

A Trek Through Jeremiah 16 - 8:18 - 9:9

Bruce Pike

December 21, 2025

Today: Rebukes, appeals, reflections, warnings, and prayers 7:16 - 10:25

- ...
- Sorrow 8:18 - 9:1
- Not knowing Me 9:2-6
- Inevitable judgment 9:7-9

Points

Point 1 Sorrow: Jeremiah was a man of sorrow, mourning over the destruction of his people. His sorrow mirrors Yahweh's sorrow.

Point 2 Blame: Even in exile the people would continue to blame Yahweh for their affliction. But the blame lay with them.

Point 3 No escape: Judah had exhausted their chances for repentance. There was now no escaping judgment.

Point 4 Turmoil: Jeremiah was a man in turmoil: he wanted to run away but was faithful to go and to speak as Yahweh commanded.

Point 5 Not knowing: Judah did not know Yahweh; did not honor their covenant with Him. Their ignorance was willful and accomplished by deceit.

Point 6 Inevitable: Judah's judgment was inevitable, both to refine them and to demonstrate Yahweh's righteousness.

Sorrow 8:18 - 9:1

Jeremiah's sorrow 8:18

Jeremiah 8:18 (LSB)

18My sorrow is beyond healing; My heart is faint within me!

- "Beyond healing" is better with 8:17. Then reads
 - 8:17 And they will bite you beyond healing
 - 8:18 I sorrow; My heart is faint within me.
- Jeremiah expressing his sorrow. Mirrors Yahweh's sorrow.
 - Lk 19:41-42 Jesus weeping over Jerusalem: And as He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He cried over it, saying, "If you knew in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.
- Heart. Inner man.
- Faint. Sick, weak.

Point 1: Sorrow: Jeremiah was a man of sorrow, mourning over the destruction of his people. His sorrow mirrors Yahweh's sorrow.

Complaint and answer 8:19

Jeremiah 8:19 (LSB)

19Behold, the sound! The cry of the daughter of my people from a distant land: "Is Yahweh not in Zion? Is her King not within her?" "Why have they provoked Me to anger with their graven images, with foreign idols?"

- V19a Complaints
 - Behold the sound. Heard prophetically. Why Jeremiah is sorrowful.
 - daughter of My people. Lit daughter my people. Intimate relationship.
 - Cry...from a distant land. Exiled in Babylon.
 - Is Yahweh not in Zion? Is her King not within her?
 - Captive to their wrong theology: Peace, peace; the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh.
 - Blaming Yahweh: He did not keep the covenant. Maybe He got tired or ran away or was defeated by the Babylonian gods.
- V19b Answer
 - Why have they provoked Me to anger with their graven images, with foreign idols?
 - Yahweh's reply to the people's complaints: they did not keep the covenant. Broke 1st and 2nd commandments, then all the others.

Point 2 Blame: Even in exile the people would continue to blame Yahweh for their affliction. But the blame lay with them.

Lost opportunities 8:20 - 9:1

Jeremiah 8:20 - 9:1 (LSB)

20“Harvest is past, summer is ended, And we are not saved.”

21For the brokenness of the daughter of my people I am broken; I mourn, desolation has taken hold of me.

22Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has not the health of the daughter of my people gone up?

1Oh that my head were waters And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people!

- V20 No hope
 - Popular proverb for a hopeless situation
 - Harvest is past: wheat harvest in Apr - Jun; summer is ended: fruit harvest in late summer. If both failed then famine in the winter.
 - Likewise, Judah has passed up every opportunity for repentance, now hope is gone.
- V21 Lament
 - Prophetically Jeremiah sees Judah destroyed. He is now devastated as they will be devastated.
- V22 No healing
 - Gilead known for healing balms.
 - Health gone up. Healed. As skin covers a healing sore.
 - Question: there is medicine and there are doctors, why no healing?
 - Two answers implied: (1) Judah's sickness is of the heart (2) Judah has not made use of opportunities to be healed.
- V1 Weeping
 - Inclusio with 8:18
 - The weeping prophet.

Point 3 No escape: Judah had exhausted their chances for repentance. There was now no escaping judgment.

Not knowing Me 9:2-6

Desire to escape 9:2a

Jeremiah 9:2a (LSB)

2Oh that I had in the desert A travelers' lodging place, That I might leave my people And go from them!

- Jeremiah wants to run away. Living alone in the wilderness was not like today but it would be better than living among a people who profess to know Yahweh but do not. As David in Ps 55:4-8 My heart is in anguish within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, And horror has covered me. I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. "Behold, I would wander far away, I would lodge in the wilderness. Selah. "I would hasten to my place of refuge From the stormy wind and tempest."
- However Jeremiah continues in obedience to Yahweh, ministers among his unfaithful people for more than 40 years, finally dies in Egypt where the remaining Jews fled to, disobeying Yahweh.

Point 4 Turmoil: Jeremiah was a man in turmoil: he wanted to run away but was faithful to go and to speak as Yahweh commanded.

Two sets of sins, each ending with “declares Yahweh”

Sins against God 9:2b-3

Jeremiah 9:2b–3 (LSB)

2 ...For all of them are adulterers, A solemn assembly of treacherous men.

3 “They bend their tongue like their bow; Lies and unfaithfulness prevail in the land, For they go onward from evil to evil, And they do not know Me,” declares Yahweh.

- Adulterers. Left Yahweh; going after idols.
- A solemn assembly of treacherous men. They worship externally but have abandoned the covenant.
- They bend their tongue like their bow. To shoot lies like arrows.
- Lies and unfaithfulness prevail in the land. False teaching. Covenant rejected.
- For they go onward from evil to evil. Continuing in wickedness.
- And they do not know Me
 - Know
 - To have an intimate relationship, each committed to the other.
 - Depicted by human sexual relations. Gen 4:25 Then Adam knew his wife again; and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth
 - Knowing God
 - Fear Him. 1 Ki 8:43 Solomon dedicating the temple: in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name to fear You, as do Your people Israel, and to know that Your name is called upon this house which I have built.
 - Serve Him and delight in Him. 1 Ch 28:9 David’s charge to Solomon: As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a delighted soul...
 - Trust in Him: Is 43:10 Yahweh speaking to Israel: “You are My witnesses,” declares Yahweh, “And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me...
 - Those who God knows He is jealous for. Amos 3:1-2 Hear this word which Yahweh has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, “You only have I known among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

Sins against men 9:4-6

Jeremiah 9:4–6 (LSB)

4“Let everyone beware of his neighbor, And do not trust any brother, Because every brother surely supplants, And every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.

5“Everyone deceives his neighbor And does not speak the truth; They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves committing iniquity.

6“Your habitation is in the midst of deceit; Through deceit they refuse to know Me,” declares Yahweh.

- Let everyone beware of his neighbor, And do not trust any brother,
 - No one trustworthy
- Because every brother surely supplants,
 - “Surely supplants” sounds like “Jacob”
 - Takes what is not his
- And every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.
 - Speaking malicious lies.
- Everyone deceives his neighbor And does not speak the truth
 - All speak lies
- They have taught their tongue to speak lies
 - Trained in deceit
- They weary themselves committing iniquity.
 - Their wickedness wears them out. Contrast Is 40:31 Yet those who hope in Yahweh Will gain new power; They will mount up with wings like eagles; They will run and not get tired; They will walk and not become weary.
- Your habitation is in the midst of deceit
 - Yahweh to Jeremiah. He knows what Judah is like. He has commanded Jeremiah to reside among a deceitful people and to speak His words to them.
- Through deceit they refuse to know Me
 - Parallel with 9:3
 - Willful ignorance accomplished through deceit.
 - Ro 1:18, 21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness...For even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Point 5 Not knowing: Judah did not know Yahweh; did not honor their covenant with Him. Their ignorance was willful and accomplished by deceit.

Inevitable judgment 9:7-9

Jeremiah 9:7–9 (LSB)

7Therefore thus says Yahweh of hosts, “Behold, I will refine them and test them; For what else can I do, because of the daughter of My people?

8“Their tongue is a slaughtering arrow; It speaks deceit; With his mouth one speaks peace to his neighbor, But inwardly he sets an ambush for him.

9“Shall I not punish them for these things?” declares Yahweh. “On a nation such as this Shall I not avenge Myself?

- Two reasons for judgment, separated by a description of their sin
- V7 Refining and testing
 - Refine. Make pure by applying heat (affliction).
 - Test. Determine the nature of.
 - In 6:27 Jeremiah was made an assayer of Judah and found none righteous. Only by grace will there be some elected to return from the exile and repopulate Judah and Jerusalem.
- V8 Wickedness rehearsed
 - Their tongue is a slaughtering arrow; It speaks deceit. Repeating v3.
 - With his mouth one speaks peace to his neighbor, But inwardly he sets an ambush for him. Repeating v4. Illustration from warfare.
- V9 Avenging
 - Punish. Visit with intensity.
 - On a nation such as this. Same word used to describe pagan nations.
 - Avenge.
 - Exact retribution for an injury or wrong done.
 - Judg 16:28 Samson blinded and brought out to entertain the Philistines: Then Samson called to Yahweh and said, “O Lord Yahweh, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.”
 - Judah has wronged Yahweh by rejecting the covenant. He will exact vengeance by putting on them the curses promised for disobedience.
 - The nations are watching (6:18-19). Before them Yahweh will demonstrate His righteousness through Judah by faithfully keeping the requirements of His covenant with them.

Point 6 Inevitable: Judah’s judgment was inevitable, both to refine them and to demonstrate Yahweh’s righteousness.

Application: No balm in Gilead

Jer 8:22

- Gilead was known for healing balm. Judah was full of wise men. But the whole country was sick. Their sickness was not physical but spiritual.

Today our nation is afflicted in many ways. We have no shortage of means of healing and many doctors. But we do not get better. What to do?

Heb 11:16 But now, they aspire to a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He prepared a city for them.

- Our city is heavenly, not earthly.

2 Cor 5:20 So then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as God is pleading through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

- On earth we are ambassadors for Christ to bring people to God

Mt 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- Our commission: go and make disciples.

All should vote. Some may be more active in politics and social action. Our main commission is to make disciples.

Application: Theology repair

Jer 8:19

- The people of Judah had turned away from Yahweh and gone after pagan idols. Because of the teaching of the false prophets and priests the people thought that they were safe because Jerusalem was Yahweh's city. Now they cry, "Where is Yahweh?"
- Yahweh stated the truth: I am here. Why have you provoked Me?
- He used the Babylonian exile to refine and test them, and sent Jeremiah to proclaim the truth.
- After the exile the Jews never again worshipped pagan idols.

Likewise, the men of Jerusalem had their theology repaired on Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-41

- The Jewish leaders saw Jesus as a blasphemer deserving death. They handed Him over to the Romans and induced the crowd to call for His crucifixion.
- But God raised Him from the dead and made Him Lord and Christ.
- When Peter preached at Pentecost he proclaimed Jesus as the risen Lord and Christ. Many in the crowd likely had called for Him to be crucified. But 3000 men were pierced to the heart, repented, and were saved.

I once thought that the creation story in Genesis was a myth. But then I heard a teacher proclaim that it was a true account, and was shown by the Holy Spirit that he was right.

Let us not be afraid to have our theology corrected when it is wrong. But beware of being led astray. How to tell? 1 Jn 4:1 Test the spirits.

References

- Baker, Warren (Editor), *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, AMG, 1994
- Baker, Warren (Editor), *The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament*, AMG, 2003
- Feinberg, Charles L., *Jeremiah* in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan, 1986
- Harrison, R. K., *Jeremiah and Lamentations* in Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Tyndale Press, 1973
- Kidner, Derek, *Jeremiah*, InterVarsity Press, 1987
- Thompson, J. A., *The Book of Jeremiah* in Eerdmans's Classic Biblical Commentaries, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980