

**Jer. 16:1 ¶ The word of the LORD came also unto me, saying,  
Jer. 16:2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.**

**Jer. 16:3 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;**

**Jer. 16:4 They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; *but* they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.**

This chapter begins with YHWH telling Jeremiah that he is not to marry or have children. The structure of Jewish society was founded upon land allotments that were ensured by one's progeny. Although it sounds harsh, this instruction is really an act of love and protection for His servant. The LORD has determined that the people of the land (Judah), including children and their parents, will suffer from deadly diseases. The deaths will be so many so quickly that there will be no time for normal periods of mourning or even burials. They will also die at the hands of enemy soldiers and from famine. Their dead bodies will be left in the open to be eaten by the carnivorous birds of the air and beasts of the earth. What's left will serve as fertilizer for the earth. In that culture, this would be a reason for great shame to the people of the nation.

**Jer. 16:5 For thus saith the LORD, Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies.**

**Jer. 16:6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them:**

**Jer. 16:7 Neither shall *men* tear *themselves* for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother.**

The LORD goes on to forbid Jeremiah from participating in mourning the death of his people. YHWH has purposed to remove His peace from the people. They will no longer be allowed to experience His kindness, favor, compassion or mercy (all from the Hebrew). Death will come to all, from the nobles to the common folk, rich to poor. Again, the point is made that the number of dead will be so many so quickly that proper burials and times of mourning will not be possible. The people will not be able to find comfort even when confronted with the death of father or mother because everyone will be overtaken in his/her own sorrow.

It is to be noted that the instructions in verse 6 were customs adopted from the pagan religions that the people had turned to and were specifically forbidden the people of Israel.

*Leviticus 19:27–28 “Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard. Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.”*

*Deuteronomy 14:1–2 “Ye are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.”*

**Jer. 16:8** Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink.

**Jer. 16:9** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

Neither was Jeremiah to participate in any of the normally “joyous” occasions among the people that included feasting and fellowship. YHWH has determined to take happiness away from His people. The wording is clear that Jeremiah will live to witness this time of judgment.

**Jer. 16:10 ¶** And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

**Jer. 16:11** Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

**Jer. 16:12** And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

**Jer. 16:13** Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

The LORD anticipates the response of the people as they observe Jeremiah’s lifestyle in obedience to the LORD as he declares God’s message to the people. They are going to pretend not to understand why God is angry with them. They are going to pretend to be ignorant of their sin.

YHWH instructs Jeremiah to boldly declare that judgment is being pronounced because of the sins of their fathers—specifically in turning to the worship of false gods and forsaking their covenant with Him. Then he is to emphasize that they are acting even worse than their fathers did. In spite of the warning of God’s prophet(s), they determined to continue in their sin and in fulfilling the desires of their flesh in rejection of that message. Because of their continued disobedience and lack of repentance, YHWH is determined to cast many of them out of the Promised Land so they can serve the false gods of the Gentile nations and experience firsthand the “pleasures” of living among the heathen and serving

their gods. The judgment being declared by YHWH is exactly as warned by Moses before they ever even entered the land to possess it.

*Deuteronomy 28:15, 20-26 "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.... The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.*

**Jer. 16:14 ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;**

**Jer. 16:15 But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.**

Up until this time in Israel's history, the LORD's powerful, miraculous deliverance of His people from Egypt was the event most recognized by the Jewish people as well as the Gentile nations as declaring YHWH's greatness and power. The LORD is saying that the time is coming that He is going to once again regather His people from among the nations with a display of greatness and power that will overshadow their deliverance from Egypt. This is an amazing statement as one thinks back over the ten plagues that God used to bend Pharaoh to His will to let the people go followed by His spectacular miracle of deliverance from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea.

Because of the comparison being made, I do not believe this is descriptive of the return from exile after the Babylonian captivity or the current regathering of the Jewish people and reestablishment of the nation of Israel in 1948. I believe this prophecy will be fulfilled when the LORD returns in glory to take David's throne in Jerusalem in establishment of His millennial kingdom.

Though the "children" of Israel have continued in their rebellion against God in general as a nation, God's covenant with Abraham will be honored. God will ensure that the people reestablish their relationship with Him through a new covenant that God will personally make a part of their being through His indwelling Spirit.

Ezekiel 36:24–28 “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. **And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.** And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”

**Jer. 16:16 Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.**

**Jer. 16:17 For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.**

**Jer. 16:18 And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.**

Back to Jeremiah’s present—the time for judgment is near. Fishers and hunters represent the enemy that will be coming to take the people of Judah as their prey. Point is made that the LORD is sending these fishers and hunters to make prey of the people of Judah. Verse 17 is a statement that should cause great fear to God’s people; He is going to make sure they can’t hide from the enemy. They can’t hide from God, and He is going to make sure that they experience the full judgment for their sin. Verse 18 brings up another aspect of how God views their sin. He views it as desecrating “His” land. Not only had they defiled the land through idolatrous sacrifices to their false gods, we learn from the Chronicler that they had neglected to allow the land to “rest” every seven years and every 50<sup>th</sup> year as the LORD had instructed them.

*Leviticus 25:4–5 “But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.”*

*Leviticus 25:8–11 “And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.”*

*2 Chronicles 36:20–21 “And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had*

*enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."*

**Jer. 16:19** O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* wherein *there is no profit*.

**Jer. 16:20** Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they *are no gods*?

**Jer. 16:21** Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is The LORD.

This section begins with what appears to be an expression of the heart of Jeremiah to YHWH as he considers the effect these events would have on the Gentile nations. They will understand that the false gods to which the Jewish people had turned were totally impotent in the light of the power of Almighty God. Man cannot create a "god" with true power and authority to act on behalf of the man creating it.

YHWH affirms Jeremiah's conclusion. He declares that the nations will come to know that He is "The LORD," the self-existent, eternal GOD. I believe this also will be fulfilled at the time the prophecy in verses 14-15 is fulfilled—when the LORD returns to take the throne of David in Jerusalem as He establishes His earthly kingdom.

The prophet Micah spoke of this future kingdom: *Micah 4:1-2 "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."*

And the prophet Zechariah: *Zechariah 8:22-23 "Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you."*