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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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Various information and topics that help the reader of the Bible understand the apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ's teachings.

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## Jeremiah 9.

(2010).

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*Teach it, don't demand it.*

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## Jeremiah 9.

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### God's Heart is Grieved.

Jeremiah 9:1-2 ----- <sup>1</sup>Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! <sup>2</sup>Oh that I had in the desert a travelers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men.

Jeremiah is now seeing ahead in time to the destruction and devastation Babylon's armies are about to bring upon Jerusalem and the land of Judah. In his vision of this event, he is probably seeing smoke going up from their burnt houses, the city of Jerusalem destroyed, the Temple pillaged and the enormous suffering of those who survived looking upon multitudes of dead bodies of Judeans lying on the surface of the earth being eaten by the birds and animals (Jeremiah 7:32-33).

As Jeremiah sees the magnitude of this horror he expresses in prophecy the grieved heart of God. God's heart is enormously grieved, so much so that He is pictured as not having enough water to form the flood of tears He desires to shed over the great sorrow He feels for the suffering of His People.

**How tragic it this;** God's people have become so corrupt and so badly hurt Him that He expresses a strong desire to walk away from them (v2).

### Sins of Judah.

Jeremiah 9:3-6 ----- <sup>3</sup>They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me, declares the LORD. <sup>4</sup>Let everyone beware of his neighbor, and put no trust in any brother, for every brother is a deceiver, and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer. <sup>5</sup>Everyone deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves committing iniquity. <sup>6</sup>Heaping oppression upon oppression, and deceit upon deceit, they refuse to know me, declares the LORD.

### The people of Judah: -

- Twist and distort the truth.
- Lie and deceive each other for their own gain.
- Go from evil to evil and weary themselves committing iniquity.
- Do not know the LORD or His ways.
- Cannot be trusted, not even those who confess God.
- Make false or malicious statements that damages their brothers or sisters reputation (slander each other).
- Heap oppression on the less fortunate to increase their own profit.
- Refuse to listen to the words of the prophets and know the LORD.

**"I will refine them and test them, for what else can I do?"**

Jeremiah 9:7-11 ----- <sup>7</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: "Behold, I will refine them and test them, for what else can I do, because of my people? <sup>8</sup>Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor, but in his heart he plans an ambush for him. <sup>9</sup>Shall I not punish them for these things? declares the LORD, and shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this? <sup>10</sup>"I will take up weeping and wailing for the mountains, and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness, because they are laid waste so that no

one passes through, and the lowing of cattle is not heard; both the birds of the air and the beasts have fled and are gone. <sup>11</sup>I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a lair of jackals, and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant."

God sees the Motive of the Heart; the people of Judah are saying good things to their neighbour, they are telling them everything will be OK, but in their heart they intend to take advantage of them.

God says, "What else can I do?" because of Judah's corrupt ways they leave God no choice but to refine them and test them.

God will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a lair of jackals, and the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant."

God used Babylon to bring this about; the armies of Babylon destroyed the city of Jerusalem, burned the people's houses, their cities and their farms and took the people of Judah captive into Babylon for 70 years.

**Judah has stubbornly followed their own Hearts.**

Jeremiah 9:12-16 ----- <sup>12</sup>Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? <sup>13</sup>And the LORD says: "Because they have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice or walked in accord with it, <sup>14</sup>but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them. <sup>15</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will feed this people with bitter food, and give them poisonous water to drink. <sup>16</sup>I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them."

**Baal**; means Lord, possessor, husband. Since the Hebrew husband was regarded as the literal owner of his wife, Baal was the common term for husband. Most often however, the word refers to the Semitic deity or deities called Baal. Baal is not the name of one god, but the name of the presiding deity of any given locality. Because the worship of Baal was much the same everywhere in Canaan, in time Baal came to represent the idea of one god. The Baalim were the gods of the land, owning and controlling it and the increases of crops, fruits, and cattle was under their control. The farmer was completely dependent upon the Baalim. Some Baals were greater than others. Some were in control of cities.

The struggle between Baalism and Judaism came to a head on Mount Carmel when the Prophet Elijah met the priests of Baal and slew 450 of them. The cult quickly recuperated, however, and prospered until crushed by Jehu, but Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, the wife of Jehoram, gave the worship of Baal a new impulse. In the worship of Baal, incense and burnt sacrifices were offered to him and on extraordinary occasions the victims were children offered by their parents. Lascivious rites accompanied the worship. Sometimes priests, dancing around the altar in a state of frenzy, slashed themselves with knives. At first the name Baal was used by the Jews for their God without discrimination, but as the struggle between the two religions developed, the name Baal was given up in Judaism as a thing of sham.

**Wisdom**; Jeremiah prophetically seeing the end result of God's Judgment asks, is there a wise man that understands why Judah's land is in ruin, the LORD answers his question saying, because they stubbornly followed the way of their own heart.

I will scatter them among the nations; when Babylon invaded the land of Judah multitudes fled to the surrounding nations to escape the impending destruction.

**Weeping and Wailing Women.**

Jeremiah 9:17-22 ----- <sup>17</sup>Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider, and call for the mourning women to come; send for the skillful women to come; <sup>18</sup>let them make haste and raise a wailing over us, that our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids flow with water. <sup>19</sup>For a sound of wailing is

heard from Zion: 'How we are ruined! We are utterly shamed, because we have left the land, because they have cast down our dwellings.' <sup>20</sup>Hear, O women, the word of the LORD, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth; teach to your daughters a lament, and each to her neighbor a dirge. <sup>21</sup>For death has come up into our windows; it has entered our palaces, cutting off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares. <sup>22</sup>Speak, "Thus declares the LORD: 'The dead bodies of men shall fall like dung upon the open field, like sheaves after the reaper, and none shall gather them.'"

### **Contagious Emotion.**

In real life or imaginary life emotion is contagious, when a person is in the company of someone whose eyes are full of tears of sorrow and sadness whoever is with them will feel the same emotion.

This also applies when an audience watches a well-acted movie and the actors cry in deep hurt and grief at the loss of a loved one or because of some tragic crisis, the emotions of the viewers will be moved to feel the same sorrow. The same principle applies to being in the company of negative or positive people and works for all emotions, fear, joy and laughter etc.; this is why comedy programs overlay the show with the laughter of an audience.

The people of Judah understood this that is why they had professional women who they could call on in times of national disaster, days of repentance or times of great sorrow i.e. funerals.

Even today the people of some nations still pay woman who are skilful at wailing to attend the funeral of their loved ones.

### **The LORD knows Babylon is about to: -**

- Utterly shame Judah by taking them from their land.
- Burn their houses.
- March into their houses and slaughter the inhabitants.
- Leave the dead bodies of Judah lying on the surface of the ground like dung.

The LORD foreseeing all this horror tells Jeremiah to call for weeping women who are skilful at mourning to come; and wail over Judah so that all the eyes of the people of Judah would be filled with tears.

### **Boasting.**

Jeremiah 9:23-24 ---- <sup>23</sup>Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, <sup>24</sup>but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."

### **The LORD tells the people of Judah: -**

- If they are wise not to boast in their wisdom.
- If they are strong in physical strength or authority not to boast in their might and power.
- If they are rich not to boast in their wealth.

### **If they are going to boasts boast in the following things: -**

- That they understand and know the LORD.
- That the things on earth God delights in are steadfast love, justice, and righteousness.

To delight the heart of the LORD, no-one has to be, rich, famous, memorise scriptures, have great Bible knowledge or be a great minister or evangelist etc, to thrill God's heart all we have to do is acknowledge Him, trust in His Son for our eternal salvation and then do what is just, fair and right to other humans.

**God will Punish all Nations, Israel will not be Protected.**

Genesis 17:25-26 ---- <sup>25</sup>"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— <sup>26</sup>Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."

**Circumcision;** speaks of the people of Judah and Israel, because it was God's Covenant with Abraham and the nation Israel.

**Uncircumcision;** refers to everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew.

Genesis 17:10-14 ---- <sup>10</sup>This is my covenant, which you (Abraham) shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. <sup>11</sup>You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup>He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, <sup>13</sup>both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup>Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

Judah was the LORD'S chosen people called to worship God only. Egypt worshipped many local deities of varying importance, i.e. Orisis and Isis and their son Horus a sun god. Edom was a continue thorn to the people of God and Amon was an evil King of Israel. The Ammonites were given to brutish murder, rebellious against Israel and idolatrous in their religious practices, their chief idol was Molech, to whom they offered human sacrifices and Moab hired Balaam against Israel to curse them. God is basically saying, just because the men of Israel are keeping His covenant by being circumcised in the flesh it will not protect them from His judgment and punishment because their heart is not circumcised, meaning their heart is full of rebellion, selfish greed and gross sin, they are not living any differently to the Gentile nations surrounding them.

**The lesson we learn;** is honouring God and treating other humans with justice and doing what is right and fair is far more important to God than keeping religious rites and ceremonies.

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End.