

Wednesday, October 9

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Jeremiah 12:1 - 14:10

12 **1** LORD, you always give me justice when I bring a case before you. So let me bring you this complaint: Why are the wicked so prosperous? Why are evil people so happy? **2** You have planted them, and they have taken root and prospered. Your name is on their lips, but you are far from their hearts. **3** But as for me, LORD, you know my heart. You see me and test my thoughts. Drag these people away like sheep to be butchered! Set them aside to be slaughtered! **4** How long must this land mourn? Even the grass in the fields has withered. The wild animals and birds have disappeared because of the evil in the land. For the people have said, "The LORD doesn't see what's ahead for us!" **5** "If racing against mere men makes you tired, how will you race against horses? If you stumble and fall on open ground, what will you do in the thickets near the Jordan? **6** Even your brothers, members of your own family, have turned against you. They plot and raise complaints against you. Do not trust them, no matter how pleasantly they speak. **7** "I have abandoned my people, my special possession. I have surrendered my dearest ones to their enemies. **8** My chosen people have roared at me like a lion of the forest, so I have treated them with contempt. **9** My chosen people act like speckled vultures, but they themselves are surrounded by vultures. Bring on the wild animals to pick their corpses clean! **10** "Many rulers have ravaged my vineyard, trampling down the vines and turning all its beauty into a barren wilderness. **11** They have made it an empty wasteland; I hear its mournful cry. The whole land is desolate, and no one even cares. **12** On all the bare hilltops, destroying armies can be seen. The sword of the LORD devours people from one end of the nation to the other. No one will escape! **13** My people have planted wheat but are harvesting thorns. They have worn themselves out, but it has done them no good. They will harvest a crop of shame because of the fierce anger of the LORD ." **14** Now this is what the LORD says: "I will uproot from their land all the evil nations reaching out for the possession I gave my people Israel. And I will uproot Judah from among them. **15** But afterward I will return and have compassion on all of them. I will bring them home to their own lands again, each nation to its own possession. **16** And if these nations truly learn the ways of my people, and if they learn to swear by my name, saying, 'As surely as the LORD lives' (just as they taught my people to swear by the name of Baal), then they will be given a place among my people. **17** But any nation who refuses to obey me will be uprooted and destroyed. I, the LORD, have spoken!"

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14 **1** This message came to Jeremiah from the LORD, explaining why he was holding back the rain: **2** "Judah wilts; commerce at the city gates grinds to a halt. All the people sit on the ground in mourning, and a great cry rises from Jerusalem. **3** The nobles send servants to get water, but all the wells are dry. The servants return with empty pitchers, confused and desperate, covering their heads in grief. **4** The ground is parched and cracked for lack of rain. The farmers are deeply troubled; they, too, cover their heads. **5** Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn

because there is no grass in the field. **6** The wild donkeys stand on the bare hills panting like thirsty jackals. They strain their eyes looking for grass, but there is none to be found.” **7** The people say, “Our wickedness has caught up with us, LORD, but help us for the sake of your own reputation. We have turned away from you and sinned against you again and again. **8** O Hope of Israel, our Savior in times of trouble, why are you like a stranger to us? Why are you like a traveler passing through the land, stopping only for the night? **9** Are you also confused? Is our champion helpless to save us? You are right here among us, LORD . We are known as your people. Please don’t abandon us now!” **10** So this is what the LORD says to his people: “You love to wander far from me and do not restrain yourselves. Therefore, I will no longer accept you as my people. Now I will remember all your wickedness and will punish you for your sins.”

1 Thessalonians 1:1 - 2:8

1 1 This letter is from Paul, Silas, and Timothy. We are writing to the church in Thessalonica, to you who belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. May God give you grace and peace. **2** We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. **3** As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ. **4** We know, dear brothers and sisters, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own people. **5** For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you. **6** So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. In this way, you imitated both us and the Lord. **7** As a result, you have become an example to all the believers in Greece—throughout both Macedonia and Achaia. **8** And now the word of the Lord is ringing out from you to people everywhere, even beyond Macedonia and Achaia, for wherever we go we find people telling us about your faith in God. We don’t need to tell them about it, **9** for they keep talking about the wonderful welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. **10** And they speak of how you are looking forward to the coming of God’s Son from heaven—Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. He is the one who has rescued us from the terrors of the coming judgment.

2 1 You yourselves know, dear brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not a failure. **2** You know how badly we had been treated at Philippi just before we came to you and how much we suffered there. Yet our God gave us the courage to declare his Good News to you boldly, in

spite of great opposition. **3** So you can see we were not preaching with any deceit or impure motives or trickery. **4** For we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts. **5** Never once did we try to win you with flattery, as you well know. And God is our witness that we were not pretending to be your friends just to get your money! **6** As for human praise, we have never sought it from you or anyone else. **7** As apostles of Christ we certainly had a right to make some demands of you, but instead we were like children among you. Or we were like a mother feeding and caring for her own children. **8** We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too.

Psalm 79:1 - 13

79 1 O God, pagan nations have conquered your land, your special possession. They have defiled your holy Temple and made Jerusalem a heap of ruins. **2** They have left the bodies of your servants as food for the birds of heaven. The flesh of your godly ones has become food for the wild animals. **3** Blood has flowed like water all around Jerusalem; no one is left to bury the dead. **4** We are mocked by our neighbors, an object of scorn and derision to those around us. **5** O LORD, how long will you be angry with us? Forever? How long will your jealousy burn like fire? **6** Pour out your wrath on the nations that refuse to acknowledge you— on kingdoms that do not call upon your name. **7** For they have devoured your people Israel, making the land a desolate wilderness. **8** Do not hold us guilty for the sins of our ancestors! Let your compassion quickly meet our needs, for we are on the brink of despair. **9** Help us, O God of our salvation! Help us for the glory of your name. Save us and forgive our sins for the honor of your name. **10** Why should pagan nations be allowed to scoff, asking, "Where is their God?" Show us your vengeance against the nations, for they have spilled the blood of your servants. **11** Listen to the moaning of the prisoners. Demonstrate your great power by saving those condemned to die. **12** O Lord, pay back our neighbors seven times for the scorn they have hurled at you. **13** Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will thank you forever and ever, praising your greatness from generation to generation.

Proverbs 24:30 - 34

24 30 I walked by the field of a lazy person, the vineyard of one with no common sense. **31** I saw that it was overgrown with nettles. It was covered with weeds, and its walls were broken down. **32** Then, as I looked and thought about it, I learned this lesson: **33** A little extra sleep, a

little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— **34** then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like an armed robber.