitting there right now if that were the case, so don't look at me as spiritual.

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If the relationship was meritorious, based on merit, deserved favor? That's the antithesis of mercy. It's the antithesis of grace.

No, God says, I will.

Yeah, but God, I don't deserve it.

I know.

Lord, what did I do for You to do this for me?

Nothing, you didn't do anything. But I'm going to do it.

Why?

Because I love you. I'm not through with you. I have a plan for you.

And I'm kind of liking this. I will, lot of "I wills" again.

"I will punish all who oppress them."

Oh, cool. Can I watch? Is that bad? Can I see the list, Lord, cause I just want to make sure you got everybody. Cause this is Genesis 12:1-2, isn't it? **"I will curse those who curse you. I will bless those who bless you."**

That's what God's saying here.

Why? Because Israel was deserving of it?

Absolutely not.

Because Israel had merited it, earned it?

Absolutely not.

It's not based on anything but the goodness of God.

Verse 21, "Their nobles shall be from among them, and their governor shall come from their midst. Then I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach Me. For who is this who pledged his heart to approach Me?" says the Lord. 'You shall be My people, and I will be your God.'"

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These two verses are a prophecy about Jesus, who is both king and priest. Priest: in the order of Melchizedek, who we studied about in our verse-by-verse study through Hebrews. He will be the ruler, the ultimate ruler, the Governor, over the people that will reconcile the people to God.

Verse 23 "Behold the whirlwind of the Lord." [Remember now we've seen this word before]

[Think tornado: Very fast, very violent]

"The whirlwind of the Lord goes forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind. It will fall violently on the head of the wicked. The fierce anger [Verse 24] of the Lord will not return until He has done it, and until He has performed the intents of His heart. [And then pay particular attention to this at the end of this chapter] **In the latter days, you will consider it."**

Woe! That's pretty powerful and profound, and it's a prophecy concerning the latter days. We're in the latter days, by the way, spoiler alert, when all of these prophecies will ultimately find their fulfillment.

Have you ever heard it said, or perhaps you yourself have said, "This is the most exciting time to be alive?" Well, it is.

Chapter 31:1. How are we doing? Pretty good, huh? All right. We'll have you out of here by midnight. Don't worry **"At the same time," says the Lord, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people." Thus says the Lord: "The people who survived the sword, found grace in the wilderness—Israel, when I went to give him rest."**

Now, this is why I wanted to do these two chapters together because they go together. *Verse 1*, at the same time, picks up from *Chapter 30:24*, placing this at the same time.

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What time is this?

This is the latter time, the latter days, in the last days.

So what follows is a prophecy that will ultimately find its fulfillment at the time of the end.

Verse 3, "The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love. Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."

Please, please, please don't just go past that or read past that because I'm not going to let you, and here's why.

We have to see all that we read in a book like Jeremiah, these prophecies, through the lens of God's love. It's an everlasting love. You know what an everlasting love is? It's a love that lasts forever. I know, profound, right?

But it's this other word here: Lovingkindness. What if I told you that the closest word in the English language that we could come up with in the translation is: lovingkindness, and yet it still doesn't even come close to the original meaning behind it.

It is, and we're going to see this in a moment, a love that is so deep. It is an unconditional agape love that He has for us, and that is what draws us to Him: His love for us.

You know, it's sad because we know God is love. It's not just that God has love, but that God is love.

Yeah, God loves you.

I know.

Jesus loves you.

I know.

And we just blow past it, and it packs no punch, if I can say it like that.

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And it's sad because what carries more weight is when you hear someone say, "Well, yeah, Jesus loves you, but He likes you too."

He does? He likes me?

Yeah.

I mean, I know He loves me, but you mean He really likes me?

Yeah.

That's what this word "lovingkindness" comes packaged with. He likes you. He loves you. His thoughts towards you **"Again [Verse 4], I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel! You shall again be adorned with your tambourines, and shall go forth in the dances of those who rejoice. You shall yet [Verse 5] plant vines on the mountains of Samaria. The planters shall plant and eat them as ordinary food.**

[This is very encouraging to me because there's going to be food in the Millennium, okay?]

For there shall be a day [Verse 6] when the watchman will cry... [not in the way you would think] ...they will cry on Mount Ephraim, 'Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.'

So in other words, the watchman during the Millennium, they're not going to sound the alarm to warn the people of what's coming. They're going to sound the alarm so the people will rejoice.

Verse 7, "For thus says the Lord: "Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; Proclaim, give praise, and say, 'O Lord, save Your people, the remnant of Israel!'

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Behold, *[Verse 8]* I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the ends of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and the one who labors with child, together. A great throng shall return there.

They shall come *[Verse 9]* with weeping, and with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way in which they shall not stumble. For I am *[I am]* a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.

[We'll talk about Ephraim more in a moment]

"Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, *[Verse 10]* and declare it in the isles afar off. *[See, that's why I think there's going to be the Hawaiian islands]* 'He who scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.'

For the Lord *[Verse 11]* has redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, streaming to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat and new wine and oil, for the young of the flock and the herd. Their souls shall be like a well-watered garden, and they shall sorrow no more at all.

[I like those two words, never again]

"Then *[Verse 13]* shall the virgin rejoice in the dance and the young men and the old, together. For I will turn their mourning to joy, will comfort them, and make them rejoice rather than sorrow. I will satiate the soul of the priests with abundance, and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the Lord."

Thus says the Lord *[Verse 15]*: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children because they are no more."

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Thus says the Lord [Verse 16]: "Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.

[And I love verse 17, I love verse 17, I love verse 17]

There is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall come back to their own border."

Okay, let's talk about this for just a moment.

So you remember that Jacob had two wives, Leah and Rachel? Remember that old story about, you know, working for - it's a horrible story. It's one of those places in God's Word where you're thinking to yourself, TMI, man! I don't need to know this. This is way too much information.

I don't want to know that about Jacob. I don't want to know that about Jacob's father-in-law. Pulls a fast one on him, so he marries Leah, and then he has to work seven more years to get Rachel. And then as it turns out, Rachel's barren.

And here Leah's having all these children, ten of them, by the way, 10 of the 12 children of Jacob, Israel, that would become the 12 tribes of Israel. Ten of them came by way of Leah. Only two came by way of Rachel: Benjamin and Joseph.

Now what's interesting is, and I don't want to get too deep into this, but it's a very, very fascinating study.

So why wasn't there a tribe of Joseph? Joseph had two children: Manasseh and Ephraim. There was the tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim.

And by the way, again, the name is the nature. You know what Manasseh means in Hebrew? It's actually the same in my native tongue of Arabic. It means "to forget." And Ephraim means "to make fruitful or be fruitful."

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And that's why Joseph named his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. He had forgotten all that had been done to him. **"What you did to me, you meant for evil, but God meant it for good."** He forgave and forgot, and it was because he forgave and forgot that God made him fruitful. That's why you don't have a tribe of Joseph.

So when Jacob is blessing his sons, he blesses Manasseh and Ephraim. And by the way, Benjamin, the tribe of Benjamin is the area today we know as Jerusalem. That's Benjamin, the tribe of Benjamin.

So these two sons - Benjamin was the youngest, Joseph, the second to the youngest. They were the only two sons that came by way of Rachel. The other ten came by Leah.

Now, why is this important? Because this is not just prophetic. It's also poetic as a type or picture of the yet-future slaughter of the male children in Bethlehem under Herod.

This is *Matthew Chapter 2*, beginning in verse 16, **"Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men."**

That was a demonic, satanic attempt to kill the Savior of the world who had been born. And so he calculated that any male child under the age of two: kill them.

Kind of reminiscent of what Pharaoh did, right, save Moses, a deliver, a type of Christ. So he had them all - and by the way, some historians and commentators - it's quite graphic. I won't get graphic, but they were slaughtered. They were slaughtered.

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"Then [Verse 17, we're told] was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

That's the prophecy that we just read. And it was fulfilled and recorded in Matthew's Gospel.

Now, before we move on to verse 18, there's something here that I want to point out, very important.

Every parent: There's hope for you, your children. Any parent who has a wayward daughter or a prodigal son there is hope for you. There's hope for them. Never forget that God loves them more than you ever could. And He wants them right more than you ever could. And never, ever, ever give up on them. Never give up on them.

Verse 18 "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: 'You have chastised me, and I was chastised, like an untrained bull. Restore me, and I will return for You are the Lord my God. Surely, after my turning, I repented. And after I was instructed, I struck myself on the thigh; I was ashamed, yes, even humiliated because I bore the reproach of my youth.'

What's this about? What's this saying?

Well, this speaks to that godly sorrow that the Apostle Paul writes about to the Corinthian church that leads to a genuine repentance. This was a genuine repentance, a turning back.

Verse 20, please don't miss this. Listen to the heart of God in His response.

"Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a pleasant child? For though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still.

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Therefore My heart yearns for him. I will surely have mercy on him, says the Lord."

Does this sound a little bit like the parable of the prodigal? It should. That's the heart of a loving Heavenly Father.

And this is, again, one of those places where it's really hard for us to fully grasp the meaning. When we're told that the heart of God yearns, it sort of carries with it the idea of there's an internal, just a yearning and like when your stomach is in pain, hunger pains, a growling, a yearning, a churning. I mean, it's almost like a physical sickness because you ache and yearn and long so much for them.

You know the parable "the prodigal," is to me perhaps one of the most powerful pictures of a loving heavenly Father, and it's missed in our culture for what I think would be deemed obvious reasons.

You would never in the Middle East, in my culture as an Arab, you would never in the Middle East see a dad, a father run to his son. It's unthinkable, would never happen.

Yet the picture that's painted for us in that parable of the prodigal son is that of not only a father running to his son, but waiting and watching, yearning, churning in his heart for his son to return, to show mercy to him. Oh, he loves him so.

And when he sees his son coming from afar off, he gathers his robe so he can run. I mean, this would be shameful in the Middle East. The father runs? No, boy, you run to me.

No, that's what it's like. It's unimaginable, unthinkable, incomprehensible.

Here's the father gathering his robe so he could run to his son after what his son did? You want to talk about meritorious? He doesn't deserve it.

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In fact, there's every indication that the son was a little bit taken aback, just like, whoa! He was rehearsing what he was going to say to his dad all the way back home.

Like Dad, I'm sorry. I took the inheritance. I wasted it. I spent it. I lost it all.

Oh, can I just... how do I say this?

Oh, I'll just shovel you know what. You can use whatever word you want. I'll just do that for you. That would be better than what I was doing.

And here, his dad's running to him, and then he says, Hey, we're going to have a feast like, we've never had before!

And it's so... the older brother - there's a powerful lesson in that. He's not happy with this.

He's like: Are you kidding me right now? I've been faithful, and my brother went out and wasted his inheritance. And you're going to do it? You didn't do that for me!

Well, son, listen, he was lost. Now he's found. He's back. He's back!

Well, this is the heart of God. This is the response. And it's hard for us to wrap our minds around. He yearns for us? He wants to give us His mercy on us?

This is another thing, and I'm maybe giving the enemy too much credit, but if you think about it, he's also been met with a measure of success in this area, hasn't he? Getting us to think that God's angry with us and we might want to just kind of lay low for a while.

No, He's waiting, and He's not waiting with a baseball bat to beat you. He's going to run to you. He has mercy for you,

Verse 21, "Set up signposts, make landmarks; set your heart toward the highway, the way in which you went. Turn back, O

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virgin of Israel, turn back to these your cities. How long will you gad about, [Verse 22] O you backsliding daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth— a woman shall encompass a man."

What? What does that mean?

Well, I'll just try to, at the risk of an oversimplification, explain it this way. It's basically saying the restoration is going to be so secure, so complete, so safe that the woman can do that which the man would do in providing, covering, and protecting.

So come back and don't delay. What are you waiting for? How long will you gad about? Come back. You're going to be restored and that restoration is going to be so secure.

Verse 23 "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: 'The Lord bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!'

And there shall dwell [Verse 24] in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks. For I have [Verse 25, and here it is again] satiated [Satisfied] the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."

This is why it is so important to understand the timing of when Jeremiah would write this and when Jeremiah would deliver this to God's people.

It is the darkest hour, and it's the time that they needed to hear this the most. You're going to be taken into captivity, but this is not the end.

I'm going to chastise you. I'm going to discipline you. I'm going to teach you a lesson.

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But here's what I'm going to do after. Oh, you have no idea. I'm going to restore you. I'm going to bless you exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond anything you could ever imagine, let alone ask! And I'm going to satiate that weary soul.

Man, if ever I needed to hear that, it would be at that time. I need to hear the Word of the Lord, the promise from the Lord that He's going to restore me and satiate me and replenish me. Because right now I'm at rock bottom, and I need this hope for my weary soul in my darkest hour.

And this is who God is. And this is how God is. And this is why it is that God would have Jeremiah do this at this time.

My people are broken now. They are downcast, they are weary, they are sorrowful. I want you to give them hope, the future hope that I have for them. I know My thoughts toward you. You don't know My thoughts, *Chapter 29*, but I do, *verse 11*, that famous life verse that we talked about a couple of weeks ago.

Actually, that was last week, wasn't it? That's pretty bad when you don't remember what you taught on last week. Oh, well.

My plans for you? I know what My plans are for you. I know it doesn't seem like it right now, especially right now. But My plans are not to harm you. It's not evil. No, it's good. It's to give you a future and a hope.

Verse 26, "After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me. "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord."

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By the way, side note: Don't you think Jeremiah was a little bit happy about this particular prophecy in light of everything that he's had to prophesy up to this point?

Oh, Lord, Thank You! Thank You!

Because all the prophecies have been plucking up and breaking down, and throwing down and destroying, and judgment and destruction and affliction.

And now You're saying, okay, well, now I'm going to build you up. Oh, thank You, Lord, I needed that.

They need this too.

"In those days [Verse 29] they shall say no more: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge."

Now, this is - actually, Ezekiel references this as well. This was a saying in that day. In fact, we've kind of modernized it about sour grapes. This is basically the children blaming the parents for everything.

Let me say that again. It's the children not taking responsibility for themselves but blaming their parents. They ate the sour grapes, and that's why our teeth are set on edge. It's their fault.

You know, we had a dysfunctional family.

Every family's dysfunctional. Are you kidding me?

It's the parents' fault. That's why I'm going through this.

No, it's not their fault. You can't blame them for that. I mean, listen, there's no such thing as a perfect parent, but you can't blame the parent, the sour grapes story. God isn't going to buy it.

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Verse 31, "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant."

Every time we partake of communion, which I think we did last week, Jesus, when He gives them the cup, says, '**This is the cup of My Blood of the New Covenant.**'

The New Covenant. Well, what happened to the Old Covenant?

Oh, it's not nullified. It's fulfilled. It's not done away with. It's completed.

"**A New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.**

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

No more [Verse 34] shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." Ah! "As far as the East is from the West" - ah! "I will remember them no more."

"**Though your sins [Isaiah says] are as scarlet, the Lord says, I will make them white as snow."**

"**I will remove them as far as the East is from the West and remember them no more"** -That's the New Covenant. See, the Old Covenant, it was "kopher" covering, the sins were covered. That's the Old Covenant.

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New Covenant: no longer covered; God removed, and He remembers them no more. Aren't you glad?

I love how one said it: Every time you pray and asked God to forgive a sin that you already asked Him to forgive you for, He's like, Oh, I forgot about that. You just reminded me of that again.

Verse 35, "Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The Lord of hosts is His name)."

[In case you were wondering]

"If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever."

Thus says the Lord: [Verse 37] "If heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the Lord."

This is what I mean when I say that anybody who is deceived and believed that the church replaces Israel as God's elect and God's chosen people a.k.a Replacement Theology, they will stay as far away from a passage like this as they possibly can, and for good reason.

Because you know what God is saying here, right? He's saying if you wake up one morning and the sun isn't there, then I'm done with Israel. If at night when you go to bed and you look out and the moon and the stars are not there, I'm done with Israel. The waves of the sea when they're roaring to and fro: If that ever stops, then I'm done with Israel.

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It's worse than that. If you can find Me somebody that is able to actually measure heaven and the universe and the foundations of the earth - in other words, you got to get a pretty big measuring tape to do that. And also not just the foundations of the earth, but beneath. So you got to measure that, the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is. If you can do that, then I will cast off Israel.

Do you get the impression that He's not going to do that? Because nobody is going to do that. And the sun's going to be there, and the moon is going to be there, and nobody's going to come back with the measurements of the earth and the universe.

So I'll say this as lovingly as I can, and we're almost done, and I appreciate your patience.

But if God is through with the Jew, then what about me and you? See, God has a covenant with the Jew. And if He has a covenant with the Jew and He has a New Covenant with me and you too, and He's through with the Jew, then how secure are you?

In other words, you don't want God to be through with the Jew. And that's an Arab telling you that, by the way. Because if God's through with the Jew, then I don't know about you.

Replacement theology is - I better stop or my blood pressure's going to go up.

"Behold, [Verse 38] the days are coming, says the Lord, that the city shall be built for the Lord from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.

[Notice the specificity]

Verse 39, The surveyor's line shall again extend straight forward over the hill Gareb; then it shall turn toward Goath.

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[Verse 40] **And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the Lord. It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever."**

All right! I love ending a chapter in a Bible study like that.

You know what an everlasting covenant is? A covenant that lasts forever. Forever! This is a literal restoration of Israel and Jerusalem. And we have quite the specificity here, don't we?

I like how one commentator said it, and I'll close with this. I love this. "Anyone who tries to assign what we just read to a spiritual Israel does violence to the text."

I like that. True dat!

[Laughter]

That's not a spiritual Israel. This is a literal Israel. Jerusalem is going to be restored, and we've got the boundaries. I like this. I've not heard of some of these places, but we got the boundaries where it's going to be restored to.

Oh, may it be. Thank You, Lord.

David, come on up. Why don't you stand up? Again, I appreciate your patience. We did it!

Two chapters; those were not short chapters either. Good job! Good job!

Oh, Lord, You're a restoring God. You're a restoring God. And it doesn't matter how bad we've been, it only matters how good You always are.

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Oh, Lord, thank You. Thank You for the hope, the future, the mercy, the grace despite our incurable, wretched, sinful condition.

Lord, thank You for the Savior! Thank You for salvation! Thank You for restoration! And Lord, if need be, the tribulation that brings about the restoration and the salvation. So be it, Lord. So be it, Lord. Thank You. In Jesus' name, amen.