

**Friday, October 4**

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**Jeremiah 2:31 - 4:18**

**2** **1** The LORD gave me another message. He said, **2** “Go and shout this message to Jerusalem. This is what the LORD says: “I remember how eager you were to please me as a young bride long ago, how you loved me and followed me even through the barren wilderness. **3** In those days Israel was holy to the LORD, the first of his children. All who harmed his people were declared guilty, and disaster fell on them. I, the LORD, have spoken!” **4** Listen to the word of the LORD, people of Jacob—all you families of Israel! **5** This is what the LORD says: “What did your ancestors find wrong with me that led them to stray so far from me? They worshiped worthless idols, only to become worthless themselves. **6** They did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD who brought us safely out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness— a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought and death, where no one lives or even travels?’ **7** “And when I brought you into a fruitful land to enjoy its bounty and goodness, you defiled my land and corrupted the possession I had promised you. **8** The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD ?’ Those who taught my word ignored me, the rulers turned against me, and the prophets spoke in the name of Baal, wasting their time on worthless idols. **9** Therefore, I will bring my case against you,” says the LORD . “I will even bring charges against your children’s children in the years to come. **10** “Go west and look in the land of Cyprus ; go east and search through the land of Kedar. Has anyone ever heard of anything as strange as this? **11** Has any nation ever traded its gods for new ones, even though they are not gods at all? Yet my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols! **12** The heavens are shocked at such a thing and shrink back in horror and dismay,” says the LORD . **13** “For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me— the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all! **14** “Why has Israel become a slave? Why has he been carried away as plunder? **15** Strong lions have roared against him, and the land has been destroyed. The towns are now in ruins, and no one lives in them anymore. **16** Egyptians, marching from their cities of Memphis and Tahpanhes, have destroyed Israel’s glory and power. **17** And you have brought this upon yourselves by rebelling against the LORD your God, even though he was leading you on the way! **18** “What have you gained by your alliances with Egypt and your covenants with Assyria? What good to you are the streams of the Nile or the waters of the Euphrates River? **19** Your wickedness will bring its own punishment. Your turning from me will shame you. You will see what an evil, bitter thing it is to abandon the LORD your

God and not to fear him. I, the Lord, the LORD of Heaven's Armies, have spoken! **20** "Long ago I broke the yoke that oppressed you and tore away the chains of your slavery, but still you said, 'I will not serve you.' On every hill and under every green tree, you have prostituted yourselves by bowing down to idols. **21** But I was the one who planted you, choosing a vine of the purest stock—the very best. How did you grow into this corrupt wild vine? **22** No amount of soap or lye can make you clean. I still see the stain of your guilt. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken! **23** "You say, 'That's not true! I haven't worshiped the images of Baal!' But how can you say that? Go and look in any valley in the land! Face the awful sins you have done. You are like a restless female camel desperately searching for a mate. **24** You are like a wild donkey, sniffing the wind at mating time. Who can restrain her lust? Those who desire her don't need to search, for she goes running to them! **25** When will you stop running? When will you stop panting after other gods? But you say, 'Save your breath. I'm in love with these foreign gods, and I can't stop loving them now!' **26** "Israel is like a thief who feels shame only when he gets caught. They, their kings, officials, priests, and prophets— all are alike in this. **27** To an image carved from a piece of wood they say, 'You are my father.' To an idol chiseled from a block of stone they say, 'You are my mother.' They turn their backs on me, but in times of trouble they cry out to me, 'Come and save us!' **28** But why not call on these gods you have made? When trouble comes, let them save you if they can! For you have as many gods as there are towns in Judah. **29** Why do you accuse me of doing wrong? You are the ones who have rebelled," says the LORD . **30** "I have punished your children, but they did not respond to my discipline. You yourselves have killed your prophets as a lion kills its prey. **31** "O my people, listen to the words of the LORD ! Have I been like a desert to Israel? Have I been to them a land of darkness? Why then do my people say, 'At last we are free from God! We don't need him anymore!'

**3 1** "If a man divorces a woman and she goes and marries someone else, he will not take her back again, for that would surely corrupt the land. But you have prostituted yourself with many lovers, so why are you trying to come back to me?" says the LORD . **2** "Look at the shrines on every hilltop. Is there any place you have not been defiled by your adultery with other gods? You sit like a prostitute beside the road waiting for a customer. You sit alone like a nomad in the desert. You have polluted the land with your prostitution and your wickedness. **3** That's why even the spring rains have failed. For you are a brazen prostitute and completely shameless. **4** Yet you say to me, 'Father, you have been my guide since my youth. **5** Surely you won't be angry forever! Surely you can forget about it!' So you talk, but you keep on doing all the evil you can." **6** During the reign of King Josiah, the LORD said to me, "Have you seen what fickle Israel has done? Like a wife who commits adultery, Israel has worshiped other gods on every hill and under every green tree. **7** I thought, 'After she has done all this, she will return to

me.’ But she did not return, and her faithless sister Judah saw this. **8** She saw that I divorced faithless Israel because of her adultery. But that treacherous sister Judah had no fear, and now she, too, has left me and given herself to prostitution. **9** Israel treated it all so lightly—she thought nothing of committing adultery by worshiping idols made of wood and stone. So now the land has been polluted. **10** But despite all this, her faithless sister Judah has never sincerely returned to me. She has only pretended to be sorry. I, the LORD, have spoken!” **11** Then the LORD said to me, “Even faithless Israel is less guilty than treacherous Judah! **12** Therefore, go and give this message to Israel. This is what the LORD says: “O Israel, my faithless people, come home to me again, for I am merciful. I will not be angry with you forever. **13** Only acknowledge your guilt. Admit that you rebelled against the LORD your God and committed adultery against him by worshiping idols under every green tree. Confess that you refused to listen to my voice. I, the LORD, have spoken! **14** “Return home, you wayward children,” says the LORD, “for I am your master. I will bring you back to the land of Israel — one from this town and two from that family— from wherever you are scattered. **15** And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will guide you with knowledge and understanding. **16** “And when your land is once more filled with people,” says the LORD, “you will no longer wish for ‘the good old days’ when you possessed the Ark of the LORD ’s Covenant. You will not miss those days or even remember them, and there will be no need to rebuild the Ark. **17** In that day Jerusalem will be known as ‘The Throne of the LORD .’ All nations will come there to honor the LORD . They will no longer stubbornly follow their own evil desires. **18** In those days the people of Judah and Israel will return together from exile in the north. They will return to the land I gave your ancestors as an inheritance forever. **19** “I thought to myself, ‘I would love to treat you as my own children!’ I wanted nothing more than to give you this beautiful land— the finest possession in the world. I looked forward to your calling me ‘Father,’ and I wanted you never to turn from me. **20** But you have been unfaithful to me, you people of Israel! You have been like a faithless wife who leaves her husband. I, the LORD, have spoken.” **21** Voices are heard high on the windswept mountains, the weeping and pleading of Israel’s people. For they have chosen crooked paths and have forgotten the LORD their God. **22** “My wayward children,” says the LORD, “come back to me, and I will heal your wayward hearts.” “Yes, we’re coming,” the people reply, “for you are the LORD our God. **23** Our worship of idols on the hills and our religious orgies on the mountains are a delusion. Only in the LORD our God will Israel ever find salvation. **24** From childhood we have watched as everything our ancestors worked for— their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters— was squandered on a delusion. **25** Let us now lie down in shame and cover ourselves with dishonor, for we and our ancestors have sinned against the LORD our God. From our childhood to this day we have never obeyed him.”

**4 1** “O Israel,” says the LORD, “if you wanted to return to me, you could. You could throw away your detestable idols and stray away no more. **2** Then when you swear by my name, saying, ‘As surely as the LORD lives,’ you could do so with truth, justice, and righteousness. Then you would be a blessing to the nations of the world, and all people would come and praise my name.” **3** This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and Jerusalem: “Plow up the hard ground of your hearts! Do not waste your good seed among thorns. **4** O people of Judah and Jerusalem, surrender your pride and power. Change your hearts before the LORD, or my anger will burn like an unquenchable fire because of all your sins. **5** “Shout to Judah, and broadcast to Jerusalem! Tell them to sound the alarm throughout the land: ‘Run for your lives! Flee to the fortified cities!’ **6** Raise a signal flag as a warning for Jerusalem : ‘Flee now! Do not delay!’ For I am bringing terrible destruction upon you from the north.” **7** A lion stalks from its den, a destroyer of nations. It has left its lair and is headed your way. It’s going to devastate your land! Your towns will lie in ruins, with no one living in them anymore. **8** So put on clothes of mourning and weep with broken hearts, for the fierce anger of the LORD is still upon us. **9** “In that day,” says the LORD, “the king and the officials will tremble in fear. The priests will be struck with horror, and the prophets will be appalled.” **10** Then I said, “O Sovereign LORD, the people have been deceived by what you said, for you promised peace for Jerusalem. But the sword is held at their throats!” **11** The time is coming when the LORD will say to the people of Jerusalem, “My dear people, a burning wind is blowing in from the desert, and it’s not a gentle breeze useful for winnowing grain. **12** It is a roaring blast sent by me! Now I will pronounce your destruction!” **13** Our enemy rushes down on us like storm clouds! His chariots are like whirlwinds. His horses are swifter than eagles. How terrible it will be, for we are doomed! **14** O Jerusalem, cleanse your heart that you may be saved. How long will you harbor your evil thoughts? **15** Your destruction has been announced from Dan and the hill country of Ephraim. **16** “Warn the surrounding nations and announce this to Jerusalem: The enemy is coming from a distant land, raising a battle cry against the towns of Judah. **17** They surround Jerusalem like watchmen around a field, for my people have rebelled against me,” says the LORD . **18** “Your own actions have brought this upon you. This punishment is bitter, piercing you to the heart!”

## **Colossians 1:1 - 17**

**1 1** This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. **2** We are writing to God’s holy people in the city of Colosse, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. May God our Father give you grace and peace. **3** We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **4** For we

have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God's people, **5** which come from your confident hope of what God has reserved for you in heaven. You have had this expectation ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News. **6** This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God's wonderful grace. **7** You learned about the Good News from Epaphras, our beloved co-worker. He is Christ's faithful servant, and he is helping us on your behalf. **8** He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you. **9** So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. **10** Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better. **11** We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, **12** always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. **13** For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, **14** who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins. **15** Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, **16** for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. **17** He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

## **Psalms 76:1 - 12**

**76 1** God is honored in Judah; his name is great in Israel. **2** Jerusalem is where he lives; Mount Zion is his home. **3** There he has broken the fiery arrows of the enemy, the shields and swords and weapons of war. Interlude **4** You are glorious and more majestic than the everlasting mountains. **5** Our boldest enemies have been plundered. They lie before us in the sleep of death. No warrior could lift a hand against us. **6** At the blast of your breath, O God of Jacob, their horses and chariots lay still. **7** No wonder you are greatly feared! Who can stand before you when your anger explodes? **8** From heaven you sentenced your enemies; the earth trembled and stood silent before you. **9** You stand up to judge those who do evil, O God, and to rescue the oppressed of the earth. Interlude **10** Human defiance only enhances your glory, for you use it as a weapon. **11** Make vows to the LORD your God, and keep them. Let everyone

bring tribute to the Awesome One. **12** For he breaks the pride of princes, and the kings of the earth fear him.

**Proverbs 24:21 - 22**

**24 21** My child, fear the LORD and the king. Don't associate with rebels, **22** for disaster will hit them suddenly. Who knows what punishment will come from the LORD and the king?