

Understanding Jeremiah
Chapter 8

V 1.00

CHAPTER 8

Calamities will befall the inhabitants of Jerusalem—For them the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and they are not saved.

1 At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves:

2 And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped [TG Idolatry]: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.

Footnote [2b] buried

Jeremiah 25:33

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind [OR storm] shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

33 And the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

34 ¶ Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel.

35 And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and an howling of the principal of the flock, shall be heard: for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture.

37 And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

38 He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for their land is desolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

Footnote (34a) shepherds

Jeremiah 23

1 Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.

3 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

5 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

8 But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell *in their own land*.

Joseph Smith Jr.

The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.” (Isaiah 35:10); and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge (Isa. 28 D&C 45:31) that shall pass through the land. But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. (See Joel 2:32; Isaiah 26:20 and 21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalms 1:5; Ezekiel 34:11, 12 and 13.14) These are testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth His own sheep, and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, (Ezek. 34) to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought.

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; (D&C 87:1–8) pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake (D&C 87:6) will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. (Jer. 23:8 D&C 133:26 D&C 110:11) The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow-men than their eternal salvation; therefore, “Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.” Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before overflowing scourge overtake you... Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.—DHC 1:312–316.

(*TPJS*, p.17-18)

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Answers to certain questions on the writings of Isaiah, given by Joseph Smith the Prophet, March 1838. HC 3:9–10.

1 Who is the Stem of Jesse spoken of in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th verses of the 11th chapter of Isaiah?

2 Verily thus saith the Lord: It is Christ.

3 What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?

4 Behold, thus saith the Lord: It is a servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.

5 What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

6 Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

7 Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

8 He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

9 What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

10 We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

Isaiah 11:1 Who Is the “Branch”?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote the following analysis of the meaning of the Branch:

“Since it takes a first and a second coming to fulfill many Messianic prophecies, we of necessity must consider them here, and in the case of the Davidic-Messianic utterances show also how they apply to our Lord’s Second Coming. Christ is the Son of David, the Seed of David, the inheritor, through Mary his mother, of the blood of the great king. He is also called the Stem of

Jesse and the Branch, meaning Branch of David. Messianic prophecies under these headings deal with the power and dominion he shall wield as he sits on David's throne, and have reference almost exclusively to his second sojourn on planet earth.

“Jesse was the father of David. Isaiah speaks of the Stem of Jesse, whom he also designates as a branch growing out of the root of that ancient worthy. He recites how the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; how he shall be mighty in judgment; how he shall smite the earth and slay the wicked; and how the lamb and the lion shall lie down together in that day—all of which has reference to the Second Coming and the millennial era thereby ushered in. (Isa. 11.) As to the identity of the Stem of Jesse, the revealed word says: ‘Verily thus saith the Lord: It is Christ.’ (D&C 113:1–2.) This also means that the Branch is Christ, as we shall now see from other related scriptures.

“By the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord foretells the ancient scattering and the latter-day gathering of his chosen Israel. After they have been gathered ‘out of all countries whither I have driven them,’ after the kingdom has been restored to Israel as desired by the ancient apostles in Acts 1:6, then this eventuality, yet future and millennial in nature, shall be fulfilled: ‘Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ (Jer. 23:3–6.) That is to say, the King who shall reign personally upon the earth during the Millennium shall be the Branch who grew out of the house of David. He shall execute judgment and justice in all the earth because he is the Lord Jehovah, even him whom we call Christ.

“Through Zechariah the Lord spoke similarly: ‘Thus saith the Lord of hosts: ... I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. ... I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day [meaning that the wicked shall be destroyed and the millennial era of peace and righteousness commence]. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.’ (Zech. 3:7–10.) Of that glorious millennial day the Lord says also: ‘Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne.’ (Zech. 6:12–13.)

“That the Branch of David is Christ is perfectly clear. We shall now see that he is also called David, that he is a new David, an Eternal David, who shall reign forever on the throne of his ancient ancestor. ‘It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, ‘that is, in the great millennial day of gathering, that ‘they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.’ (Jer. 30:8–9.)

“In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness,’ which is to say that because the Great King himself reigns in her midst, even the city shall be called after him. ‘For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. ... If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.’ (Jer. 33:15–21.) David’s temporal throne fell long centuries before our Lord was born, and that portion of Israel which had not been scattered to the ends of the earth was in bondage to the iron yoke of Rome. But the promises remain. The eternal throne shall be restored in due course with a new David sitting thereon, and he shall reign forever and ever. ...

“Through Ezekiel, the Lord speaks of this One Shepherd in this way: ‘I will save my flock. ... And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them.’ When that day comes, ‘I will make with them a covenant of peace,’ the Lord says, meaning they shall have again the fulness of the everlasting gospel. Then ‘there shall be showers of blessing’; all Israel shall dwell safely and know that the Lord is their God. (Ezek. 34:22–31.)

“Through Ezekiel, the Lord also tells of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which becomes the instrument in his hands to bring to pass the gathering of Israel. Of that day of gathering he says, ‘I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all.’ In that day he promises to ‘cleanse them,’ by baptism, ‘so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.’

“Then the Lord restates that his gathered people shall have his everlasting gospel with all its blessings; that he will set his sanctuary, meaning his temple, in their midst forevermore (as Zechariah recorded); and all Israel shall know that the Lord is their God. (Ezek. 37:15–28.)

“How glorious shall be the coming day when the second David, who is Christ, reigns on the throne of the first David; when all men shall dwell safely; when the earth shall be dotted with

temples; and when the gospel covenant shall have full force and validity in all the earth!” (The Promised Messiah, pp. 192–95).

(Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi, Religion 302, Chapter 13: The Establishment of Zion, Isaiah 1-12)

Seminary Book of Mormon Study Guide for Home-Study, (Unit 7: Day 3, 2 Nephi 21-24)

Consider the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who explained that the “root of Jesse” and the “rod out of the stem of Jesse” both refer to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“Are we amiss in saying that the prophet here mentioned [in D&C 113:5–6] is Joseph Smith, to whom the priesthood came, who received the keys of the kingdom, and who raised the ensign for the gathering of the Lord’s people in our dispensation? And is he not also the ‘servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power’? [D&C 113:3–4]” (Millennial Messiah [1982], 339–40).

Read 2 Nephi 21:10, 12, and look for what Isaiah prophesied the Lord would do through the “root of Jesse” (Joseph Smith). The word ensign refers to a “standard” to which people gather.

D&C 103:20. Zion Was Not to Be Redeemed in 1834

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained the implications of the phrase in time: “It appears from this declaration that the redemption of Zion was not to come immediately, but was to be postponed to some future day. Moreover, that day would not come until the members of the Church were willing to keep their covenants and walk unitedly, for until the members of the Church learn to walk in full accord and in obedience with all of the commandments, this day cannot come. It may be necessary in order to bring this to pass for the Lord to use drastic measures and cleanse the Church from everything that offends. This he has promised to do when he is ready to redeem Zion. (See Matt. 13:41.)” (Church History and Modern Revelation, 1:484.)

(Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual, Religion 324 and 325, 2001, Section 103: The Redemption of Zion by Power, p.251)

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

3 And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

Footnote (a) death

Revelation 9

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

(23-18) Jeremiah 8:1–3. “Bring out the Bones”

“In order to pour the utmost contempt upon the land, the victorious enemies dragged out of their graves, caves, and sepulchers, the bones of kings, princes, prophets, priests, and the principal inhabitants, and exposed them in the open air; so that they became, in the order of God’s judgments, a reproach to them in the vain confidence they had in the *sun, moon, and the host of heaven* —all the planets and stars, whose worship they had set up in opposition to that of Jehovah. This custom of raising the bodies of the dead, and scattering their bones about, seems to have been general. It was the highest expression of hatred and contempt.” (Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible ... with a Commentary and Critical Notes*, 4:276.)

(Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi, Religion 302, Chapter 23: As Ye Sow, So Shall Ye Reap, Jeremiah 1-19)

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14 But, behold, I say unto you that before this great day shall come the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be turned into blood, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and there shall be greater signs in heaven above and in the earth beneath;

15 And there shall be weeping and wailing among the hosts of men;

16 And there shall be a great hailstorm sent forth to destroy the crops of the earth.

17 And it shall come to pass, because of the wickedness of the world, that I will take vengeance upon the wicked, for they will not repent; for the cup of mine indignation is full; for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not.

18 Wherefore, I the Lord God will send forth flies upon the face of the earth, which shall take hold of the inhabitants thereof, and shall eat their flesh, and shall cause maggots to come in upon them;

19 And their tongues shall be stayed that they shall not utter against me; and their flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets;

20 And it shall come to pass that the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air shall devour them up.

21 And the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire, according as it is spoken by the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet, who spoke of these things, which have not come to pass but surely must, as I live, for abominations shall not reign.

Orson Pratt

Would you suppose that the House of Jacob, the ten tribes of Israel, can be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and brought back to their own land, without the lifting of this ensign?

No. Read the 11th chapter of Isaiah. There he says—“I will lift up an ensign for the nations, I will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and I will gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.” (Isa. 11:12) Until the Lord God sends forth this proclamation (*Isa. 62:11*) to all the inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth, (Isa. 18:3) in vain may we look for the redemption of the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah. (Isa. 11:12) Israel, the ten tribes - called the outcasts (Ps. 147:2 Isa. 56:8)- etc. will never return... until such an ensign is raised. (Isa. 11:12) Isaiah, in the fifth chapter, speaks of that ensign—“I will lift up for the nations an ensign from afar.” (Isa. 5:26) Why not lift it up in Jerusalem, Isaiah? Why not lift it up in Palestine? Why not commence the work in Asia? Says Isaiah—“I will lift up an ensign to the nations from afar.” (Isa. 5:26) How far? Away off to the ends of the earth, (Isa. 62:11) from where Isaiah then was.

Read the 18th chapter of Isaiah. Isaiah, when standing in Palestine delivering his prophecy, looked off to the southwest and saw the rivers of Ethiopia, or Africa; and after having seen these rivers in vision he also sees a land *shadowing with wings* away beyond the rivers of Ethiopia. (Isa. 18:1) What kind of a land was that, away beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, from where Isaiah stood in Palestine? Why *it is a land that had the appearance of wings*. (Isa. 18:1) You have been struck doubtless, *with the great resemblance that North and South America have to the two great wings of a bird*. While Isaiah was thus gazing upon a land away beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, it looked so much like the wings of a bird that he says— “A land shadowing with wings, away, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.” (Isa. 18:1) Well, Isaiah, what have you to say about that land? Why, says he, there is a proclamation to be had there. How extensive, Isaiah? To all people. Hear the words of Isaiah. Says he, “All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifts up an ensign on the mountains.” (Isa. 18:3) ...

Does it affect all people, Isaiah? Yes. “All ye inhabitants of the world.” (Isa. 18:3) What could be more extensive than that? “And dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifts up an ensign on the mountains; *and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.*” (Isa. 18:3) What else is to take place, Isaiah? *He says that a severe judgment is to take place on that land shadowing with wings*. What kind of a judgment, one that is to be very severe, Isaiah? Yes, for he says—“Afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruninghooks, and take away and cut down the branches. They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountain, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.” (Isa. 18:5-6) When will this be, Isaiah? *After* this proclamation, *after* all the nations of the world have heard it, *after* the people have heard the sound of the warning message; *then the first among all the nations where the extremities of the image have sent forth one of its governments, there will be the commencement of a most terrible judgment, so much so that the people on that land will not have time to bury their dead, and the fowls shall summer upon them.* (Isa. 18:6) Why is all this? Because they will not hearken when that sound goes to all people; they will not repent of their sins; they will not receive the message that God has sent by his angel, (Rev. 14:6) he therefore visits them *first*, because *they are the first to hear those glad tidings*. No wonder, then,

that Zion, that brings good tidings, was commanded by the ancient Prophet to get up into the high mountain. (Isa. 40:9)

(Journal of Discourses 18:169, Restoration of the Gospel, Etc.)

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23 Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.

24 Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

25 And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;

26 First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

27 Therefore, see to it that ye trouble not yourselves concerning the affairs of my church

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

4 ¶ Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?

5 Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.

6 I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

Unnatural Self-justification: these verses emphasize the idea that when people fall or stray from the right path, they should seek to get back up and return. It goes further and highlights the expectation of repentance and the natural instinct to correct one's mistakes- even the beasts know not to continuously hit the electric fence. And yet, my people Israel are in a state of perpetual backsliding? Why? Because they hold fast to deceit/lies/falsehoods because “they love it so”, and refuse to return- and more than that, they rush forward as though they believe themselves to be a gallant war horse riding valiantly into battle...

Joseph Smith Jr.

If Zion will not purify herself, so as to be approved of in all things, in His sight, He will seek another people; for His work will go on until Israel is gathered, and they who will not hear His voice, must expect to feel His wrath. Let me say unto you, seek to purify yourselves, and also the inhabitants of Zion, lest the Lord's anger be kindled to fierceness.

Repent, repent, is the voice of God to Zion; *and strange as it may appear*, yet it is true, mankind will persist in self-justification until all their iniquity is exposed, and their character past being

redeemed, and that which is treasured up in their hearts be exposed to the gaze of mankind. I say to you (and what I say to you I say to all), hear the warning voice of God, lest Zion fall, and the Lord swear in His wrath the inhabitants of Zion shall not enter into His rest.”

(Teachings of the Presidents: Joseph Smith, p.187)

Men are Judged According to Their Deeds

Our heavenly Father is more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive; and, at the same time, is more terrible to the workers of iniquity, more awful in the executions of His punishments, and more ready to detect every false way, than we are apt to suppose Him to be. *(TPJS, p.257)*

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

7 Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

Footnote (b) know not

Helaman 12

6 Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them; notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.

7 O how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even they are less than the dust of the earth.

8 For behold, the dust of the earth moveth hither and thither, to the dividing asunder, at the command of our great and everlasting God.

9 Yea, behold at his voice do the hills and the mountains tremble and quake.

10 And by the power of his voice they are broken up, and become smooth, yea, even like unto a valley.

11 Yea, by the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake;

12 Yea, by the power of his voice, do the foundations rock, even to the very center.

13 Yea, and if he say unto the earth—Move—it is moved.

14 Yea, if he say unto the earth—Thou shalt go back, that it lengthen out the day for many hours—it is done;

15 And thus, according to his word the earth goeth back, and it appeareth unto man that the sun standeth still; yea, and behold, this is so; for surely it is the earth that moveth and not the sun.

16 And behold, also, if he say unto the waters of the great deep—Be thou dried up—it is done.

17 Behold, if he say unto this mountain—Be thou raised up, and come over and fall upon that city, that it be buried up—behold it is done.

18 And behold, if a man hide up a treasure in the earth, and the Lord shall say—Let it be accursed, because of the iniquity of him who hath hid it up—behold, it shall be accursed.

19 And if the Lord shall say—Be thou accursed, that no man shall find thee from this time henceforth and forever—behold, no man getteth it henceforth and forever.

20 And behold, if the Lord shall say unto a man—Because of thine iniquities, thou shalt be accursed forever—it shall be done.

21 And if the Lord shall say—Because of thine iniquities thou shalt be cut off from my presence—he will cause that it shall be so.

22 And wo unto him to whom he shall say this, for it shall be unto him that will do iniquity, and he cannot be saved; therefore, for this cause, that men might be saved, hath repentance been declared.

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

8 How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain.

Footnotes (a) wise

1 Corinthians 1

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

2 Nephi 9

28 O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

2 Nephi 27

24 And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

25 Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

26 Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

27 And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?

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5 For thus saith the Lord—I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end.

6 Great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory.

7 And to them will I reveal all mysteries, yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old, and for ages to come, will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things pertaining to my kingdom.

8 Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations.

9 And their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to heaven; and before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught.

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18.. for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. And not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

9 The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?

10 Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

D&C 52:39. Who Does the Lord Command to “Labor with Their Own Hands,” and How Would Obedience to This Commandment Prevent Idolatry?

This instruction was given to those elders not assigned to go as missionaries to Missouri. These men were assigned to stay home and be the priesthood leaders for the Saints in Kirtland. By laboring with their own hands for their support, *rather than being paid for their priesthood service, these brethren would help prevent idolatry and priestcraft from springing up in the*

Church (see 2 Nephi 26:29). Regarding the word idolatry in this verse, in the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord warned that one of the characteristics of the last days would be that “every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his God . . . whose substance is that of an idol” (D&C 1:16). Paul defined *covetousness as idolatry* (see Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5). When people set their hearts on natural things, or prestige, or power to the point that God is no longer supreme, then that becomes as god to them. They worship, or give allegiance to, those things. This verse suggests that if the elders who remained in Ohio did not labor with their own hands, they might be guilty of this kind of covetousness or idolatry.

(Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual, Religion 324 and 325, 2001, Section 52: Let Them Go Two by Two, p.113)

Luke 16:13–18. Context for the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:13–18 provides the context that led the Savior to teach the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. When Jesus taught the doctrine that you cannot serve God and mammon—meaning worldly riches *or gain*—this angered the Pharisees, “who were covetous,” and “they derided him.” The Savior then told them that they were justifying their actions but that God knew the intent of their hearts. (See Luke 16:13–15.) The Joseph Smith Translation expands upon Luke 16:16–18, making clear that in the parable Jesus taught to the Pharisees, he was comparing the rich man to them and teaching them what lay in their future if they continued to pervert the right way...

(New Testament Student Manual, Religion 211–212, 2018: Chapter 16: Luke 15-17)

Joseph F. Smith

I have heard of some people who had sunken so low that they would sell anything for money; mother or father, or brother or sister, or friend or neighbor would never stand in the way. They would do anything to obtain money; money is their God. Such people would sell out their interest in their king, their people, and their country, for money. We only want to find out who will sell God and the people for filthy lucre and we bring them to trial, and in a very short time we manage to sever connection with them. We say he has departed from the faith, and we cut him off from our fellowship in the Church. But what do we do with those who sell their inheritances to the enemy? Why we pat them on the shoulder, we hug them to our bosoms, we love and cherish them and it is all right; no apostasy there! But suppose we should all sell our inheritance, we should then have to move to some other clime. It may not be considered prudent to thus publicly express our feelings on this subject, as slanderers and vilifiers are apt to wrest the truth and misquote, and misrepresent the facts. Yet I feel as though I would be chargeable with a neglect of duty if I did not say at least this much on this subject, and I am not afraid nor

ashamed to meet this view of the matter. If men will sell out their homes, and their inheritances to the wicked and the ungodly for money, when, I ask, will they be prepared to go and build up the Center Stake of Zion? Who of this class will be called to do this work? And will they have an inheritance in the New Jerusalem? Why, I suspect they would pull up the paving stones and sell them for money; they would steal the diamonds, pearls and precious stones from the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and sell them for the coveted "cash!" (*Journal of Discourses* 23:32)

Talents Taken: In Jeremiah 8:10-11, the prophet Jeremiah conveys a message of judgment from God against the people of Judah. In verse 10, God declares that as a consequence of their widespread corruption and greed, their wives will be taken by others and their land given to new owners. This is a direct punishment for the pervasive covetousness and dishonesty that infects every level of society—from the least to the greatest, including religious leaders like prophets and priests. These leaders, who should guide the people in truth, are instead deceitful- and how do we know they are covetous and deceitful? For there is no Zion and they've made the choice "might not this money better be spent"... Verse 11 highlights how these false leaders have tried to downplay the nation's moral and spiritual wounds, offering superficial reassurances of peace when in reality, there is none and will be none to have. They claim "all is well" to avoid confronting the deeper issues, making their words empty, and thus their neglect of true repentance and justice has provoked divine judgment.

Brigham Young

You sisters may say that plural marriage is very hard for you to bear. It is no such thing. A man or woman who would not spend his or her life in building up the kingdom of God on the earth, without a companion, and travel and preach, valise in hand, is not worthy of God or his kingdom, and they never will be crowned, they cannot be crowned; the sacrifice must be complete. If it is the duty of a husband to take a wife, take her. But it is not the privilege of a woman to dictate the husband, and tell who or how many he shall take, or what he shall do with them when he gets them, but it is the duty of the woman to submit cheerfully. Says she—"My husband does not know how to conduct himself, he lacks wisdom—he does not know how to treat two wives and be just." That all may be true, but it is not her prerogative to correct the evil, she must bear that; and the woman that bears wrong—and any number of them do in this order—patiently, will be crowned with a man far above her husband; and the man that is not worthy, and who does not prove himself worthy before God, his wife or wives will be taken from him and given to another, so the women need not worry. It is the man who has need to worry and watch himself, and see that he does right. Where is the man who has wives, and all of them think he is doing just right to them? I do not know such a man; I know it is not your humble servant. If I would only be dictated by women I should make a hell of it; but I cannot be, I can humor them and treat them kindly, but I tell them I shall do just what I know to be right, and they may help themselves the best they can. I do not say that in so many words, but that is what I mean, and I let them act it

out. (JD 17:154)

Hugh Nibley

My sense of urgency comes from the fact that I spend all my days now with the scriptures. And the two marks of the Church I see are and have been for a long time these: a reverence for wealth and a contempt for the scriptures. Naturally, the two go hand in hand. We should call attention to the fact that these things we are doing are against the work of the Lord. There is one saying of Joseph Smith I think of quite often: “If the heavens seem silent at a time when we desperately need revelation, it is because of covetousness in the Church. God has often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness.” And now the Church isn’t just shot through with covetousness, it is saturated with covetousness. And so the heavens are going to be closed. We’re told we don’t get revelation if we put our trust in money in the bank. (*“Nibley Talks about Contemporary Issues,”* 13)

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

13 ¶ I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them.

Footnotes (a) consume

2 Nephi 26

6 And they shall be visited with thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and all manner of destructions, for the fire of the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them, and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Doctrine and Covenants 63

34 And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.

Fear of Man vs Fear of God: In Jeremiah 8:12-13, God continues to speak through the prophet, condemning the people of Judah for their shamelessness and moral decay. In verse 12, He points out that even after committing abominable acts—sins that should bring deep shame—the people feel no remorse. They are so spiritually hardened that they can't even blush, indicating a

complete loss of conscience and sensitivity to sin- they've completely lost their fear of God. Because of this unrepentant attitude, God declares that they will fall with the rest of those who are judged; when His appointed time of judgment comes (the "time of their visitation"), they will be brought down. In verse 13, God announces the severity of the coming judgment: it will include total devastation. The land will be stripped of its fruitfulness—no grapes, no figs, and even the leaves will wither. This imagery of agricultural ruin symbolizes the loss of God's blessings and the removal of everything He had once provided for them. It is a powerful picture of both spiritual and physical desolation ("both temporally and spiritually") as a result of persistent sin and hardened hearts.

Hedge Down: In the parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees, found in Doctrine and Covenants 101, the "hedge" symbolizes constitutional laws that protect the people, while the "watchmen" represent government leaders tasked with upholding these laws. The Lord, as the Nobleman, expects His people to appoint worthy leaders to maintain the hedge, safeguarding the people from oppression and harm (Doctrine and Covenants 98:9–10). If/when the hedge is broken down or neglected, as the parable warns, the consequences are dire, reflecting the judgment that will come upon leaders who fail in their stewardship and his people for failing to maintain the hedge.

D&C 45:27. What Will Cause the Love of Men to Wax Cold?

“The expression is the same as that found in Matt. 24:12, where we read (translated literally), ‘And *because lawlessness has abounded*, the love of the many [this indicates more than a few] shall wax cold.’ ‘Love’ here means Christian unity, harmony...” (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 262.)

(Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual, Religion 324 and 325, 2001, Section 45: Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord, p.95)

Waxed Cold: The parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees teaches that when the “hedge”—the inspired constitutional laws meant to protect God’s people—is neglected or broken down, society is left exposed to danger. Without faithful “watchmen,” or righteous leaders, disorder and “lawlessness” inevitably spread, just as prophesied in D&C 45:27 and Matthew 24:12. In this climate of unchecked corruption and disregard for divine principles, the unity and charity that bind people together diminish; the love of many grows cold as self-interest replaces mutual care. As hearts harden and trust collapses, violence follows, and people “take up the sword” against one another, fulfilling the Lord’s warning that the breakdown of righteous law leads from spiritual decay to open conflict and bloodshed. The question then might become, “what is it that caused the hedge to be broken down? What was the very first domino to fall?”

The Family Proclamation to the World

We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn *that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.*

President Gordon B. Hinckley

“The family is the basic unit of society. If we are to preserve the stability of our civilization, then we must strengthen the family as the basic unit of society” (*Standing for Something*, p. 152)

John Adams

“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Source: John Adams to the Massachusetts Militia, 11 October 1798, in *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, ed. Charles Francis Adams (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1854), vol. 9, p. 229.

“The foundation of national morality must be laid in private families. ... How is it possible that Children can have any just Sense of the sacred Obligations of Morality or Religion if, from their earliest Infancy, they learn their Mothers live in habitual Infidelity to their fathers, and their fathers in as constant Infidelity to their Mothers?”

—John Adams to Abigail Adams, 28 April 1780, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

George Washington

“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports... Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.”

Source: George Washington, *Farewell Address*, 19 September 1796, published in *The Writings of George Washington*, ed. Jared Sparks (Boston: Russell, Odiorne & Metcalf, 1838), vol. 1

“It is in the early education of youth and in the habits which they acquire that the enduring prosperity of a nation must be laid.”

—George Washington, Address to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, 3 Oct. 1795, in *The Writings of George Washington*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, vol. 34, p. 483.

Lifeblood of the Hedge: It is in strong, covenant-keeping families that we find the strength to uphold law, nurture virtue, and preserve the stability of communities and nations. “Families” as described and defined by the Lord are children raised with a married man (husband, XY) and woman (wife, XX)

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

14 Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities [OR fortified], and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

15 We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!

16 The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

Too Little, Too Late: These verses (Jeremiah 8:14–15) capture the people of Judah realizing, too late, that God’s judgment is upon them. Facing invading armies and the collapse of their nation, they urge one another to flee to fortified cities for safety, yet they feel an oppressive silence because the Lord Himself has decreed their chastisement. The “water of gall” is a vivid symbol of bitter suffering and divine wrath- “gall” refers to something intensely bitter and even poisonous, often drawn from a plant like wormwood or from bile. Drinking “water of gall” therefore paints a sensory picture of swallowing something nauseating and painful. Thus they had hoped for peace and healing—expecting prosperity and deliverance, the “balm of Gilead”—but instead encounter only trouble and disaster, the “water of gall”. Jeremiah portrays a community finally recognizing that their sin against the Lord has brought unavoidable consequences: the loss of security, the absence of God’s favor, and the bitter taste of judgment.

Revelation 8

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Two Cups

The cup of gold, the gilded hall,
Promised delight, but yields the water of gall.
With wormwood bitter, it taints the tongue,
A draught of sorrow for the proud and young.

The cup of the Lord, a sacred balm,
Flows with mercy, steadies, and calms.
The balm of Gilead, sweet and clear,
Heals the heart, drives out all fear.

Trust not in riches, vain worldly praise,
Nor in the false priestcraft's maze.
Drink of the Lord, His mercy call,
Or sip the bitter water of gall.

Doctrine and Covenants 19

15 Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not.

16 For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

17 But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

20 Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

17 For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

18 ¶ When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me.

Joy in Babylon vs Joy in Zion: The Lord promises that when His people qualify, He will dwell among them, be their lawgiver, and protect them from harm- the central promise in the covenants we make with the Lord. Isaiah proclaims that the righteous who obtain Zion, the New Jerusalem, may “put their hand on the cockatrice’ den” and not be harmed (Isaiah 11:8), a vivid assurance that divine protection surrounds those who drink from the cup of obedience and faith. In contrast, those who turn to Babylon, idolatry, or the vain things of the world expose themselves to

judgment and danger; the same cockatrices and serpents that symbolize God's instruments of discipline become their torment (Isaiah 14:29; Revelation 12:9). Just as in the metaphor of the two cups, the faithful drink the balm of Gilead—healing, security, and peace—while the prideful and idolatrous drink the water of gall, suffering under the consequences of their rebellion. The imagery underscores that safety, peace, and life flow from covenant-keeping and trust in the Lord, while the perils of the world, both spiritual and temporal, are the bitter rewards of choosing the cup of sin.

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities [OR foreign idols]?

O' Tower, Where Art Thou: In Jeremiah 8:19, the “daughter of my people” cries out in anguish over those dwelling far from the covenant land, lamenting the idolatry and vain pursuits of the unfaithful. In a modern Latter-day Saint perspective, this image parallels the scattering of the Lord's people across the world, as described in *Doctrine and Covenants 101* and 1 Nephi 14, where the Lord—the Nobleman of the parable of the Olive Trees—is promised to dwell physically in the New Jerusalem, atop “the tower” prepared for Zion. Yet, because the people of the Lord have been scattered, they look toward the gathering place and ask in sorrow, “Is not the Lord in Zion? Is not her king in her?”—echoing the rhetorical lament of Jeremiah. The questions underscore the tension between God's promised presence and the current reality of dispersion: though Zion and its protections are ordained, the unfaithful and the scattered fail to fully partake of them, while the faithful long for the fulfillment of God's covenant and the establishment of His protective presence among His people.

Cry from Afar

From distant lands, the daughters weep,
O'er hills and seas, their sorrows deep.
“Is not the Lord in Zion's tower?
Is not her King in His appointed bower?”

The Nobleman waits, His olives sway,
A city prepared for the promised day.
Yet scattered are His children wide,
Across the earth, from side to side.

Graven images and vain delights
Have drawn their hearts from holy heights.

But still the faithful lift their gaze,
Longing for Zion, the sacred place.

The tower shall stand, the streets ordained,
The Lord Himself there will remain.
For now a servant comes at last,
To gather Zion from the past.

Joseph Smith, the Lord's own hand,
Builds the city by His command.
Though distance mocks and exile calls,
The redeemed shall dwell within Zion's walls.

Come, children scattered, lift your eyes,
Beyond the earth, beyond the skies.
For though afar, your cries are known,
And through His servant, Zion shall be your own.

Jeremiah 8 (cont.)

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

Footnotes (a) harvest

Doctrine and Covenants 45

2 And again I say, hearken unto my voice, lest death shall overtake you; in an hour when ye think not the summer shall be past, and the harvest ended, and your souls not saved.

Doctrine and Covenants 56

16 Wo unto you rich men, that will not give your substance to the poor, for your riches will canker your souls; and this shall be your lamentation in the day of visitation, and of judgment, and of indignation: The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved!

Doctrine and Covenants 76

71 And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differs from that of the church of the Firstborn who have received the fulness of the Father, even as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.

72 Behold, these are they who died without law;

73 And also they who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh;

74 Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it.

75 These are they who are honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men.

76 These are they who receive of his glory, but not of his fulness.

77 These are they who receive of the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father.

78 Wherefore, they are bodies terrestrial, and not bodies celestial, and differ in glory as the moon differs from the sun.

79 These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.

Isaiah 49

4 Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

5 And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though *Israel be not gathered*, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

(17-6) Isaiah 49:4–12. Did the Lord Forget [Joseph Smith], His Chosen [Prophet]?

“The Restoration was a long time in coming. During the years of [restoration, Joseph Smith] undoubtedly felt lonely and forsaken by the Lord. Isaiah 49:4–12 shows that loneliness. Verse 4 describes the attitude of [Joseph Smith] somewhat discouraged, yet not completely so: “I have spent my strength ... in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord” (Isaiah 49:4).

Nephi spoke of the [Latter-Day Saints] in their cast-off condition as being “a hiss and a byword and ... hated among all nations” (1 Nephi 19:14). Isaiah 49:7 describes that condition: men despise and abhor the Lord’s covenant people. But [the church] still has hope: “Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I [Joseph Smith] be glorious in the eyes of the Lord” (v. 5). [Joseph Smith] will yet be raised and restored and stand as “a light to the Gentiles” and as a beacon of “salvation unto the end of the earth” (v. 6). “In an acceptable time” God will hear [the righteous remnant in the church,] their cry and “give thee [the “my servant,” in 1 Nephi 21:8] for a covenant of the people” (Isaiah 49:8). That began with the call of Joseph Smith, [but will not see its completeness until after Joseph Smith returns].”

Some of little faith ask if Isaiah’s words were to be interpreted spiritually [only, not] temporally, [but the righteous remnant always] replies that they were [and are] to be interpreted both ways (see 1 Nephi 22:1–3).

(edits and emphasis added)

(Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi, Religion 302, Chapter 17: The Gathering of Israel and the Coming of the Messiah, Isaiah 48-54)

Jeremiah 8 (fin)

21 For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black [Hebrew idiom meaning “gloomy”]; astonishment hath taken hold on me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

(23-19) JEREMIAH 8:22. “There Is No Balm in Gilead”

Gilead was famous for its healing ointment (see **GENESIS 37:25**). Nevertheless, no healing ointment, or medication, was available for rebellious Israel. The balm of salvation could be administered only through Israel’s Savior, Jehovah, whom they had rejected.

(Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi, Religion 302, Chapter 23: As Ye Sow, So Shall Ye Reap, Jeremiah 1-19)

Help Me, Help You: In Jeremiah 8:21–22, the Lord expresses profound grief and empathy for His people, using the metaphor of a physician and a balm to illustrate both their spiritual and temporal suffering. The verse begins with God identifying with the pain of the “daughter of my people,” showing that He shares in their sorrow and is deeply affected by their waywardness and its consequences. The phrase “I am black” is a Hebrew idiom conveying gloom, despair, or overwhelming sorrow, emphasizing the intensity of His grief. In verse 22, God laments that there seems to be no “balm in Gilead,” no remedy or healer able to restore the people to health and wholeness. This rhetorical question underscores the tragic consequences of persistent sin and rebellion: despite His desire and provision for healing, the people’s hearts remain hardened, and their spiritual and moral health is not recovered. The passage portrays a God who is both compassionate and sorrowful, yearning for His people’s repentance and restoration while mourning their suffering caused by their own choices.

History Repeats: Jeremiah 8:21–22 parallels Christ’s lament over Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37, where He weeps, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee... how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Just as the Lord in Jeremiah expresses sorrow over the “daughter of my people” and wonders why there is no balm to heal them, Christ laments the spiritual blindness and obstinacy of Jerusalem, recognizing the abundant opportunities for protection, guidance, and life that the people have repeatedly rejected. In both cases, the language conveys deep, personal grief: God identifies intimately with the suffering caused by human rebellion and longs to restore His people, yet is frustrated by their

persistent disobedience. The imagery of healing and gathering underscores that divine love seeks restoration, but that the remedy—whether the balm of Gilead or Christ’s protective embrace—is effective only when embraced by the people themselves.

Prophecy- History in Reverse: The grief and lament expressed in Jeremiah 8 and by Christ over Jerusalem find a prophetic continuation in the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees (Doctrine and Covenants 101), where the Lord forewarns of a future period when His people—the olive trees—will be damaged through disobedience, apostasy, and neglect. Just as in Jeremiah, God is intimately affected by the harm brought upon His covenant people, and, like Christ over Jerusalem, He longs for their protection and healing. Yet when the time comes for judgment, it begins among those who bear His name—the Lord’s House—underscoring that those who have received greater light and responsibility are accountable first (D&C 112:23–27). The servant, identified as Joseph Smith Jr., is sent in the Lord’s name to redeem Zion and to gather and heal the damaged trees, but those who persist in pride and rebellion face the same bitter consequences symbolized by the “water of gall”. This pattern—grief over waywardness, warning, and ultimately judgment—links the lament over past Israel, Christ’s sorrow over Jerusalem, and the latter-day gathering and cleansing of Zion/America- showing that divine mercy and justice operate hand in hand, always beginning with those closest to the Lord. We would do well to heed the priestcraft cycle- for “there is no balm in Gilead”, nor shall there be, without “the tower” and the Lord on that tower...

President Romney

I hope we are all familiar with these words of the Lord and with his predictions concerning other coming events, such as the building of the New Jerusalem and the redemption of the old, the return of Enoch's Zion, and Christ's millennial reign.

Not only do I hope that we are familiar with these coming events; I hope also that we keep the vision of them continually before our minds. This I do because upon a knowledge of them, and an assurance of their reality and a witness that each of us may have part therein, rests the efficacy of Christ's admonition, "be not troubled" (*Be Not Troubled, 1966*)