

## Sunday, October 6

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### **Jeremiah 6:16 - 8:7**

**6 16** This is what the LORD says: “Stop at the crossroads and look around. Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it. Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. But you reply, ‘No, that’s not the road we want!’ **17** I posted watchmen over you who said, ‘Listen for the sound of the alarm.’ But you replied, ‘No! We won’t pay attention!’ **18** “Therefore, listen to this, all you nations. Take note of my people’s situation. **19** Listen, all the earth! I will bring disaster on my people. It is the fruit of their own schemes, because they refuse to listen to me. They have rejected my word. **20** There’s no use offering me sweet frankincense from Sheba. Keep your fragrant calamus imported from distant lands! I will not accept your burnt offerings. Your sacrifices have no pleasing aroma for me.” **21** Therefore, this is what the LORD says: “I will put obstacles in my people’s path. Fathers and sons will both fall over them. Neighbors and friends will die together.” **22** This is what the LORD says: “Look! A great army coming from the north! A great nation is rising against you from far-off lands. **23** They are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like a roaring sea as they ride forward on horses. They are coming in battle formation, planning to destroy you, beautiful Jerusalem.” **24** We have heard reports about the enemy, and we wring our hands in fright. Pangs of anguish have gripped us, like those of a woman in labor. **25** Don’t go out to the fields! Don’t travel on the roads! The enemy’s sword is everywhere and terrorizes us at every turn! **26** Oh, my people, dress yourselves in burlap and sit among the ashes. Mourn and weep bitterly, as for the loss of an only son. For suddenly the destroying armies will be upon you! **27** “Jeremiah, I have made you a tester of metals, that you may determine the quality of my people. **28** They are the worst kind of rebel, full of slander. They are as hard as bronze and iron, and they lead others into corruption. **29** The bellows fiercely fan the flames to burn out the corruption. But it does not purify them, for the wickedness remains. **30** I will label them ‘Rejected Silver,’ for I, the LORD, am discarding them.”

**7 1** The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, **2** “Go to the entrance of the LORD’s Temple, and give this message to the people: ‘O Judah, listen to this message from the LORD! Listen to it, all of you who worship here! **3** This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says: ““Even now, if you quit your evil ways, I will let you stay in your own land. **4** But don’t be fooled by those who promise you safety simply because the LORD’s Temple is here.

They chant, “The LORD ’s Temple is here! The LORD ’s Temple is here!” **5** But I will be merciful only if you stop your evil thoughts and deeds and start treating each other with justice; **6** only if you stop exploiting foreigners, orphans, and widows; only if you stop your murdering; and only if you stop harming yourselves by worshiping idols. **7** Then I will let you stay in this land that I gave to your ancestors to keep forever. **8** “Don’t be fooled into thinking that you will never suffer because the Temple is here. It’s a lie! **9** Do you really think you can steal, murder, commit adultery, lie, and burn incense to Baal and all those other new gods of yours, **10** and then come here and stand before me in my Temple and chant, “We are safe!”—only to go right back to all those evils again? **11** Don’t you yourselves admit that this Temple, which bears my name, has become a den of thieves? Surely I see all the evil going on there. I, the LORD, have spoken! **12** “Go now to the place at Shiloh where I once put the Tabernacle that bore my name. See what I did there because of all the wickedness of my people, the Israelites. **13** While you were doing these wicked things, says the LORD, I spoke to you about it repeatedly, but you would not listen. I called out to you, but you refused to answer. **14** So just as I destroyed Shiloh, I will now destroy this Temple that bears my name, this Temple that you trust in for help, this place that I gave to you and your ancestors. **15** And I will send you out of my sight into exile, just as I did your relatives, the people of Israel. ’ **16** “Pray no more for these people, Jeremiah. Do not weep or pray for them, and don’t beg me to help them, for I will not listen to you. **17** Don’t you see what they are doing throughout the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? **18** No wonder I am so angry! Watch how the children gather wood and the fathers build sacrificial fires. See how the women knead dough and make cakes to offer to the Queen of Heaven. And they pour out liquid offerings to their other idol gods! **19** Am I the one they are hurting?” asks the LORD . “Most of all, they hurt themselves, to their own shame.” **20** So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “I will pour out my terrible fury on this place. Its people, animals, trees, and crops will be consumed by the unquenchable fire of my anger.” **21** This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says: “Take your burnt offerings and your other sacrifices and eat them yourselves! **22** When I led your ancestors out of Egypt, it was not burnt offerings and sacrifices I wanted from them. **23** This is what I told them: ‘Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well!’ **24** “But my people would not listen to me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward. **25** From the day your ancestors left Egypt until now, I have continued to send my servants, the prophets—day in and day out. **26** But my people have not listened to me or even tried to hear. They have been stubborn and sinful—even worse than their ancestors. **27** “Tell them all this, but do not expect them to listen. Shout out your warnings, but do not expect them to respond. **28** Say to them, ‘This is the nation whose people will not obey the LORD their God and who refuse to be taught.

Truth has vanished from among them; it is no longer heard on their lips. **29** Shave your head in mourning, and weep alone on the mountains. For the LORD has rejected and forsaken this generation that has provoked his fury.’ **30** “The people of Judah have sinned before my very eyes,” says the LORD. “They have set up their abominable idols right in the Temple that bears my name, defiling it. **31** They have built pagan shrines at Topheth, the garbage dump in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, and there they burn their sons and daughters in the fire. I have never commanded such a horrible deed; it never even crossed my mind to command such a thing! **32** So beware, for the time is coming,” says the LORD, “when that garbage dump will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. They will bury the bodies in Topheth until there is no more room for them. **33** The bodies of my people will be food for the vultures and wild animals, and no one will be left to scare them away. **34** I will put an end to the happy singing and laughter in the streets of Jerusalem. The joyful voices of bridegrooms and brides will no longer be heard in the towns of Judah. The land will lie in complete desolation.

**8 1** “In that day,” says the LORD, “the enemy will break open the graves of the kings and officials of Judah, and the graves of the priests, prophets, and common people of Jerusalem. **2** They will spread out their bones on the ground before the sun, moon, and stars—the gods my people have loved, served, and worshiped. Their bones will not be gathered up again or buried but will be scattered on the ground like manure. **3** And the people of this evil nation who survive will wish to die rather than live where I will send them. I, the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, have spoken! **4** “Jeremiah, say to the people, ‘This is what the LORD says: “When people fall down, don’t they get up again? When they discover they’re on the wrong road, don’t they turn back? **5** Then why do these people stay on their self-destructive path? Why do the people of Jerusalem refuse to turn back? They cling tightly to their lies and will not turn around. **6** I listen to their conversations and don’t hear a word of truth. Is anyone sorry for doing wrong? Does anyone say, “What a terrible thing I have done”? No! All are running down the path of sin as swiftly as a horse galloping into battle! **7** Even the stork that flies across the sky knows the time of her migration, as do the turtledove, the swallow, and the crane. They all return at the proper time each year. But not my people! They do not know the LORD’s laws.

### **Colossians 2:8 - 23**

**2 8** Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. **9** For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. **10** So you also are complete

through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. **11** When you came to Christ, you were “circumcised,” but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. **12** For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. **13** You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. **15** In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross. **16** So don’t let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. **17** For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality. **18** Don’t let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud, **19** and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it. **20** You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, **21** “Don’t handle! Don’t taste! Don’t touch!”? **22** Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. **23** These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person’s evil desires.

### **Psalm 78:1 - 31**

**78 1** O my people, listen to my instructions. Open your ears to what I am saying, **2** for I will speak to you in a parable. I will teach you hidden lessons from our past— **3** stories we have heard and known, stories our ancestors handed down to us. **4** We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders. **5** For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, **6** so the next generation might know them— even the children not yet born— and they in turn will teach their own children. **7** So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands. **8** Then they will not be like their ancestors— stubborn, rebellious, and unfaithful, refusing to give their hearts to God. **9** The warriors of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned their backs and fled on the day of battle. **10** They did not keep God’s covenant and refused to live by his instructions. **11** They forgot what he had done— the great

wonders he had shown them, **12** the miracles he did for their ancestors on the plain of Zoan in the land of Egypt. **13** For he divided the sea and led them through, making the water stand up like walls! **14** In the daytime he led them by a cloud, and all night by a pillar of fire. **15** He split open the rocks in the wilderness to give them water, as from a gushing spring. **16** He made streams pour from the rock, making the waters flow down like a river! **17** Yet they kept on sinning against him, rebelling against the Most High in the desert. **18** They stubbornly tested God in their hearts, demanding the foods they craved. **19** They even spoke against God himself, saying, “God can’t give us food in the wilderness. **20** Yes, he can strike a rock so water gushes out, but he can’t give his people bread and meat.” **21** When the LORD heard them, he was furious. The fire of his wrath burned against Jacob. Yes, his anger rose against Israel, **22** for they did not believe God or trust him to care for them. **23** But he commanded the skies to open; he opened the doors of heaven. **24** He rained down manna for them to eat; he gave them bread from heaven. **25** They ate the food of angels! God gave them all they could hold. **26** He released the east wind in the heavens and guided the south wind by his mighty power. **27** He rained down meat as thick as dust— birds as plentiful as the sand on the seashore! **28** He caused the birds to fall within their camp and all around their tents. **29** The people ate their fill. He gave them what they craved. **30** But before they satisfied their craving, while the meat was yet in their mouths, **31** the anger of God rose against them, and he killed their strongest men. He struck down the finest of Israel’s young men.

### **Proverbs 24:26**

**24 26** An honest answer is like a kiss of friendship.