

UNDERSTANDING JEREMIAH
CHAPTER 9
VERSION 1.00

Jeremiah sorrows greatly because of the sins of the people—They will be scattered among the nations and punished.

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

2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

3 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.

Footnote (a) lies

Psalms 64: 3

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

6 They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

8 So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Footnote (b) know not

Doctrine and Covenants 101:16

10 I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass.

11 Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

12 And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

13 And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

14 And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

15 And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

16 Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

17 Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

18 They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

19 And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

20 And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed

D&C101:10–16. How Will the Lord Help His People?

The Lord has decreed that Israel will be gathered and the New Jerusalem built in preparation for His Second Coming (see Moses 7:60–62). The tribe of Ephraim has been given this responsibility, and none can stop them. The Lord has promised the Latter-day Saints that He will help them in the work of preparation and will defend them against their enemies. Though they may experience great difficulty and distress, they must remember that He has all power and will deliver them. He will not allow His people to be overthrown. His counsel is “be still [calm, undisturbed] and know that I am God” (D&C101:16). Nothing can frustrate His work or defeat His purposes (see 1Nephi 22:15–17; 2Nephi 30:10; D&C35:14).

D&C101:17–20. “Zion Shall Not Be Moved”

Speaking of the expulsion from Jackson County, Elder James E. Talmage said: “The saints were not permitted to enter into immediate possession of the land, which was promised them as an everlasting inheritance. Even as years elapsed between the time of the Lord’s promise to Israel of old that Canaan should be their inheritance, and the time of their entering into possession thereof—years devoted to the people’s toilsome and sorrowful preparation for the fulfilment—so in these latter days the divine purpose is held in abeyance, while the people are being sanctified for the great gift and for the responsibilities associated with it. In the meantime the honest in heart are gathering to the valleys of the Rocky Mountains... Temples have been erected, and all nations are flowing unto this region. But Zion shall yet be established on the chosen site; she ‘shall not be moved out of her place,’ and the pure in heart shall return ‘with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion.’” (Articles of Faith, p.353; see also Notes and Commentary on D&C29:8.)

D&C101:18. What Does It Mean to Build Up the “Waste Places of Zion”?

Waste means “wild and uninhabited” (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. “waste”). Elder Orson Hyde taught: “The scripture says, that in the last days His people will go forth and build up the waste places of Zion. But they must first be made desolate, before they can be called ‘the waste places of Zion.’ Then the hands of the Saints will be required to build them up.” (In *Journal of Discourses*, 10:376.)

Elder Orson Pratt taught that the Saints would go back to Missouri and possess the properties they had once inhabited in the early days of the Church, after God’s judgments have made the cities desolate: “Now that order of things will continue and will spread forth from that nucleus in Jackson county and the western counties of Missouri and the eastern counties of Kansas, where this people will be located, and it will spread abroad for hundreds and hundreds of miles on the right hand and the left, east, west, north, and south from the great central city, and all the people will be required to execute the law in all their stewardships, and then there will be a oneness and union which will continue and it will spread wider and wider, and become greater and greater, until the desolate cities of the Gentiles will be inhabited by the Saints. Then will be fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, in which he says, ‘Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited’ [Isaiah 54:3], for God will visit them in judgment, and there will be no owners left to occupy the country. Then the land will be filled up with Saints, those who will keep the celestial law; and they will receive their stewardships according to the appointment of heaven.” (*Deseret Evening News*, 2 Oct. 1875, p.265.)

(Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual, Religion 324 and 325, 2001, Section 101: The Saints Are “Cast Out from the Land of Their Inheritance”, p.239-240)

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

4 Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant [OR consistently deceive], and every neighbour will walk with slanders.

Footnotes (a) trust

Micah 7: 5-6

Though the people of Israel have rebelled, yet in the last days the Lord will have mercy on them

1 Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the first ripe fruit.

2 The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.

3 ¶ That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.

4 The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.

5 ¶ Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

6 For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.

7 Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

8 ¶ Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

10 Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God? mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

11 In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.

(11-15) Micah 7:1–6. What Is the Meaning of the Figures of Speech Used by Micah?

The prophet Micah employed... figures to portray the gross state of Israel's wickedness: (1) the picture of a solitary grape upon the vine (see Micah 7:1);

“Here the prophet points out the *small number* of the upright to be found in the land. He himself seemed to be the only person who was on God's side; and he considers himself as a *solitary grape*, which had escaped the general gathering. ... He desired to see the *first-ripe fruit*—distinguished and eminent piety; but he found nothing but a very imperfect or spurious kind of godliness. ...

(11-16) Micah 7:7–20. What Did Micah Foresee and Prophecy Of?

In these verses Micah prophesied of Israel's eventual restoration as a people and of that day when Israel has learned to “look unto the Lord, ... the God of [her] salvation” (Micah 7:7). Though her enemies have prevailed against her because of her wickedness, “the Lord shall be her light.” He will plead her cause and bring her “forth to the light” (vv. 8–9). Her enemies shall see it too and be ashamed (see v. 10). The walls of her cities shall be rebuilt, and her people shall be gathered from throughout the earth (see vv. 11–12). She shall again inhabit her land as in previous times and “shall be afraid of the Lord our God” (v. 17), for He is with His people then as He was in former days (see vv. 13–17).

(Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi, Religion 302, Chapter 11: Promise of Judgments, Promise of Salvation, Micah)

2 Nephi 28: 31

Many false churches will be built up in the last days—They will teach false, vain, and foolish doctrines—Apostasy will abound because of false teachers—The devil will rage in the hearts of men—He will teach all manner of false doctrines.

31 Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.

A Quick Recap: In 2 Nephi 28, Nephi warns that spiritual decay will arise inside the Lord’s own covenant community/people/etc. The “churches” he names refer specifically to congregations of Christ’s Church— i.e. wards, branches, and stakes—not outside denominations. He foresees a time when these groups will “contend one with another,” seeking “the praise of the world” and teaching “false and vain and foolish doctrines” for influence or gain. Among them will be voices saying, “All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well!” presuming that ordinances, a temple recommend, or even simply membership alone guarantee safety and that no further revelation/work/purification/etc. is needed. Others will justify sin with the motto, “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us!” imagining they can “commit a little sin” and, after “suffering a few stripes,” still inherit God’s kingdom. Nephi warns that Satan will either stir hearts to anger against truth or lull them into thinking “there is no hell,” whispering, “I am no devil, for there is none.” He condemns those who “build up churches, and not unto the Lord,” or who reject additional scripture and revelation or the need for it. Nephi urges every member of Christ’s Church to “hear the words of the Lord,” abandon pride, priestcraft, complacency, etc. and come humbly “unto the Holy One of Israel,” for only the repentant and faithful will stand when the Lord’s judgments come.

Doctrine and Covenants 1: 19

1–7, The voice of warning is to all people; 8–16, Apostasy and wickedness precede the Second Coming; 17–23, Joseph Smith is called to restore to earth the Lord’s truths and powers

1 Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together.

2 For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

3 And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.

4 And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

5 And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

11 Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

12 Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh;

13 And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

14 And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

15 For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

16 They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

17 Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

18 And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world; and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets—

19 The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh—

20 But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world;

21 That faith also might increase in the earth;

22 That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

23 That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers.

24 Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me

D&C1:1–4. The Doctrine and Covenants Is a Voice of Warning unto All People

The preface of the Doctrine and Covenants introduces the message of the book. The entire book of scripture stands as a warning to the nations that God will not be mocked. Those who heed the voice of warning will find protection and peace, but those who refuse it will reap bitter fruit.

President Joseph Fielding Smith said that the Doctrine and Covenants is not a book just for the Latter-day Saints. It is “more than that, it belongs to all the world, to the Catholics, to the Presbyterians, to the Methodists, to the infidel, to the non-believer. It is his book if he will accept it, if he will receive it. The Lord has given it unto the world for their salvation. If you do not believe it, you read the first section in this book, the preface, and you will find that the Lord has sent this book and the things which it contains unto the people afar off, on the islands of the sea,

in foreign lands, and his voice is unto all people, that all may hear. And so I say it belongs to all the world, not only to the Latter-day Saints, and they will be judged by it, and you will be judged by it.” (In Conference Report, Oct. 1919, p.146.)

The Lord declared in verse 4 that the Doctrine and Covenants is to serve as “the voice of warning . . . unto all people.” This theme is heard again and again throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, showing the judgments that are to come upon the world and how we can be saved from them.

D&C1:8–10. What Does It Mean to Seal the “Unbelieving and Rebellious”?

“The power to seal conferred upon the servants of the Lord in this, the last dispensation, extends to the ‘unbelieving’ and ‘rebellious.’ . . . They have power to put the seal of disapprobation upon the children of men who persist in unbelief and rebellion, and those who are thus ‘sealed’ and remain in that condition, will suffer the wrath of God. This sealing concerns the ‘unbelievers,’ those who refuse to accept the gospel message; and the ‘rebellious,’ i.e., those who turn against the servants of the Lord, especially those who do so after having enjoyed the privileges and blessings of membership in the Church.” (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 6.)

D&C1:12–13. “Prepare Ye for That Which Is to Come”

The word prepare appears about ninety times in the Doctrine and Covenants. This warning is a major theme of the book. The Lord always gives the people a chance to prepare for that which is to come, and the revelations given in this dispensation will help the Saints prepare.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

5 And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves [OR are impatient] to commit iniquity.

6 Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

Generation of Vipers: In Jeremiah 9:5–6, the Lord laments that His people have become entrenched in deceit, training their tongues to speak lies and laboring to commit iniquity. Their very homes and communities are described as “**in the midst of deceit,**” illustrating how deception has become habitual and foundational. Through this pervasive falsehood, they **refuse to know God**, mistaking cunning and craftiness for wisdom and security. The warning echoes Nephi’s concerns centuries later: even within the covenant community, individuals can be lulled into thinking “all is well in Zion” or justify sin with empty slogans, allowing pride, priestcraft, and false teachings to flourish. God’s judgment begins not on the outside but **within His house**, purging deception and calling His people to recognize their spiritual blindness, repent, and return

humbly to the Holy One of Israel.

Building on that, the deceit Jeremiah condemns can be seen as a corruption not just of words but of **spiritual perception and relational trust**. When a people train themselves to speak lies and embrace iniquity as habit, their very understanding of reality becomes warped—they cannot discern truth from falsehood, light from darkness. This internal corruption mirrors the withering branches in Jacob 5, where neglect, pride, and stubbornness cause the olive trees to falter despite the care of the Master. Just as a branch that refuses to yield good fruit must be grafted, nourished, or removed, so too must those entrenched in deceit confront the hard truth of their spiritual state. The Lord calls for **recognition, humility, and repentance**, emphasizing that no amount of outward ritual, mere membership, or familiarity with ordinances can substitute for a heart aligned with God’s truth. Deception, once internalized, spreads outward, affecting communities, judgments, and even covenant relationships, showing that **purity of speech, thought, and intention is inseparable from covenantal fidelity**.

In modern times, Jeremiah’s warning about deceit finds a striking parallel in the world of **social media influencers and priestcrafters**, those who craft a polished image designed to captivate, manipulate, or profit from others. Every post, every word, every curated persona becomes a **carefully engineered lie**, presenting a world of comfort, approval, and affirmation rather than reality. Just as the people in Jeremiah’s day “weary themselves to commit iniquity” through habitual falsehood, followers today often **cling to the pleasing illusions**, finding solace in flattering lies rather than confronting the hard, sometimes painful truths about themselves, their choices, or the spiritual reality around them. The truth dealers, prophets, and ministers who dare to speak unvarnished reality are frequently **dismissed, mocked, or avoided**, because their words demand effort, self-reflection, and accountability. In this way, the deceit of human-crafted personas, whether online or in pulpits, mirrors the internal corruption Jeremiah condemned, showing that the love of ease and comfort can blind communities to the presence and voice of God, leaving hearts malnourished and spiritually frail.

In this modern context, Jeremiah’s phrase about those who “weary themselves to commit iniquity” can be understood as the **haste and impatience with which social media priestcrafters operate**, eager to be the first to report, comment, or spin a narrative regardless of truth or ethical restraint. They rush to amplify every sensational story, jumping on bandwagons of viral clickbait, often prioritizing speed and attention over accuracy or wisdom. When a shocking event occurs—such as the hypothetical assassination of a public figure like Charlie Kirk—these figures dive in headfirst, shaping narratives and commentary with feverish urgency, motivated less by justice or truth than by the desire to **capitalize on the spectacle**. Similarly, spiritual priestcrafters exploit sacred things, rushing to use the **blood and sacrifice of Christ** as a

commodity, packaging it for their audience in ways that **profane or trivialize its holiness**, rather than carefully shepherding souls in humility and truth. In both cases, the impatience to act, to seize the moment for influence or profit, mirrors the deceitful energy Jeremiah condemned, showing how a **love of acclaim and gain can drive even ostensibly sacred work into iniquity**.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

7 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

Footnotes (a) melt

2 Nephi 23/Isaiah 13: 7-9

The destruction of Babylon is a type of the destruction at the Second Coming—It will be a day of wrath and vengeance—Babylon (the world) will fall forever—Compare Isaiah 13. About 559–545 B.C.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, for mine anger is not upon them that rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of the multitude in the mountains like as of a great people, a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the Lord of Hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle.

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, yea, the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

6 Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, every man's heart shall melt;

8 And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

9 Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

11 And I will punish the world for evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay down the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

Trump is not God; Charlie is not His son: In the same vein, the Lord's promise that "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; yea, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir" underscores the eternal value of **righteousness and truth**, which far surpasses any earthly wealth or acclaim. Yet the liars, priestcrafters, and vipers of society instinctively recognize such a man as a **threat to their schemes and false narratives**. The more righteous, courageous, or principled he is, the more zealously they target him, tearing down his reputation, twisting his words, and portraying him as enemy number one, all in an attempt to neutralize his influence.

Meanwhile, those who propagate lies, who serve their own gain or political idols, are **exalted and lionized**, their failings overlooked, their agendas glorified, and their image raised to near godlike status in the eyes of a deceived populace. This inversion reflects a profound spiritual truth: **the world often punishes virtue with lies and rewards falsehood with gain**, but divine valuation, unlike human acclaim, recognizes the unshakable worth of those who walk in God's light, even when surrounded by vipers and deceivers.

Doctrine and Covenants 133: 41

17 For behold, the Lord God hath sent forth the angel crying through the midst of heaven, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh—

18 When the Lamb shall stand upon Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads.

19 Wherefore, prepare ye for the coming of the Bridegroom; go ye, go ye out to meet him.

36 And now, verily saith the Lord, that these things might be known among you, O inhabitants of the earth, I have sent forth mine angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, who hath appeared unto some and hath committed it unto man, who shall appear unto many that dwell on the earth.

37 And this gospel shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.

38 And the servants of God shall go forth, saying with a loud voice: Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come;

39 And worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters—

40 Calling upon the name of the Lord day and night, saying: O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence.

41 And it shall be answered upon their heads; for the presence of the Lord shall be as the melting fire that burneth, and as the fire which causeth the waters to boil.

42 O Lord, thou shalt come down to make thy name known to thine adversaries, and all nations shall tremble at thy presence—

43 When thou doest terrible things, things they look not for;

44 Yea, when thou comest down, and the mountains flow down at thy presence, thou shalt meet him who rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, who remembereth thee in thy ways.

45 For since the beginning of the world have not men heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath any eye seen, O God, besides thee, how great things thou hast prepared for him that waiteth for thee.

Some are called to endure, others to be endured: In a world dominated by deceit, lies, and the elevation of the proud, even the few precious righteous men can feel **discouraged or disheartened**, wondering, “What profit is it to serve God faithfully, to keep His ordinances, or to walk humbly before Him, when the wicked are exalted, praised, and seemingly delivered from

consequence?” This despair mirrors the lament recorded in **Malachi 3:14–15**, where those who serve God faithfully perceive the proud and lawless as being set up and favored by men, while their own faithful labor feels overlooked. Yet the Lord reassures His servants with a divine perspective beyond mortal perception: “For since the beginning of the world have not men heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath any eye seen, O God, besides thee, how great things thou hast prepared for him that waiteth for thee and fear thee” (Isaiah 64:4). God reminds His righteous ones that **true reward is eternal, not temporal**, and that the value of faithfulness, humility, and integrity far surpasses the fleeting glory, power, or recognition of the proud. The faithful are called to endure, not for human praise, but for the **unseen, incomparable blessings that God has reserved for those who patiently trust and revere Him**, even when surrounded by vipers, deceivers, and the illusions of worldly success.

Footnote 41 (a) as

Exodus 24

17 And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

Jeremiah 9

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

Helaman 5

23 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi were encircled about as if by fire, even insomuch that they durst not lay their hands upon them for fear lest they should be burned. Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi were not burned; and they were as standing in the midst of fire and were not burned.

Doctrine and Covenants 103

16 Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

17 For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

18 And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

19 Therefore, let not your hearts faint

1 Nephi 22

16 For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

17 Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

18 Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel.

19 For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.

20 And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.

2 Nephi 30

8 And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.

9 And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

10 For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.

11 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

12 And then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, together; and a little child shall lead them.

13 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

14 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

15 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Joseph Smith Jr.

Interpretation of Scripture

The Savior said when these tribulations should take place, it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. *It has always been my*

province ... Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood--just at that time I have the greater right. ...

All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people.

Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes him Himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. *John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.*

The scripture is *ready to be fulfilled* when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, &c., are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. *John saw the angel* having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel--a special messenger--ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones! (TPJS, p.364-365)

Revelation 7

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and I heard him cry with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,
3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

1 Thessalonians 5

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

8 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart [TG Hypocrisy] he layeth his wait.

9 ¶ Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

Footnotes 9 (a) visit

Mosiah 12

1 And it came to pass that after the space of two years that Abinadi came among them in disguise, that they knew him not, and began to prophesy among them, saying: Thus has the Lord commanded me, saying—Abinadi, go and prophesy unto this my people, for they have hardened their hearts against my words; they have repented not of their evil doings; therefore, I will visit them in my anger, yea, in my fierce anger will I visit them in their iniquities and abominations.

Doctrine and Covenants 124

50 And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord God.

I am Abinadi: Abinadi's proclamation of his name while in hiding was not a careless slip or accidental reveal, but a moment of profound risk in a world riddled with deceit. Though he had withdrawn, he may have thought he was among those he could cautiously trust—those who seemed sympathetic to righteousness or shared his convictions. Yet vipers were lying in wait, motivated by loyalty to **political power rather than spiritual truth**, and they ultimately delivered him into the hands of **King Noah and his wicked priests**. This exchange demonstrates that even the faithful can be betrayed by those who appear close or trustworthy, and that wickedness often operates through opportunistic exploitation of trust. It underscores the timeless prophetic warning that deception and treachery can lurk within any community, and that righteous action often unfolds amid hidden peril and opposition.

Just as Abinadi warned the people of King Noah that the Lord would visit them in His fierce anger for their hardened hearts, evil deeds, and abominations, so too does the Lord declare in **Doctrine and Covenants 124:50** that those who obstruct His work and persist in transgression will not escape divine justice. The unrepentant, whose hearts are closed against truth and whose actions actively oppose God's commandments, will experience the consequences of their choices—not merely in fleeting earthly discomfort, but through the weight of **God's righteous judgment**, extending even to their descendants if they remain hardened. This principle underscores a consistent pattern: the Lord's patience is not indefinite, and persistent rebellion, deceit, or obstruction of His work invokes His **fierce and exacting visitation**, demonstrating that God's justice is both personal and communal, measured by the persistence of iniquity and the refusal to turn to Him.

Shall I not visit them for these things: Yes — we absolutely believe that the Lord will **visit people for these things**. The deceit, hypocrisy, and hidden malice described in Jeremiah—where

one speaks peaceably with the mouth while plotting in the heart—cannot escape God’s notice. Modern false Christian teachings often misrepresent His love, suggesting that because Christ has atoned, we are free to indulge in sin or abominations without consequence, promoting a mindset of entitlement or spiritual laxity. Some even claim, as Jeremiah warned, “I am delivered to do these abominations because of Christ and His atonement,” twisting grace into license. But the Lord’s justice and holiness do not bend to such lies; when the **cup of iniquity is full**, He will visit these individuals and communities for their deceit and unfaithfulness, just as He has done with every people who have broken covenant throughout history. This visitation is part of the **repeating cycle of judgment—the abomination which maketh desolate—where pride, priestcraft, and deception are finally confronted, purged, and made to account before the Lord.**

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

11 And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons [HEB jackals]; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

Footnotes 11 (b) desolate

Isaiah 1

7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

2 Nephi 13

8 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen, because their tongues and their doings have been against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

12 ¶ Who is the wise man, that may understand this? and who is he to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

14 But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them:

Footnote 14 (a) imagination

1 Nephi 12

18 And the large and spacious building, which thy father saw, is vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men. And a great and a terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the justice of the Eternal God, and the Messiah who is the Lamb of God, of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record, from the beginning of the world until this time, and from this time henceforth and forever.

Doctrine and Covenants 1

16 *They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god*, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

Doctrine and Covenants 45

26 And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.

27 And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound.

28 And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, *a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;*

29 *But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.*

Write the Law upon thy heart vs Thy heart is the law: These verses from **Jeremiah 9:12–14** illustrate the stark consequences of **persistent disobedience and idolatry**. The Lord asks rhetorically who is wise enough to truly understand His words, emphasizing the gravity of a society so steeped in rebellion that the land itself perishes and lies desolate, “burned up like a wilderness.” The root cause of this devastation is not random misfortune but a deliberate **forsaking of God’s law**, a refusal to hear and obey His voice, and a pursuit of **the imaginations of their own hearts** rather than divine guidance. Compounding this, they follow the **idolatrous practices of Baalim** handed down from their fathers, showing how rebellion and false worship are often perpetuated through cultural and generational habits. The passage highlights the **inseparable link between spiritual unfaithfulness and societal decay**, and warns that ignoring God’s commandments in favor of human desires and false gods ultimately leads to destruction, desolation, and the Lord’s righteous visitation.

These passages form a clear **thematic through-line (word association)** connecting the rebellion of ancient Israel with the spiritual state of modern humanity. In Jeremiah 9:13–14, God laments

that the people “have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them.” Here, the people deliberately **abandon God’s commandments** in favor of following human impulses and culturally inherited idolatry—Baalim, false gods handed down through generations—demonstrating a **pattern of willful disobedience and spiritual blindness**.

This mirrors Doctrine and Covenants 1:16, which condemns those who “walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.” Just as Israel chased the **false images of Baalim**, modern individuals chase the **idols of the world**—social, political, or cultural constructs that claim ultimate authority but are ultimately fleeting and perishable. Both passages emphasize **substituting human-made systems or desires for God’s law**, showing the enduring human tendency to replace divine truth with temporal constructs.

Similarly, the rejection of God’s word in both contexts is paralleled. Jeremiah notes that the people **do not obey God’s voice**, and in D&C 45:29, the Lord laments that even when “the fulness of my gospel” is revealed, many “**receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.**” In both cases, the people are presented with **truth and light**, yet their hearts are hardened; they turn instead to human wisdom, traditions, and precepts, whether by inherited idolatry or contemporary worldly philosophies. The pattern is consistent: **divine law and revelation are offered, but human pride and attachment to worldly images lead to rejection, deception, and eventual judgment**.

In essence, the ancient Baalim and the modern idols of Babylon share the same spiritual function: they **replace God in the hearts of men, offering illusory guidance while ultimately leading to destruction**, highlighting that the Lord’s warnings transcend time and culture.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

16 I will scatter them [TG Israel, Scattering of] also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

(23-21) Jeremiah 9:16. Was Judah to Be Completely Consumed?

To be consumed does not mean to become extinct. Being consumed and destroyed, in the context of the prophecies of the scattering of Israel, meant to be utterly disorganized and disbanded so that Israel's power, influence, and cohesiveness as a nation was gone. Moses, in Deuteronomy 4:26, told all Israel that they would "utterly be destroyed." Yet the verses following show that Israel still existed as homeless individuals.

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

Doctrine and Covenants 113

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.

Returning lost power; thy Kingdom come: Jeremiah 9:15–16 warns that Israel would be "fed with wormwood" and given "water of gall to drink," and that they would be scattered among nations unknown to them, pursued by the sword until they were consumed—not extinct, but utterly disorganized, stripped of national cohesion, power, and influence. This scattering is echoed in Doctrine and Covenants 113, where the Lord, through Joseph Smith, explains that the scattered remnants of Israel must return to Him, thus regaining the power of a united Zion that was lost, or "consumed". Central to this was loosening themselves from the "bands of their neck"— i.e. removing that imposed curse upon them of being in a scattered condition. This modern parallel starts in the history of the Saints, when they were driven from Jackson County, Missouri, and us in the present, living ever since, in a scattered condition among the Gentiles. In such a condition we are facing both external opposition and the spiritual trials of displacement and maintaining our faith in a literal return and fulfillment to the Lord's promises. Just as Israel remained spiritually disorganized until God called forth leaders to restore covenant authority via priesthood keys, the Saints will remain physically scattered until the Elders rise up in righteousness, exercising the fullness of priesthood to redeem Zion, thus reclaiming this lost power and establishing the Lord's promised order (Kingdom) and blessing among His people forever.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

17 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning women, that they may come:

18 And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.

19 For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast us out.

How are we spoiled indeed: This verse captures the lamentation of a people experiencing the consequences of their own disobedience and rebellion. A voice of wailing rises from Zion because the inhabitants are spoiled and confounded, realizing that their suffering, displacement, and vulnerability are the direct results of forsaking the land God gave them. Their neglect towards their inheritances, which could have provided safety and sustenance, has instead become the reason for their destruction and desolation. In a modern parallel, the Saints cast out from their inheritance in **Zion, the New Jerusalem in Jackson County**, face a similar consequence. The land and covenantal promise were meant to be a source of spiritual and temporal security, yet neglect, delay, or mismanagement—exemplified in the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees (Doctrine and Covenants 101)—transforms opportunity into vulnerability. The “tower” in that parable represents Zion itself, meant to **provide protection and support for the olive trees, the covenant people**. But when the servants fail to build it diligently, making excuses such as, “Might not this money better be spent elsewhere?” they replicate the same error: the very thing meant to secure them becomes the instrument by which the destroyer is able to damage, scatter, or spoil the olive trees. Just as ancient Zion suffered because the people forsook their inheritance, modern Saints encounter the consequences of delayed or misplaced stewardship, emphasizing that **blessings and safety are tied to faithful action, diligence, and obedience to the Lord’s commands regarding His covenant lands (i.e. “the tower”)**.

The lament of the women in Jeremiah’s time—“How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because our dwellings have cast us out”—echoes powerfully in **Psalms 137**, where the exiles weep by the rivers of Babylon, remembering Zion. In both instances, the people are confronted with the consequences of **forsaking their covenant land and inheritance**: their dwellings, their security, and their community no longer provide protection or stability, leaving them spiritually and physically vulnerable. In Babylon, the captives are surrounded by idolatry and oppression, and even when commanded to offer songs of joy, they cannot, for their hearts are fixed on the loss of Zion. The psalmist’s grief—hanging harps on the willows, refusing to sing in a strange land—illustrates the **internal desolation** that follows neglect and disobedience. Just as Jeremiah’s lamenters recognize that their displacement

is the result of forsaking the Lord's law and covenant, the exiles in Babylon understand that their sorrow is tied directly to their separation from the promised land and the blessings that flow from faithful stewardship.

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation.

21 For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets.

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

23 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Footnotes 24 (a) glory

1 Corinthians 1

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

2 Corinthians 10

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Alma 26

36 Now if this is boasting, even so will I boast; for this is my life and my light, my joy and my salvation, and my redemption from everlasting wo. Yea, blessed is the name of my God, who has been mindful of this people, who are a branch of the tree of Israel, and has been lost from its body in a strange land; yea, I say, blessed be the name of my God, who has been mindful of us, wanderers in a strange land.

37 Now my brethren, we see that God is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth. Now this is my joy, and my great thanksgiving; yea, and I will give thanks unto my God forever. Amen.

Joseph Smith

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. He will be inquired of by His children. He says, “Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find;” but, if you will take that which is not your own, or which I have not given you, you shall be rewarded according to your deeds; but no good thing will I withhold from them who walk uprightly before me, and do my will in all things—who will listen to my voice and to the voice of my servant whom I have sent; for I delight in those who seek diligently to know my precepts (Jeremiah 9:24), and abide by the law of my kingdom; for all things shall be made known unto them in mine own due time, and in the end they shall have joy.(Aug. 27, 1842.) DHC 5:134–136. (*TPJS*, p.257)

Know God, Work Righteousness: These verses move from vivid warning to a profound call for true discipleship. First, the Lord commands the women to **teach wailing and lamentation**, for death has already breached the city’s defenses—“come up into our windows” and “entered into our palaces.” Children and young men, the future of the nation, are being cut off, and corpses will lie in the fields like uncollected grain. It is a stark image of a society collapsing under the weight of its own rebellion.

Yet the Lord pivots in verses 23–24, revealing what He truly values: **not human brilliance, power, or wealth**, but a people who “understand and know” Him—who recognize His **lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness**. The contrast is striking. Human strength, wisdom, and riches offer no shelter from judgment; only a relationship with the living God provides lasting security. In a modern setting, where intellect, influence, and affluence are often idolized, this passage still speaks urgently: when death and chaos intrude, the only glory that matters is to know the Lord and walk righteously in His covenant of truth, mercy and justice.

These passages from Paul and Ammon all echo the same eternal principle introduced in Jeremiah 9:23–24: **the only boasting that heaven approves is boasting in the Lord**. Paul twice quotes the prophetic admonition, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,” reminding the Saints at Corinth that personal achievement—whether wisdom, influence, or even missionary success—is nothing without God’s sustaining enabling grace. He warns against claiming credit for “other men’s labours” or measuring worth by human commendation, for only the Lord’s approval truly matters.

Ammon’s joyful declaration in Alma 26 beautifully illustrates what this godly glorying looks like. Fresh from miraculous missionary victories, he insists that if this is “boasting,” it is boasting

in God alone: the source of his life, light, joy, and redemption. Ammon rejoices that the Lord remembers all His children—even “wanderers in a strange land”—and that divine mercy extends to every nation. Together these scriptures teach that real glory is not self-promotion but grateful recognition of God’s power and goodness, the kind of humble praise that transforms personal success into everlasting thanksgiving.

In sharp contrast stands **priestcraft**, the counterfeit of true ministry, which Nephi defines as men “preach[ing] and set[ting] themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and the praise of the world” (2 Nephi 26:29). Where righteous servants deflect all honor heavenward, priestcrafters deliberately redirect the spotlight onto themselves—treating God’s truths as merchandise to sell and His glory as currency for personal profit. Their sermons, books, and platforms become tools for self-promotion, trading revelation for revenue and applause. Instead of pointing hearts to Christ, they subtly teach dependence on their own charisma, insights, or brand. Such behavior robs God of His honor and exploits the sacred for temporal advantage, proving that priestcraft is not mere vanity but a spiritual theft: the taking of what belongs to the Lord and using it to exalt the self. (3 Nephi 24)

Jeremiah 9 (cont.)

25 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised;

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

(23-20) Jeremiah 9. Jeremiah’s Lament

Except, perhaps, for David’s cry over his son Absalom (see 2 Samuel 18:33), or Jesus’ prophetic lament over Jerusalem (see Matthew 23:37), or the lament of Mormon over the destroyed Nephite nation (see Mormon 6:16–22), few passages lamenting the results of sin in the scriptures are as moving as Jeremiah 9.

In Jeremiah 9:17–22, the Lord referred to the custom in ancient Israel of hiring professional mourners, women who were paid to wail and lament for long periods of time at someone’s death. Jeremiah was told to hire professional mourners to lament over Judah.

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

Oh ye whited tombs: Jeremiah closes this chapter with a sobering reminder that outward signs of religion cannot substitute for a converted heart. The Lord declares that He will “punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised,” naming Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon,

Moab, and every nation that has trusted in ritual rather than righteousness. The physical covenant mark of circumcision, meant as a token of devotion, is meaningless when “the house of Israel [is] uncircumcised in the heart.” This is why the Lord summons professional mourners earlier in the chapter—to dramatize the depth of grief warranted by such hypocrisy. Like David’s wail over Absalom, Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem, and Mormon’s cry over a fallen nation, Jeremiah’s mourning exposes the tragedy of a people who confuse external religion with inner conversion. The lesson reaches far beyond ancient Judah: no ordinance, tradition, or inherited faith can shield anyone from judgment if the heart remains proud, unrepentant, and untouched by God’s transforming grace.

Return, O Zion

A cry of sorrow fills the night,
We left the land, we lost the light.
Without the vision we err in sight.
By Babylon’s rivers we bow and weep,
Our harps fall silent, our vows asleep,
Yet we pray “Lord, our souls to keep!”
The tower unbuilt, the trees lay bare,
The watch broken, no one’s there.
The foe comes in where faith grows cold,
And scatters the flock from the Shepherd’s fold.
Rise, O Saints, with steadfast hands,
Reclaim your birthright, prize the land.
Build the tower, tend the vine,
Trust the Lord to respond in kind,
For soon our God will call His Zion—“mine”.