

Friday, October 11

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Jeremiah 16:16 - 18:23

16 16 “But now I am sending for many fishermen who will catch them,” says the LORD . “I am sending for hunters who will hunt them down in the mountains, hills, and caves. **17** I am watching them closely, and I see every sin. They cannot hope to hide from me. **18** I will double their punishment for all their sins, because they have defiled my land with lifeless images of their detestable gods and have filled my territory with their evil deeds.” **19** LORD, you are my strength and fortress, my refuge in the day of trouble! Nations from around the world will come to you and say, “Our ancestors left us a foolish heritage, for they worshiped worthless idols. **20** Can people make their own gods? These are not real gods at all!” **21** The LORD says, “Now I will show them my power; now I will show them my might. At last they will know and understand that I am the LORD .

17 1 “The sin of Judah is inscribed with an iron chisel— engraved with a diamond point on their stony hearts and on the corners of their altars. **2** Even their children go to worship at their pagan altars and Asherah poles, beneath every green tree and on every high hill. **3** So I will hand over my holy mountain— along with all your wealth and treasures and your pagan shrines— as plunder to your enemies, for sin runs rampant in your land. **4** The wonderful possession I have reserved for you will slip from your hands. I will tell your enemies to take you as captives to a foreign land. For my anger blazes like a fire that will burn forever.” **5** This is what the LORD says: “Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from the LORD . **6** They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, in an uninhabited salty land. **7** “But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. **8** They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit. **9** “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? **10** But I, the LORD, search all hearts and examine secret motives. I give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve.” **11** Like a partridge that hatches eggs she has not laid, so are those who get their wealth by unjust means. At midlife they will lose their riches; in the end, they will become poor old fools. **12** But we worship at your throne— eternal, high, and glorious! **13** O

LORD, the hope of Israel, all who turn away from you will be disgraced. They will be buried in the dust of the earth, for they have abandoned the LORD, the fountain of living water. **14** O LORD, if you heal me, I will be truly healed; if you save me, I will be truly saved. My praises are for you alone! **15** People scoff at me and say, "What is this 'message from the LORD' you talk about? Why don't your predictions come true?" **16** LORD, I have not abandoned my job as a shepherd for your people. I have not urged you to send disaster. You have heard everything I've said. **17** LORD, don't terrorize me! You alone are my hope in the day of disaster. **18** Bring shame and dismay on all who persecute me, but don't let me experience shame and dismay. Bring a day of terror on them. Yes, bring double destruction upon them! **19** This is what the LORD said to me: "Go and stand in the gates of Jerusalem, first in the gate where the king goes in and out, and then in each of the other gates. **20** Say to all the people, 'Listen to this message from the LORD, you kings of Judah and all you people of Judah and everyone living in Jerusalem. **21** This is what the LORD says: Listen to my warning! Stop carrying on your trade at Jerusalem's gates on the Sabbath day. **22** Do not do your work on the Sabbath, but make it a holy day. I gave this command to your ancestors, **23** but they did not listen or obey. They stubbornly refused to pay attention or accept my discipline. **24** "But if you obey me, says the LORD, and do not carry on your trade at the gates or work on the Sabbath day, and if you keep it holy, **25** then kings and their officials will go in and out of these gates forever. There will always be a descendant of David sitting on the throne here in Jerusalem. Kings and their officials will always ride in and out among the people of Judah in chariots and on horses, and this city will remain forever. **26** And from all around Jerusalem, from the towns of Judah and Benjamin, from the western foothills and the hill country and the Negev, the people will come with their burnt offerings and sacrifices. They will bring their grain offerings, frankincense, and thanksgiving offerings to the LORD's Temple. **27** "But if you do not listen to me and refuse to keep the Sabbath holy, and if on the Sabbath day you bring loads of merchandise through the gates of Jerusalem just as on other days, then I will set fire to these gates. The fire will spread to the palaces, and no one will be able to put out the roaring flames."

18 **1** The LORD gave another message to Jeremiah. He said, **2** "Go down to the potter's shop, and I will speak to you there." **3** So I did as he told me and found the potter working at his wheel. **4** But the jar he was making did not turn out as he had hoped, so he crushed it into a lump of clay again and started over. **5** Then the LORD gave me this message: **6** "O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand. **7** If I announce that a certain nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down, and destroyed, **8** but then that nation renounces its evil ways, I will not destroy it as I had planned. **9** And if I announce that I will plant and build up a certain nation or kingdom, **10** but

then that nation turns to evil and refuses to obey me, I will not bless it as I said I would. **11** “Therefore, Jeremiah, go and warn all Judah and Jerusalem. Say to them, ‘This is what the LORD says: I am planning disaster for you instead of good. So turn from your evil ways, each of you, and do what is right.’” **12** But the people replied, “Don’t waste your breath. We will continue to live as we want to, stubbornly following our own evil desires.” **13** So this is what the LORD says: “Has anyone ever heard of such a thing, even among the pagan nations? My virgin daughter Israel has done something terrible! **14** Does the snow ever disappear from the mountaintops of Lebanon? Do the cold streams flowing from those distant mountains ever run dry? **15** But my people are not so reliable, for they have deserted me; they burn incense to worthless idols. They have stumbled off the ancient highways and walk in muddy paths. **16** Therefore, their land will become desolate, a monument to their stupidity. All who pass by will be astonished and will shake their heads in amazement. **17** I will scatter my people before their enemies as the east wind scatters dust. And in all their trouble I will turn my back on them and refuse to notice their distress.” **18** Then the people said, “Come on, let’s plot a way to stop Jeremiah. We have plenty of priests and wise men and prophets. We don’t need him to teach the word and give us advice and prophecies. Let’s spread rumors about him and ignore what he says.” **19** LORD, hear me and help me! Listen to what my enemies are saying. **20** Should they repay evil for good? They have dug a pit to kill me, though I pleaded for them and tried to protect them from your anger. **21** So let their children starve! Let them die by the sword! Let their wives become childless widows. Let their old men die in a plague, and let their young men be killed in battle! **22** Let screaming be heard from their homes as warriors come suddenly upon them. For they have dug a pit for me and have hidden traps along my path. **23** LORD, you know all about their murderous plots against me. Don’t forgive their crimes and blot out their sins. Let them die before you. Deal with them in your anger.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 - 5:3

4 1 Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You live this way already, and we encourage you to do so even more. **2** For you remember what we taught you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. **3** God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. **4** Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor— **5** not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways. **6** Never harm or cheat a fellow believer in this matter by violating his wife, for the Lord avenges all such sins, as we have solemnly warned you before. **7** God has called us to live holy lives, not impure lives. **8** Therefore, anyone who refuses

to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. **9** But we don't need to write to you about the importance of loving each other, for God himself has taught you to love one another. **10** Indeed, you already show your love for all the believers throughout Macedonia. Even so, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you to love them even more. **11** Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. **12** Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others. **13** And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. **14** For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. **15** We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. **16** For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. **17** Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. **18** So encourage each other with these words.

5 1 Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don't really need to write you. **2** For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. **3** When people are saying, "Everything is peaceful and secure," then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape.

Psalm 81:1 - 16

81 1 Sing praises to God, our strength. Sing to the God of Jacob. **2** Sing! Beat the tambourine. Play the sweet lyre and the harp. **3** Blow the ram's horn at new moon, and again at full moon to call a festival! **4** For this is required by the decrees of Israel; it is a regulation of the God of Jacob. **5** He made it a law for Israel when he attacked Egypt to set us free. I heard an unknown voice say, **6** "Now I will take the load from your shoulders; I will free your hands from their heavy tasks. **7** You cried to me in trouble, and I saved you; I answered out of the thundercloud and tested your faith when there was no water at Meribah. Interlude **8** "Listen to me, O my people, while I give you stern warnings. O Israel, if you would only listen to me! **9** You must never have a foreign god; you must not bow down before a false god. **10** For it was I, the LORD your God,

who rescued you from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with good things. **11** “But no, my people wouldn’t listen. Israel did not want me around. **12** So I let them follow their own stubborn desires, living according to their own ideas. **13** Oh, that my people would listen to me! Oh, that Israel would follow me, walking in my paths! **14** How quickly I would then subdue their enemies! How soon my hands would be upon their foes! **15** Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him; they would be doomed forever. **16** But I would feed you with the finest wheat. I would satisfy you with wild honey from the rock.”

Proverbs 25:6 - 8

25 6 Don’t demand an audience with the king or push for a place among the great. **7** It’s better to wait for an invitation to the head table than to be sent away in public disgrace. Just because you’ve seen something, **8** don’t be in a hurry to go to court. For what will you do in the end if your neighbor deals you a shameful defeat?