***Jeremiah 8:1-11 “At that time,” says the Lord, “they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves. 2They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and which they have worshiped. They shall not be gathered nor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth. 3Then death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of those who remain of this evil family, who remain in all the places where I have driven them,” says the Lord of hosts. 4“Moreover you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Will they fall and not rise? Will one turn away and not return? 5Why has this people slidden back,
Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit, They refuse to return. 6I listened and heard, But they do not speak aright. No man repented of his wickedness, Saying, ‘What have I done?’ Everyone turned to his own course, As the horse rushes into the battle. 7“Even the stork in the heavens Knows her appointed times; And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow Observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the Lord. 8“How can you say, ‘We are wise, And the law of the Lord is with us’? Look, the false pen of the scribe certainly works falsehood. 9The wise men are ashamed, They are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the Lord; So what wisdom do they have?
10Therefore I will give their wives to others, And their fields to those who will inherit them;
Because from the least even to the greatest Everyone is given to covetousness; From the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely. 11For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is no peace.***

We’re back with Jeremiah tonight, as the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar are coming into sight. The people continue to deny that anything like an invasion can happen to them. They’re Israel after all. God will protect them regardless of the rebellion, idolatry, and corruption that they’re engaged in. He’ll do it because of His name, no matter how we act. Like a spoiled rich child who thinks Daddy will always pay his way out of trouble. God says no. Our worship, our reverence, and our obedience is critical. He always loves us… He loves us enough to allow us the pain of learning the hard way. He loves Israel and Judah that much as well.

Verses 1-2 *“At that time,” says the Lord, “they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of its princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves. 2They shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and which they have served and after which they have walked, which they have sought and which they have worshiped. They shall not be gathered nor buried; they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth.*The Babylonians will have no regard for the living or the dead. They’ll kill without hesitation, without regard to the status of the living. They’ll break open tombs and desecrate the dead, hoping to find treasure in the graves, casting the bones aside. The historian Josephus tells us that Solomon buried great treasure with King David. In one case, John Hyrcanus, High Priest in the 1 BC, opened David’s tomb and took out 3000 talents of gold. Herod the Great also opened the tomb and took out gold. It wasn’t uncommon for conquering armies to raid tombs. The bones will be spread before the very idols that the people of Judah are worshipping. The idols for the sun and the moon. These false idols will offer no help during this time of misery. The bones will be scattered and never replaced in the grave, strewn about like trash.

Verse 3 *Then death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of those who remain of this evil family, who remain in all the places where I have driven them,” says the Lord of hosts.* The despair will be so great that people will choose death over life. There will be misery in the land and calamities all around. Nothing will offer comfort for the suffering. Those taken into captivity, like those that remain, will find no solace.

Verses 4-5 *“Moreover you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Will they fall and not rise? Will one turn away and not return? 5Why has this people slidden back, Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit, They refuse to return.* God now directs Jeremiah to lay out the case against Judah, the folly and senselessness of their wickedness and refusal to repent. God now, through Jeremiah asks a series of questions – If a man falls, will he not get back up? The answer: of course he’ll try. If someone is going the wrong way and is told of hs error, will he not turn back and correct the error? The answer: of course. Why then do the backslidden people of Judah, having sinned and been informed of their sin, continue to sin and backslide? The people instead are deceived and hold fast to that deceit. They refuse to return, even though this will lead to ruin.

Verse 6 -*I listened and heard, But they do not speak aright. No man repented of his wickedness, Saying, ‘What have I done?’ Everyone turned to his own course, As the horse rushes into the battle.* God listens and hears, looks intently for signs of repentance and return, wanting to show mercy to the people. But the do not speak aright. Nothing God hears or sees suggests sorrow. No one cries out What have I done? They have all continued in their sin and wickedness, while believing that God doesn’t see. People are the same today, worshipping God with their words, but being far from Him in their hearts. Our daily conduct tells our story loud and clear.

Verse 7 *“Even the stork in the heavens Knows her appointed times; And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow Observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the Lord.* God now points to nature. The stork, the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow all know the appointed time of the changing seasons, when to come and when to go, from cold to warm and back again. But my people do not know the judgement of the Lord. They miss God’s calling, His commandments. They miss the duty they have to Him. They fail to see His mercies and grace. They miss His prophets and miss the rebuke He sends. They miss the signs, just as Jesus spoke in Matthew 16:2-3 *He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’; 3 and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.* The people have missed that God is dealing with them and their nation. I’d say we are the same today. The world is missing God’s wake up call.

Verse 8 *“How can you say, ‘We are wise, And the law of the Lord is with us’? Look, the false pen of the scribe certainly works falsehood.*How can you call yourself wise, when the birds have better sense of the times than you do? We used to call people a silly goose. God sees that the people can’t even discern the times like a bird. They boast of having the Law of the Lord, but they make no good use of it. They ignore the wisdom and direction found there. People today have the Bible, but fail to live by it. Wisdom isn’t there to be boasted of, but lived out. The scribes pen works in vain, as they live falsely, while they explain to others how to live.

Verse 9 *The wise men are ashamed, They are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the Lord; So what wisdom do they have?* The wise men have reason to be ashamed. They make no use of wisdom and knowledge. The religion is nothing but ritual, a practice that they do, but don’t adhere to the heart of what it means. They are dismayed, because they have not followed their own advice. The snares will take them. Ruin is on the way. The wise and the simple alike will be conquered. Why? Because they have rejected the word of the Lord. When we know the word of God and we fail to do it, it is worse than if we had no wisdom in us at all.

Verse 10-11 *Therefore I will give their wives to others, And their fields to those who will inherit them; Because from the least even to the greatest Everyone is given to covetousness; From the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely. 11For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is no peace.* We saw this in Jeremiah 6:12 – wives will be given to another. Fields will be given away. The crops will be taken, the livestock taken by the Babylonians. Everyone is given to greed and covetousness. Old and young, rich and poor, high status and low, everyone is greedy and looking out for self. Does that sound familiar at all today? Sure it does. What’s in it for me? Money is the root of all evil and a bitter root many have found it to be. Hearts are hardened and families destroyed over something that won’t mean anything in eternity. From prophet to priest, all deal falsely and greedily. This has the idea of hypocrisy and appearing one way acting another. Like in Jeremiah 6, they have healed only with a thin skin over a deep wound, speaking words that tickle ears, saying Peace, Peace, while the armies mass outside. The tickle ears rather than call for repentance. This is a curse and a cruelty to the people, sweet in the short term, but cruel in the long term.

And so it is today. Many say what people want to hear, but deceive people’s eternal souls. God is calling for repentance and for us to return to His wisdom, serving and being obedient, loving one another and His Son. We have many that teach falsely to line their own pockets. Jeremiah mourned the people in his day, much as we mourn for people today. May we continue to tell the Truth to all that will hear, so some may be saved before it is everlasting too late.