

## ISAIAH 37-44

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- a. The Bible reading plan for Week 32: Isa. 37-44*
- b. The following questions may be used for personal reflection or cell group discussion. You do not need to attempt all questions at cell meetings.*

1. Read Isaiah 37. What is the situation covered in this chapter? When the situation seemed hopeless, what did king Hezekiah do (vv. 1-4)? What message did God give Hezekiah through the prophet? No matter how bad your circumstances seem, don't despair. Turn to God. Turning to God means believing that God is there and that he is able to help us. How did the Assyrians taunt the king in vv. 13? What did Hezekiah do when he received God's message (vv. 14-18)? How did God answer the king's prayer (vv. 21-35)? How was this fulfilled (vv. 36-38)? When we pray, we must have faith that God has already prepared the best answer. Our task is to wait in faith and to wait in humility.
2. Read Isaiah chapter 38. When Isaiah went to the king, who was extremely ill, what did the prophet tell Hezekiah (v. 1)? What did Hezekiah do in vv. 2-3? How did the Lord address the king's prayer (vv. 4-8)? In response to fervent prayer, God may change the course of our lives too. Never hesitate to ask God for changes if you will honor him with those changes. How did the king praise God after he recovered (vv. 9-20)? The next time you have difficult struggles, pray for God's help to gain something beneficial from them.
3. Read Isaiah chapter 39. Merodach-Baladan, a Babylonian prince, was planning a revolt against Assyria and was forming an alliance. He probably hoped to convince Hezekiah to join

this alliance against Assyria. What did the king show the Babylonian envoys (vv. 1-2)? What was so wrong about showing these Babylonians around (vv. 4-7)? What message did the Lord have for Isaiah (vv. 5-7)? What will happen to the sons that issue from Hezekiah? Why did Hezekiah feel relieved (v. 8)? What can we learn from Hezekiah's mistake?

4. Read Isaiah chapter 40. Judah still had 100 years of trouble before Jerusalem would fall, then 70 years of exile. So God tells Isaiah to speak tenderly and comfort Jerusalem. What kind of picture about life does the desert give (v. 3)? What did Isaiah tell the people to prepare for (v. 3)? John used these words as he challenged the people to prepare for the coming Messiah (Matt. 3:3). If the people make the necessary preparations, what would they see (v. 5)? Why did Isaiah compare men with grass (vv. 6-8)? How does God's word compare with grass (v. 8)? What does that say about the prophecy in vv. 3-5?  
What picture of God is given in v. 11? How does God care for his people? Give some attributes of God found in vv. 12-31. How has this passage comforted you?
5. Read Isaiah chapter 41. Who is the judge in v. 1? Who does the judge summon to his court? Who controls history from beginning to end (vv. 2-4)? What do the nations trust in (vv. 5-7)? What does God promise his people in vv. 8-20? Can idols deliver (vv. 21-24)? For what reason will God send someone from the north (v. 25)? We may be worried about all sorts of things, big and small. We might be fearful about the future. The Jews who believed Isaiah's prophecy of an invasion would have been fearful about the future. God reassures us that he knows that we struggle with fear. So God's promise in vv. 10 tells us "So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
6. Read Isaiah chapter 42. How is vv. 1-2 used in Matt. 12:18-21? What do vv. 1-4 reveal about the character of the chosen

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servant of God? Describe what the chosen servant would do on earth in vv. 6-7. Who is the one who controls events (vv. 8-10)? Is the Lord only the God of the people from Israel (v. 10)? Will the Lord help his people against their enemies (v. 13)? What does the Lord plan to do in v. 16? Who are the people who will not benefit from the promises in v. 16? How could the Jews be God's servants and yet be so blind? Yet do we not fail in the same way. Sometimes partial blindness - seeing but not understanding, or knowing what is right but not doing it - can be worse than not seeing at all.

7. Chapter 43 begins a passage intended to encourage God's people. Why will God rescue the Jews (vv. 1-7)? What has Israel witnessed of the Lord (v. 12)? What will the Lord do for Israel in vv. 18-19? In the past, God made a way in the desert when he brought the Jews out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. Where will this new "way in the desert" (v. 19), a new exodus, bring the Jews? Although the Jews failed to obey God (vv. 22-24), what would God do for them (vv. 25-26)? Is there someone who has wronged you? Have you withheld forgiveness from this person?

## ISAIAH 45-55

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- a. *The Bible reading plan for Week 33: Isa. 45-55*
- b. *The following questions may be used for personal reflection or cell group discussion. You do not need to attempt all questions at cell meetings.*

1. Read Isaiah chapter 45. Who is God's anointed servant in v. 1? Why did God anoint him? For what special tasks (v. 1; 4)? Is Cyrus aware that he is merely God's agent to bring about God's purposes (v. 5)? Is there anything that is ever outside God's plan and purpose (vv. 7-8)? What is the prophet's pronouncement on those people who do not agree with God's actions (vv. 9-13)? What would Jews not agree? What kind of salvation does the Lord offer Israel (vv. 17)? From their enemies? Or something more? Did God hide his purpose in darkness (v. 19)? What must people do to be saved by God (v. 22)? What will happen to people who choose to be estranged from God (v. 24)? What the Lord propose to do for the Jews (v. 25)? What do you learn about God from this passage? What special tasks has God for you to do?
2. Read Isaiah chapter 47. Who does the prophet warn in v. 1? How did they treat their slaves (v. 6)? What kind of work will they have to do when God judges them (vv. 2-3)? Whom did God use Babylon to punish (v. 6)? From whom did the Babylonians seek help (vv. 12-15)? Did they receive help the Babylonians? Why couldn't they help (vv. 3; 11)? Alternatives to God are destined to fall. If you want help, find it in God, who has proven his power in creation and history.
3. Read Isaiah chapter 48. Why were the people of Judah confident (vv. 1-2)? Why was this false security (v. 1)? Did the people's behaviour match their confession? Do you feel secure

because you go to church? Heritage, buildings or nations cannot give us a relationship with God; we must truly depend on him personally, with all our hearts and minds. How is Israel's stubbornness described in v. 5? Why did God tell them what would happen long ago (v. 5)? Did these things come to pass (v. 6)? How does the Lord protect his name (vv. 9-11)? How would God free Israel (v. 14)? How will Cyrus defeat the Babylonians (v. 15)? What did disobedience cost Israel (vv. 18-19)? Will the Jews be able to leave Babylon (v. 20)? With whose help? Will wicked people be able to claim God's promises (v. 22)? Many people cry out for comfort and security, but they haven't taken the first steps to turn away from sin and open the channels to God. They have not repented and trusted him. If you want true peace, seek God first. Then he will give you his peace.

4. Read Isaiah chapter 49. Before the servant was born, God had chosen him (v. 1). How powerful would the words of the servant be (v. 2)? Would people listen to God's servant (v. 4)? What is the task that God has for the servant to do (v. 5)? What is the greater task that God has for the servant to do (v. 6)? What do you think it means for the servant to be a light for the Gentiles? Who claimed to be the Light of the World in John's Gospel? Will God lead the Jews back to their own land (v. 8)? Would the Lord forsake his people in Babylon (vv. 14-16)? Did they think that the Lord had forgotten them? What surprise has the Lord for the Jews (vv. 20-21)? How will foreign nations treat God's people in the future (vv. 22-23)? Who will redeem the Jews (vv. 24-26)? How will the Lord's actions affect all mankind (v. 26)?
5. Read Isaiah chapter 50. How did Israel sell itself (v. 1)? How did the Israelites respond to the God who can deliver them when he called out to them (vv. 2-3)? What did God do for them in the past (v. 2; Exod. 10:21-22)? List down aspects of the chosen Servant's mission in vv. 4-9. Is the Servant of the Lord willing to suffer (v. 6; Matt. 26:67; Lk. 22:63)? What does Isaiah encourage the people to do (v. 10)? What If we walk by our own

light and reject God's, we become self-sufficient, and the result of self-sufficiency is torment (v. 11). How can you walk in the light of God?

6. Read Isaiah chapter 52. Why did the prophet call the people to awake (v. 1)? Why did the Israelites suffer (vv. 4-5)? How will the people know God's name and what is God's good news (vv. 6-8)? In what manner will the people leave Babylon for the Promised Land (v. 12)? This will show their complete confidence in the Lord. Who will witness how the Lord brings home his people from Babylon (v. 10)? Why will the Lord's Servant be highly exalted (vv. 14-15; Phil. 2:9; Heb. 10:14; 1 Pet. 1:2)? How do you plan to share God's good news with others this week?
7. Read Isaiah chapter 55. Who does the Lord invite (v. 1)? What does the Lord offer (vv. 1-6)? How do we get it?

v. 1:

v. 2:

v. 6:

God's salvation is freely offered, but to nourish our souls we must eagerly receive it. Are you craving God's Word like a newborn babe? Are you meditating on his Word day and night? How are you feeding your soul? How did Israel fail to fulfill its part of the covenant (v. 3)?

Is God far away from his people (v. 6)? How can people find him (vv. 6-7)? The people of Israel were foolish to act as if they knew what God was thinking and planning. His knowledge and wisdom are far greater than man's. We are foolish to try to fit God into our mold – to make his plans and purposes conform to ours. Instead, we must try to fit into his plans. Are you seeking God's plan for your life? Where is God's general will found? How can you go about discovering God's plan for your life?

## ISAIAH 56-66

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- a. The Bible reading for Week 34: Isa. 56-66
  - b. The following questions may be used for personal reflection or cell group discussion. You do not need to attempt all questions at cell meetings.
1. Read Isaiah chapter 56. What were God's people called to do in light of his imminent salvation (v. 1)? Why did God command the Jews to keep the Sabbath (v. 2; Exod. 20:8-11)? God wants us to serve him every day, but he wants us to make one day special when we rest and focus our thoughts on him. What is your practice? Are God's blessings of salvation limited to the Jews (v. 3)? What has God called foreigners and eunuchs to do (vv. 4-8)? Do you have to commit yourself to God and consciously allow him in your life? What kind of relationship does God want with you (v. 6)? Jesus quoted from v. 7 when he threw the money changers out of the temple (Mk. 11:17)? How much time you spend daily on prayer? Is there room for improvement? Who are Israel's watchmen and why did Isaiah censure them (vv. 9-12)? Leadership's special privileges can cause leaders either to sacrifice for the good of the people or to sacrifice their people for their own greed. If you are in a leadership position, use it for the good of your people. Have you committed yourself to pray for your leaders? How often do you do this?
  2. Read Isaiah chapter 59. Why does sin offend God and separates us from him (vv. 1-14)? God cannot ignore, excuse, or tolerate sin as though it didn't matter. Sin cuts people off from him, forming a wall to isolate people from the people he loves. What were the sins in vv. 1-14 that made God angry and look the other way? Are some of the sins committed today? Have

- you confessed your sin to God, allowing him to remove it? Why was Israel unable to take action against its sins (v. 15)? Sin fills the vacuum left when God's truth no longer fills our lives. Only God can defeat sin. Why will God save Israel from enemy armies (v. 16)? Although God would punish his people for their sins, what also would he do for them (vv. 17; 20)? What happens when the Holy Spirit dwells within his people (v. 21)? How does one get filled with the Spirit (Gal. 5:24-25)?
3. Read Isaiah chapter 60. What sense do you get from vv. 1-3 about the new Jerusalem? Who gives light to the people of Israel (vv. 2-3)? Who will be attracted by the light (v. 3)? What do you think this 'light' refers to? (Think: The Great Commission.) Who will be drawn to Jerusalem (vv. 4-9)? What is their purpose of coming to Jerusalem according (vv. 6b; 9c)? What will foreigners do for Jerusalem in vv. 10-13? How will the Lord change the attitudes of Israel's enemies (vv. 14-16)? What will the Lord establish for his people (vv. 17-18)? What kind of future has the Lord planned for his people (vv. 19-22; Rev. 21:23-24; Rev. 22:5)? As we read these promises, we long for their fulfillment. But we must wait for God's timing. He is in control of history, and he weaves together all our lives into his plan. What must you do to prepare for eternity?
  4. Read Isaiah chapter 61. Jesus quoted the words in vv. 1-2 in Lk. 4:18-19. As he read to the people in the synagogue, he stopped in the middle of 61:2 after the words, "to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor." Rolling up the scroll, what did he say in Lk. 4:21? When will the next verse in Isa. 61:2, "and the day of vengeance of our God come true? We are now under God's grace; his wrath is yet to come. Under the old covenant, who were the priests of Israel? What did they do for the Israelites? Under the new covenant, who are the priests of the Lord? What do priests do under the new covenant? Can we confess our sins directly to the Lord?

5. Read Isaiah chapter 65. Israel considered itself to be the only people of God. In v. 1, who else would become a part of God's people? Why are the Israelites described as an obstinate people (vv. 3-5)? Look up the following verses and describe what is forbidden.

Exod. 20:1-6:

Lev. 19:31:

Lev. 11:

Who will pay back the people for their sins? Judgment is not our job but his because he alone is just? Who else knows what is a completely fair reward or punishment? Whom will God preserve in vv. 8-9? No matter how bad the world is, there will always be a few who remain loyal to him (Matt. 13:36-43). In vv. 17-25, what pictorial description is given by the prophet? What must you do to prepare for eternity?

6. Read Isaiah chapter 66. Verses 2 and 3 contrasts two ways of living? Why were the sacrifices offered by the people in v. 3 not accepted by God? Don't let your freedom and right to choose lead you away from God's pathway to eternal life. Will God complete his work of restoration of his people (vv. 7-10)? What image is used to show that God will accomplish what he has promised? What else will the Lord do in the future (vv. 15-17)? This is a vivid picture of the great judgment that will occur at Christ's coming (2 Thess. 1:7-9). Where will the Lord's people go out as missionaries in v. 19? As the prophet brings his book to a close with great drama, what is his message to the faithful and to the faithless (vv. 22-24)? The contrast is so striking that it would seem that everyone would want to be God's follower. But we are often just as rebellious, foolish, and reluctant to change as the Israelites. We are just as negligent in feeding the hungry, working for justice, and obeying God's Word. Make sure that you are among those who will be richly blessed when Christ returns.

## JEREMIAH 1-8

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- a. *The Bible reading plan for Week 35: Jer. 1-8*
- b. *The following questions may be used for personal reflection or cell group discussion. You do not need to attempt all questions at cell meetings.*

1. Read Jeremiah chapter 1. How is Jeremiah identified at the beginning of the book bearing his name in verse 1? How long did Jeremiah serve as a prophet to Judah (vv. 2-3)?

How did God announce to Jeremiah that he was chosen as a prophet (v. 5)? What was Jeremiah's assessment of his own abilities in relation to God's call (v. 6)?

How did God respond to Jeremiah's reservations, according to verse 7?

What promise did God make to Jeremiah from the outset of his ministry (v. 8)? What action did God transform Jeremiah into his mouthpiece (v. 9)?

How did God describe Jeremiah's mission as a prophet in verse 10? What symbol did God show Jeremiah that He was watching both Jeremiah and the people of Judah (vv. 11-12)? How did the boiling pot tilting away from the north symbolize in vv. 13-15? What sins had caused God to execute judgment on Judah by means of the peoples from the north (v. 16)?

What consequences did God promise if Jeremiah did not say what He commanded in v. 17? What did God promise his prophet, although He predicted that the people would oppose Jeremiah in v. 19?

The problems we face may not seem as ominous as Jeremiah's, but they are critical to us and may overwhelm us. God's promise to Jeremiah and to us is that nothing will defeat us completely; he will help us through the most agonizing problems. Face each day with the assurance that God will be with you and see you through. The people of Judah sinned greatly by continuing to burn incense to and worship other gods. God had commanded them specifically against this (Exod 20:3-6) because idolatry places trust in created things rather than the Creator. Although these people belonged to God, they chose to follow false gods. Many "gods" entice us to turn away from God. Material possessions, dreams for the future, approval of others, and vocational goals compete for our total commitment. Striving after these at the expense of our commitment to God puts our heart where Judah's was – and God severely punished Judah. What commitments of yours compete with your devotion to God?

2. Read Jeremiah chapter 2. What did God remind Judah about her history with God was through Jeremiah in vv. 1-3?

What acts had God performed on behalf of His people only to be answered by disobedience in vv. 6-7? Jeremiah knew Israel's history well. The prophet's recited history to the people for several reasons: (1) to remind them of God's faithfulness; (2) to make sure the people wouldn't forget; (3) to emphasize God's love for them; (4) to remind the people that there was a time when they were close to them. We should learn from history so we can build on the successes and avoid repeating the failures of others. How well do you know the history of the church? What lessons can you learn from church history? What lessons can you learn from the experiences of the early church as recorded in the Book of Acts?

What two sins did God say His people had committed according to v. 13? How was Israel being humiliated because of her disobedience in these verses (vv. 14-16)?

What were the terrible things happening to God's people according to v. 17?

What attitude did the people of Judah fail to have toward the Lord in v. 19? What two pictures from the practice of farming did Jeremiah use to illustrate Judah's rebellion in these verses (vv. 20-21)? What animal behavior did God compare the behavior of Judah to in vv. 23-24? What did Jeremiah compare the disgrace of Israel to in v. 26?

How did Israel respond to God's correction in vv. 29-30?

What did God compare Israel's abandonment of God to in vv. 31-32? Forgetting can be dangerous, whether it is intentional or an oversight. Israel forgot God by focusing its affections on the allurements of the world. The more we focus on the pleasures of the world, the easier it becomes to forget God's care, his love, his dependability, his guidance, and most of all, God himself. What pleases you most? Have you been forgetting God lately?

What sin did God find Judah guilty of, besides spiritual prostitution in vv. 33-34?

3. Read Jeremiah chapter 3. What behavior on the part of Israel made it unthinkable that God would return to her (vv. 1-3)? How did Judah's talk contrast with her behavior according to vv. 4-5? In spite of their great sin, the people of Israel continued to talk like they were God's children. The only way they could do this was to minimize their sin. When we know we have done something wrong, we want to downplay the error and relieve some of the guilt we feel. As we minimize our sinfulness, we naturally shy away from making changes, and so we keep on sinning. But if we view every wrong attitude and action as a serious offense against God, we will begin to understand what living for God is all about. Is there any sin in your life that you have written off as too small to worry about? God says we must confess and turn away from every sin.

What did God tell Jeremiah that Israel had done, with Judah looking on in vv. 6-7?

What was the nature of Judah's return to God (v. 10)? What did God promise to Israel if they would acknowledge their guilt before Him in vv. 12-13? What did God promise to choose and bring to Jerusalem according to v. 14? What kind of leaders did God intend to give to His faithful remnant in v. 15? God promised to give His people leaders ("shepherds" after His own heart) who would follow Him, filled with knowledge (wisdom) and understanding. God saw Israel's lack of direction, so he promised to provide the right kind of leadership. We look to and trust our leaders for guidance and direction. But if they do not follow God, they will lead us astray. Pray for God-honoring leaders in our nations, communities, and churches – those who will be good examples and bring us God's wisdom.

What striking differences did God predict between the day of His salvation and Jeremiah's day in vv. 17-18?

What kind of original relationship did God originally intend to have with Israel and Judah in v. 19?

What did God compare Israel's unfaithfulness to in v. 20?

What "cry" did Jeremiah foresee from the people of Israel in v. 21? What do the people come to confess and acknowledge about themselves in vv. 22-25? Jeremiah predicted a day when the nation would be reunited, true worship would be reinstated (see Rom 12:1), and sin would be seen for what it is. Our world glorifies the thrill that comes from wealth, competition, and sensual pleasure, and it ignores the sin that is so often associated with these thrills. It is sad that so few see sin as it really is – a deception. Most people can't see this until they are destroyed by the sin they pursue. The advantage of believing God's Word is that we don't have to learn by hard experience the destructive results of sin. What priority do you give the

Word of God in your life? Find five verses in the Bible about the importance of studying God's Word and/or meditating on it, and the correct attitude towards Scripture. Many people find Bible study boring and Scripture memory a chore. What about you?

4. Read Jeremiah chapter 4. What did God require of Israel in order to bless them and, through them, all the nations in vv. 1-2?

What did Jeremiah say the people could do to avert God's wrath in vv. 3-4? Jeremiah told the people to break up the hardness of their hearts as a plow breaks up unplowed ground. Good kings like Josiah had tried to turn the people back to God, but the people had continued to worship the idols in secret. Their hearts had become hardened to God's will. Jeremiah said that the people had to remove the sin that hardened hearts before the good seed of God's commands could take root. Likewise we must remove our hard-hardening sin if we expect God's word to take root and grow in our lives.

What wild animal did Jeremiah compare the attack by the people from the north in v. 7? What was the appropriate response of Judah to God's anger, according to v. 8?

What deception was current in Jerusalem because people took God's goodness for granted and believed the false prophets in v. 10?

What would the people learn about the purpose of God's judgment when it was already descending on them in vv. 11-12? What could Jerusalem do to be saved, even as the invading army was announced in these verses (vv. 13-17)?

What brought the terrible judgment on Judah (v. 18)? How did Jeremiah feel about knowing the fate of his people (vv. 19-21)?

How did God evaluate the moral fiber of His own people in vv. 22? Judah was skilled in doing evil and did know how to do

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good. Right living is more than simply avoiding sin. It requires decision and discipline. We must develop skills in right living because our behavior attracts attention to our God. We should pursue excellence in Christian living with as much as we pursue excellence at work. What are some areas of your life that you need to work on?

How complete was the destruction foreseen by Jeremiah in vv. 23-26?

What element of hope did God give Jeremiah, though God promised a fearsome judgment, in v. 27? How do we know that God was not judging on a whim (v. 28)?

Though Judah adorned herself to win the favor of powerful nations, how did God say she would end up in vv. 30-31

5. Read Jeremiah chapter 5. What condition did God say He would forgive the city of Jerusalem on (v. 1)? What words on the part of the Israelites did God discern as a lie in v. 2?

How did Jeremiah report that the people responded to the Lord's rebuke in v. 3? How did Jeremiah try to give the leaders the benefit of the doubt in vv. 4-5? Nothing but truth is acceptable to God. When we pray, sing, speak, or serve, nothing closes the door of God's acceptance more than hypocrisy, lying, or pretense. God sees through us and refuses to listen. To be close to God, we need to be honest with him.

Why did Jeremiah predict vicious attacks by wild animals (v. 6)?

What sins provoked God to punish Israel (vv. 7-9)? God held these people responsible for the sins of their children because the children had followed their parent's example. The sin of leading others astray by our example is one for which God hold us accountable.

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What limitation did God place on the destruction of Israel and Judah in vv. 10-11?

How did the people deceive themselves about God and His prophets (vv. 12-13)?

What did God say Jeremiah's words would be to the people of Israel and Judah (v. 14)?

How did God specify the manner in which He would punish Israel in vv. 15-17? What war did Israel's punishment fit the offense (vv. 18-19)?

What was wrong with the people's perspectives in vv. 20-22?

Why did the harvests fail in Judah according to vv. 23-25?

What are the characteristics of the wicked people condemned by Jeremiah in vv. 26-29? What was the shocking condition of the people of Israel during Jeremiah's time in vv. 30-31? People and nations who please God treat the fatherless (orphans) justly and care for the poor. Wicked men in Israel treated the defenseless unjustly, which displeased God greatly. Some defenseless people – orphans, the poor, the homeless, and the lonely – are within your reach. What action can you take to help at least one of them?

6. Read Jeremiah chapter 6. What did the Lord warn Jeremiah's own tribe about according to v. 1? Who are the shepherds in vv. 3-5?

Who are the remnant in v. 9? Why did the people become angry and close their ears (v. 10)? What message did the Lord have for His people (vv. 11-15)?

What was Israel's response to Jeremiah's warnings? Israel kept listening to predictions of peace because they did not like Jeremiah's condemnation of their sin. But denying the truth

never changes it; what God says always happens. Sin is never removed by denying its existence. We must confess to God that we have sinned and ask Him to forgive us.

What are the "ancient paths" in v. 16? The right path for living is ancient and has been marked out by God. But the people refused to take God's path, going their own way instead. We face the same decision today, going God's old but true way, or following a new path of our own choosing. Don't be misled. The only way to find peace and "rest for your souls" is to walk on God's walk.

Whom did the Lord appoint over His people? How did Israel respond to the Lord's messengers? What are the consequences of Israel's choice (vv. 17-19)?

What kind of religion were the Israelites practicing (v. 20)? How does the Lord plan to discipline His people (vv. 21-30)? Metal is purified by fire. As it is heated, impurities are burned away and only the pure metal remains (vv. 29-30). As God tested the people of Judah, however, he could find no purity in their lives. They continued in their sinful ways. Do you see impurities in your life that should be burned away? Confess these to God and allow Him to purify you as He sees fit. Take time right now to reflect on the areas of your life that He has already refined; then thank Him for what He is doing.

7. Read Jeremiah chapter 7. What specific place did God tell Jeremiah to deliver his prophecy (vv. 1-2)? What did the people need to do in order to continue to live in their land in peace in vv. 2-3?

What had the people been taking for granted as a sign of their permanent standing with God in v. 4? What specific changes was God looking for in the behavior of the people of Israel in vv. 5-7)? When people fall down or realize that they are headed in the wrong direction, it only makes sense for them to get up or change directions. But as God watched the nation, He saw

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people living sinful lives by choice, deceiving themselves that there would be no consequences. They had lost perspective concerning God's will for their lives and were trying to minimize their sin. Are there some indicators that you have fallen down or are heading in the wrong direction? What are you doing to get back on the right path?

How was Israel demonstrating double-mindedness in relation to God according to vv. 9-10? What did God say about the attitude the people had developed toward the temple according to v. 11?

How did the former worship place at Shiloh provide an example for Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day according to vv. 12-15?

Why did God tell Jeremiah not even to pray for the people in vv. 16-18)?

Who suffered the greatest harm from the evil deeds of Israel (v. 19)?

How long had God been trying to communicate that He was more interested in the attitude of the heart than in empty actions in vv. 21-26)?

What symbolic action was Jeremiah to demonstrate God's rejection of the people by (vv. 28-29)?

What was going on in Topheth that was detestable to God (vv. 30-31)?

What event did Jeremiah predict for Topheth in the future (vv. 32-34)?

What lessons do you learn about God and true religion from Jeremiah chap. 8? How can you apply these lessons in life?

8. Read Jeremiah chapter 8. What horrible things did Jeremiah say would happen under the “sun and the moon and all the stars of heaven” which the people had made into gods according to vv. 1-2?

What curse would all the survivors of the invasion have in common in v. 3 of this book? What ways did Israel's stubbornness seem “unnatural” to God in, according to vv. 4-7? When the people fall down or realize that they are headed in the wrong direction, it only makes sense for them to get up or change directions. But as God watched the nation, He saw people living sinful choices, deceiving themselves that there would be no consequences. They had lost perspective concerning God's will for their lives and were trying to minimize their sin. Are there some indicators that you have fallen down or are heading the wrong direction? What are you doing to get back on the right path?

Who was guilty of greed, deceit, and minimizing Israel's predicament (vv. 10-11)?

What attitude did God expect but fail to find in the people of Israel (v. 12)?

What did God determine to take away from Israel (v. 13)?

What was the cry of the people in the face of God's judgment (vv. 14-16)?

What did God compare His instruments of judgment to in v. 17?

What was the cry of Jeremiah's heart as he contemplated the judgments he was announcing in vv. 18-21? What was God's answer to Jeremiah's pleading in v. 19? What was Jeremiah's fervent wish for Israel in v. 22? These words in vv. 20-22 vividly portray Jeremiah's emotion as he watched his people reject God. He responded with anguish to a world dying in sin. We watch that same world still dying in sin, still rejecting God. But

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**how often is our heart broken for our lost friends and neighbors, our lost world? Only when we have Jeremiah's kind of passionate concern will we be moved to help. We must begin by asking God to break our hearts for the world He loves.**