

## **Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**

### **Jeremiah Chapters 9-10**

**11/5/14**

#### **Bible Study Notes - Chapter 9**

*1 Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for the slain of my people. 2 Oh, that I had in the desert a lodging place for travelers, so that I might leave my people and go away from them; for they are all adulterers, a crowd of unfaithful people. 3 "They make ready their tongue like a bow, to shoot lies; it is not by truth that they triumph in the land. They go from one sin to another; they do not acknowledge me," declares the LORD. 4 "Beware of your friends; do not trust your brothers. For every brother is a deceiver, and every friend a slanderer. 5 Friend deceives friend, and no one speaks the truth. They have taught their tongues to lie; they weary themselves with sinning. 6 You live in the midst of deception; in their deceit they refuse to acknowledge me," declares the LORD. 7 Therefore this is what the LORD Almighty says: "See, I will refine and test them, for what else can I do because of the sin of my people? 8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks with deceit. With his mouth each speaks cordially to his neighbor, but in his heart he sets a trap for him. 9 Should I not punish them for this?" declares the LORD. "Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this?" 10 I will weep and wail for the mountains and take up a lament concerning the desert pastures. They are desolate and untraveled, and the lowing of cattle is not heard. The birds of the air have fled and the animals are gone. 11 "I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals; and I will lay waste the towns of Judah so no one can live there." 12 What man is wise enough to understand this? Who has been instructed by the LORD and can explain it? Why has the land been ruined and laid waste like a desert that no one can cross? 13 The LORD said, "It is because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them; they have not obeyed me or followed my law. 14 Instead, they have followed the stubbornness of their hearts; they have followed the Baals, as their fathers taught them." 15 Therefore, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "See, I will make this people eat bitter food and drink poisoned water. 16 I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will pursue them with the sword until I have destroyed them." 17 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Consider now! Call for the wailing women to come; send for the most skillful of them. 18 Let them come quickly and wail over us till our eyes overflow with tears and water streams from our eyelids. 19 The sound of wailing is heard from Zion: 'How ruined we are! How great is our shame! We must leave our land because our houses are in ruins.' "20 Now, O women, hear the word of the LORD; open your ears to the words of his mouth. Teach your daughters how to wail; teach one another a lament. 21 Death has climbed in through our windows and has entered our fortresses; it has cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the public squares. 22 Say, "This is what the LORD declares: " 'The dead bodies of men will lie like refuse on the open field, like cut grain behind the reaper, with no one to gather them.'*

9:1-6 Jeremiah felt conflicting emotions concerning his people. Lying, deceit, treachery, adultery, and idolatry had become common sins. He was angered by their sin, but he had compassion, too. He was set apart from them by his mission for God, but he was also one of them. Jesus had similar feelings when he stood before Jerusalem, the city that would reject him (Matthew 23:37).

*" 23 This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.25 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh-- 26 Egypt, Judah,*

*Edom, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."*

**9:23-24** People tend to admire three things about others: wisdom, power, and riches. But God puts a higher priority on knowing him personally and living a life that reflects his justice, righteousness, and love. What do you want people to admire most about you? **9:25-26** Circumcision went back to the time of Abraham. For the people of Israel, it was a symbol of their covenant relationship to God (Genesis 17:9-14). Circumcision was also practiced by pagan nations, but not as the sign of a covenant with God. By Jeremiah's time, the Israelites had forgotten the spiritual significance of circumcision even though they continued to do the physical ritual.

**9:25-26** Circumcision went back to the time of Abraham. For the people of Israel, it was a symbol of their covenant relationship to God (Genesis 17:9-14). Circumcision was also practiced by pagan nations, but not as the sign of a covenant with God. By Jeremiah's time, the Israelites had forgotten the spiritual significance of circumcision even though they continued to do the physical ritual.

## ***Bible Study Notes - Chapter 10***

### ***God and Idols - Verses 1-15***

*1 Hear what the LORD says to you, O house of Israel. 2 This is what the LORD says: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them. 3 For the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. 4 They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter. 5 Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good." 6 No one is like you, O LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. 7 Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is no one like you. 8 They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols. 9 Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple-- all made by skilled workers. 10 But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath. 11 "Tell them this: 'These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.' "* *12 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. 13 When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses. 14 Everyone is senseless and without knowledge; every goldsmith is shamed by his idols. His images are a fraud; they have no breath in them. 15 They are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. 16 He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these, for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance-- the LORD Almighty is his name.*

**10:2-3** Most people would like to know the future. Decisions would be easier, failures would be avoided, and successes would be assured. The people of Judah wanted to know the future, too, and they tried to discern it through reading "the signs in the sky." Jeremiah's response applies today: God made the earth and the heavens, including stars that people consult and worship (10:12). No one will discover the future in made-up charts of God's stars. But God, who promises to guide you, knows your future and will be with you all the way. He may not reveal your future to you, but he will walk with you as the future unfolds. Don't trust the stars; trust the One who made the stars.

**10:8** Those who put their trust in a chunk of wood, even though it is carved well and looks beautiful, are foolish. The simplest person who worships God is wiser than the wisest person who worships a worthless substitute, because this simple person has discerned who God really is. In what or whom do you place your trust?

**10:9** Tarshish was located at the westward limit of the ancient world, perhaps in what is now Spain (see Jonah 1:3). It was a source of silver, tin, lead, and iron for Tyre (Ezekiel 27:12). The location of Uphaz is unknown. It may be a metallurgical term for "refined gold." No matter how well made or how beautiful idols are, they can never have the power and life of the true and living God.

#### ***Coming Destruction - Verses 17-22***

**17** Gather up your belongings to leave the land, you who live under siege. **18** For this is what the LORD says: "At this time I will hurl out those who live in this land; I will bring distress on them so that they may be captured." **19** Woe to me because of my injury! My wound is incurable! Yet I said to myself, "This is my sickness, and I must endure it." **20** My tent is destroyed; all its ropes are snapped. My sons are gone from me and are no more; no one is left now to pitch my tent or to set up my shelter. **21** The shepherds are senseless and do not inquire of the LORD; so they do not prosper and all their flock is scattered. **22** Listen! The report is coming-- a great commotion from the land of the north! It will make the towns of Judah desolate, a haunt of jackals.

**10:19-21** In this section, Jeremiah uses the picture of nomads wandering in the desert trying to pitch their tents. The shepherds of the nation are the evil leaders responsible for the distress. The flocks are the people of Judah. Instead of guiding the people to God, the leaders were leading them astray.

#### ***Jeremiah's Prayer - Verses 23-25***

**23** I know, O LORD, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps. **24** Correct me, LORD, but only with justice-- not in your anger, lest you reduce me to nothing. **25** Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the peoples who do not call on your name. For they have devoured Jacob; they have devoured him completely and destroyed his homeland.

**10:23-24** God's ability to direct our lives is far superior to our ability. Sometimes we are afraid of God's power and God's plans because we know his power would easily crush us if he used it against us. Don't be afraid to let God correct your plans. He will give you wisdom if you are willing.