

WORDS OF
JOY

Jeremiah 15:16



FIRST MELISSA

People have always been the same.

God has always been the same.

**We are confused by the present and
we cannot predict the future.**

Maybe we can learn from the past.

Jeremiah
chapters 14-15

Written over 2,600 years ago...

That which came as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah in regard to the **drought**: “**Judah mourns** and her gates languish; they sit on the ground in **mourning**, and the cry of Jerusalem has ascended.” Jeremiah 14:1-2

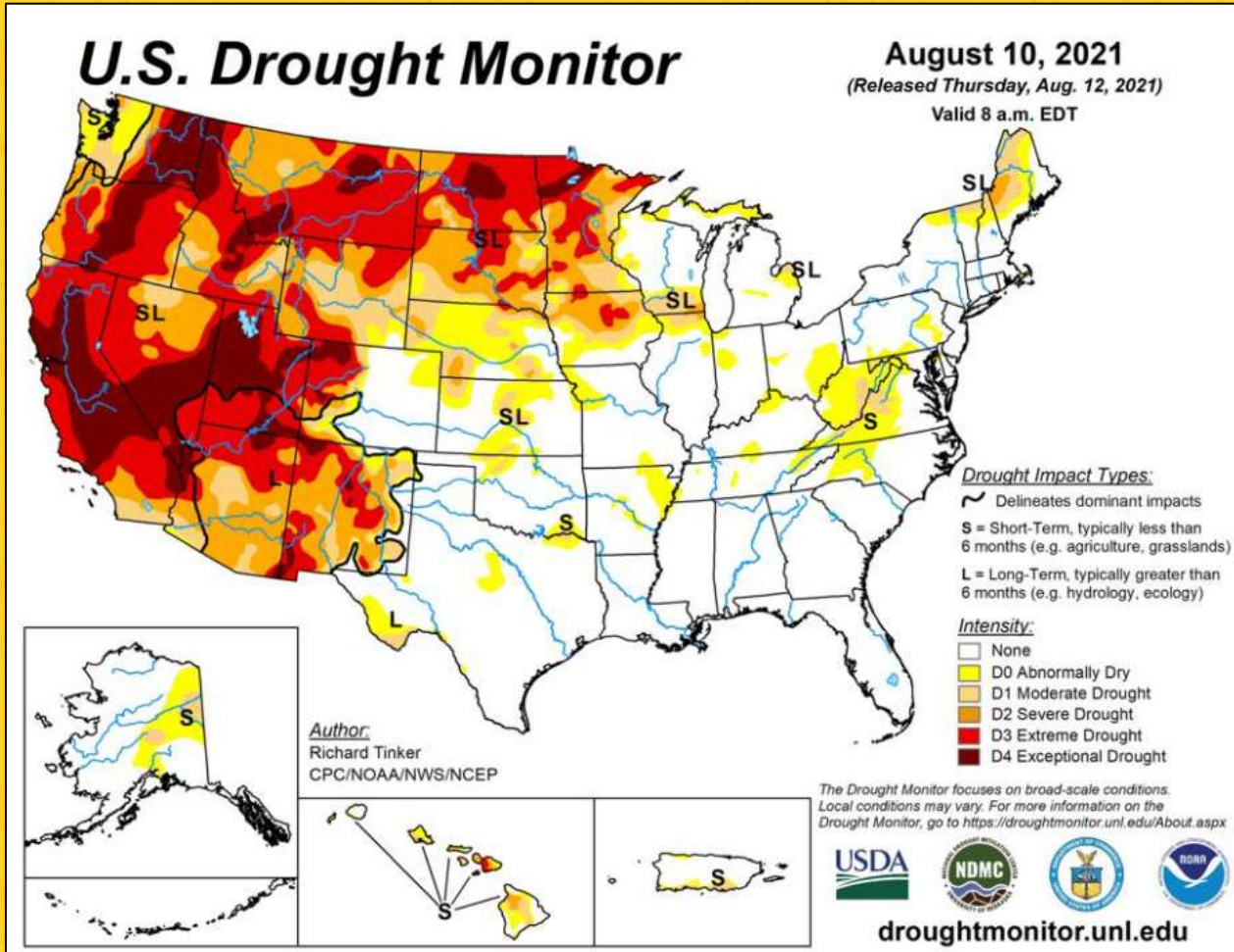
What should the people of God do when a society is mourning, when a nation is mourning, when a capital city is mourning... when a culture is crying?

WORDS OF
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Jeremiah 15:16

The Lord said, “Their nobles have sent their servants for water; **they have come to the cisterns and found no water.** They have returned with their vessels empty; they have been put to shame and humiliated, and they cover their heads.” Jeremiah 14:3

“they have come to the cisterns and found no water”
Jeremiah 14:3

After coming out of the second wettest year ever recorded, much of the Northern Plains and western region of the country have been **experiencing severe drought in what may be the driest year ever recorded**. Drought has many impacts on the ecosystem, water systems and related management, the overall economy, fire management, and maybe most notably, agriculture.



Severe --> Extreme --> Exceptional

Forbes

How This Year's Drought, Extreme Heat Are Impacting America's Crops

 Jim Foerster Contributor © August 16, 2021
Science

“they have come
to the cisterns and
found no water”
Jeremiah 14:3

Florida’s Orlando residents have
been urged to curb their water
consumption due to a recent
surge in COVID hospitalizations.

According to WESH, city mayor

Buddy Dyer made the request during a press conference Friday, telling the public to stop watering their lawns and washing their cars for at least one week. Dyer explained that the Orlando Utilities Commission treats the city’s water with liquid oxygen, **but the supply is running short**, as the substance is also being used to treat COVID patients. - Yahoo.com

Orlando Residents Urged to Immediately Limit Water Consumption Due to COVID Surge

Joshua Espinoza

August 20, 2021



WORDS OF
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Jeremiah 15:16

The Lord said, “Because the ground is cracked, for there has been no rain on the land; the farmers have been put to shame, they have covered their heads. For even the doe in the field has given birth only to abandon her young, because there is no grass. The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights; they pant for air like jackals, their eyes fail for there is no vegetation.”

Jeremiah 14:4-6

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

“Although our iniquities testify against us, **O Lord, act for Your name’s sake!** Truly our apostasies have been many, **we have sinned against You.** O Hope of Israel, its Savior [יָשָׁע *yasha*] in time of distress, **why are You like a stranger in the land** or like a traveler who has pitched his tent for the night? Why are You like a man dismayed, like a mighty man who cannot save? Yet You are in our midst, O Lord, and we are called by Your name; **do not forsake us!**” Jeremiah 14:7-9

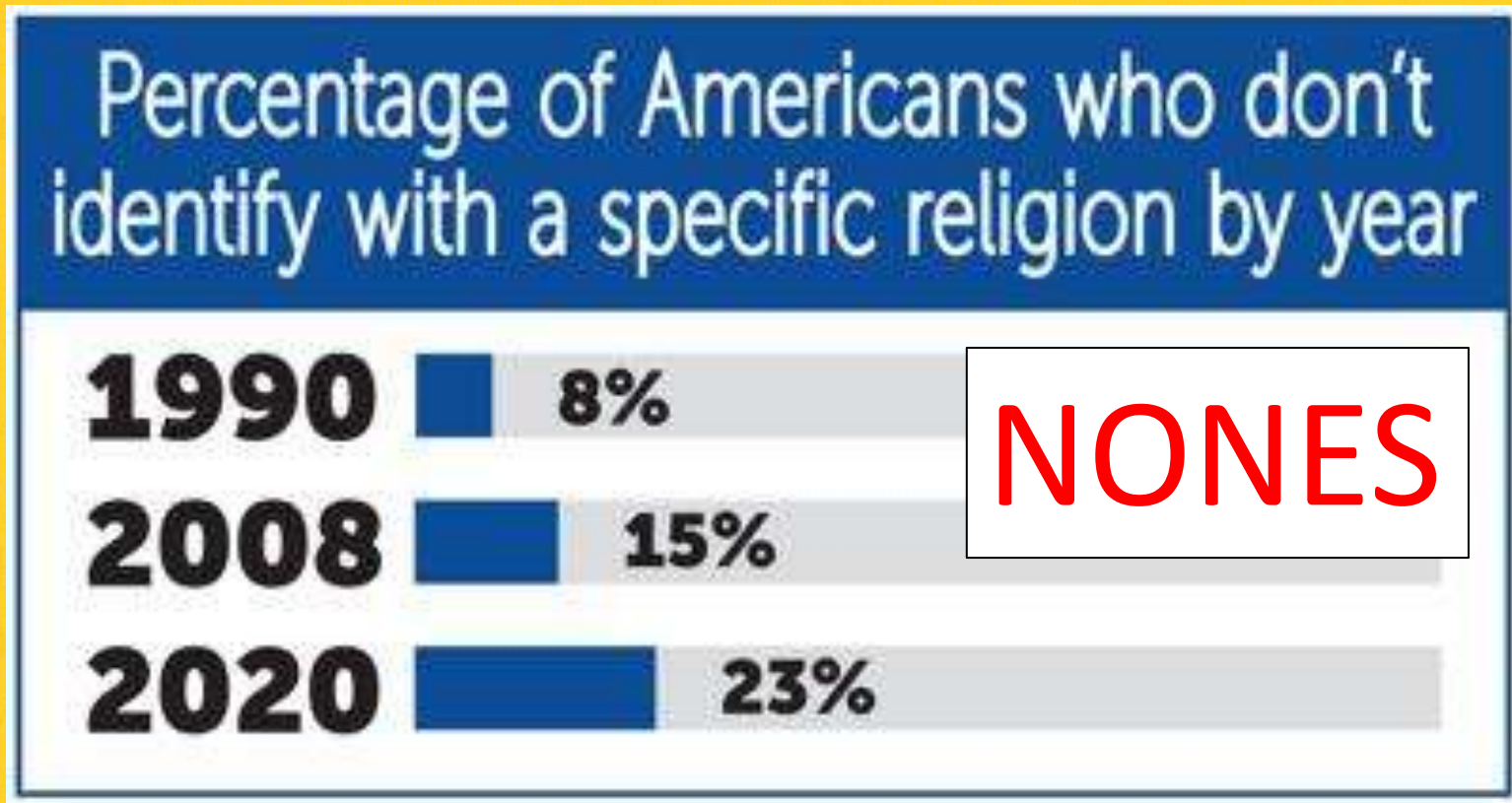
*Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble? Psalm 10:1

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Thus says the Lord to this people, “Even so **they have loved to wander** [to pursue and worship the idols of this world]; they have not kept their feet in check. Therefore the Lord does not accept them; now **He will remember their iniquity and call their sins to account.**” Jeremiah 14:10

*At what point must a nation give an account for their continual refusal to honor and obey God?

In the recently released Public Religion Research Institute census for 2020, those checking no religious preference continued to rise. In 1990, the number was around 8%. Thirty years later, it has almost tripled to 23%. **This means those who consider themselves religiously unaffiliated now outnumber both evangelical Protestants (16%) and mainline Protestants (18%).** Professor Mark Hayse at MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, Kansas, has followed this trend for more than two decades. About the rise of this phenomenon, Hayse said the time when the local religious congregation anchored one's family life has passed. No longer is the synagogue or church the center of family life and networking. "Now the internet may be the dominant social paradigm," Hayse said.



There is now what Professor Hayse calls a “consumeristic approach to social relationships.” No longer does the local religious congregation confirm and affirm one’s identity. Instead, there is a relative individualistic “free-for-all” in regard to finding one’s identity. This is usually based on consumer-driven goals.

So the Lord said to me, “Do not pray for the welfare of this people [for their spiritual punishment to be removed]. When they fast, I am not going to listen to their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I am not going to accept them. Rather I am going to make an end of them by the sword, famine and **pestilence.**” Jeremiah 14:11-12

*English word “pestilence” is Hebrew word דֶּבֶר *deber*, also translated as plague or disease

But, “Ah, Lord God!” I said, “Look, the prophets are telling them, ‘You will not see the sword nor will you have famine, but I will give you lasting peace in this place.’ ” Then the Lord said to me, “**The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them;** they are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility and the deception of their own minds. Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who are prophesying in My name, although it was not I who sent them—yet they keep saying, ‘There will be no sword or famine in this land’—by sword and famine those prophets shall meet their end!” Jeremiah 14:13-15

*What a tragedy it would be if a culture was looking and listening to the wrong people for answers!

“The people also to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and there will be no one to bury them—neither them, nor their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters—for **I will pour out their own wickedness on them.** You will say this word to them, ‘Let my eyes flow down with tears night and day, and let them not cease; for the virgin daughter of my people has been crushed with a mighty blow, with a sorely infected wound. If I go out to the country, behold, those slain with the sword! Or if I enter the city, behold, diseases of famine! For both prophet and priest have gone roving about [seeking rescue] in the land that they do not know.’ ” Jeremiah 14:16-18

Jeremiah asks God... **Have You completely rejected Judah?** Or have You loathed Zion? Why have You stricken us so that we are beyond healing? **We waited for peace, but nothing good came; and for a time of healing, but behold, terror!** We know our wickedness, O Lord, the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You. Do not despise us, for Your own name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Your glory [Temple]; remember and do not annul Your covenant with us. Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain? Or can the heavens grant showers? Is it not You, O Lord our God? Therefore **we hope in You**, for You are the one who has done all these things. Jeremiah 14:19-22

HOW LONG, O LORD?



FIRST MELISSA

TEACHING SERIES
BY PASTOR TREY GRAHAM

Psalm 13 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Prayer for Help in Trouble.

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

- 13** How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
- 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,
Having sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long will my enemy be exalted over me?
- 3 Consider *and* answer me, O LORD my God;
Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the *sleep of* death,
- 4 And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.
- 5 But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness;
My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.
- 6 I will sing to the LORD,
Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

April 2020



FIRST MELISSA

Then the Lord said to me, “Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people; **send them away from My presence and let them go!**”

Jeremiah 15:1

*The mention of Moses and Samuel was significant because Moses had interceded for the nation to turn away God’s wrath (Exodus 32:9–14; Numbers 14:11–20; Deuteronomy 9:18–20, 25–29), and Samuel had interceded to defeat the nation’s enemies and turn away God’s wrath (1 Samuel 7:5–11; 12:19–25).

– Bible Knowledge Commentary

*Moses and Samuel were needed to beg mercy for Israel, but first they induced them to repent, and afterwards they prayed on their behalf, but they had no idea of turning away My wrath until they had induced them to repent. - Rashi

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Then the Lord said to me, “Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people; **send them away from My presence and let them go!**” Jeremiah 15:1

*Could it be that a nation who continually runs away from God finally reaches the point when God accepts their repeated refusals to repent and lets them follow their own sinful ways?

Then the Lord said to me, “And it shall be that when they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ then you are to tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord: “Those destined for death, to death; and those destined for the sword, to the sword; and those destined for famine, to famine; and those destined for captivity, to captivity.” ’ I will appoint over them four kinds of doom,” declares the Lord: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag off, and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.” Jeremiah 15:2-3

*Each calamity mentioned later in this verse is harsher than the one preceding it. The sword is harsher than death. Death by the sword is defacing, whereas death in bed is not defacing. And so he says (Psalms 116:15): “Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of His Saints.” Famine is harsher than the sword, for this one is agonizing whereas the other is not agonizing. And so Scripture states (Lamentations 4:9): “Better are those who die from the sword than those who die from famine.” Captivity - all sorts of death are in it. - Rashi

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Then the Lord said, “I will make them an object of horror among all the kingdoms of the earth [other nations will be aware of their suffering] because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.” Jeremiah 15:4

*King Manasseh of Judah so polluted Jerusalem with idolatry that her destruction was inevitable (2 Kings 21:10–15, 23:36).

– Bible Knowledge Commentary

*What a tragedy it is that the people of many nations suffer because of the ungodliness of their leaders.

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

The Lord said to me, “Indeed, who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem, or who will mourn for you, or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare? **You who have forsaken Me,**” declares the Lord, **“You keep going backward.** So I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am tired of relenting!” Jeremiah 15:5-6

*The only One who had ever cared for Jerusalem was God, but she had rejected Him. - Bible Knowledge Commentary

*What if a nation today rejects the God who has given protection and provision?

WORDS OF
JOY
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The Lord said, “I will winnow them with a winnowing fork at the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy My people; **they did not repent of their ways.** Their widows will be more numerous before Me than the sand of the seas; I will bring against them, against the mother of a young man, a destroyer at noonday [daylight... no surprises]; I will suddenly bring down on her anguish and dismay. She who bore seven sons pines away; her breathing is labored. Her sun has set while it was yet day; she has been shamed and humiliated. So I will give over their survivors to the sword before their enemies,” declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 15:7-9

WORDS OF
JOY
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Jeremiah proclaims...

Woe to me, my mother, that you have borne me as a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! **I have not lent, nor have men lent money to me, yet everyone curses me.**

The Lord said, “Surely I will set you free for purposes of good; surely **I will cause the enemy to make supplication to you** in a time of disaster and a time of distress.” Jeremiah 15:10-11

This promise of supplication was fulfilled specifically in the requests of King Zedekiah to Jeremiah (see Jeremiah 21:1–7; 37:1–10; 37:17–20; 38:14–18). – Bible Knowledge Commentary

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

The Lord said, “Can anyone smash iron, iron from the north, or bronze? **Your wealth and your treasures I will give** for booty without cost, even for all your sins and within all your borders.” Jeremiah 15:12-13



Spend



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The federal government has spent \$3.18 trillion in response to COVID-19. 

USAspending is the official open data source of federal spending information.

We track how federal money is spent in communities across America and beyond. Learn more about government spending through interactive tools that explore elements of the federal budget, such as federal loan, grant, and contract data.

\$3,180,000,000,000

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

The Lord said, “Then I will cause your enemies to bring it into a land you do not know; for a fire has been kindled in My anger, it will burn upon you.”

Jeremiah 15:14-15

*Jeremiah begins to prophesy about 609 BC.

*The Babylonian army, under King Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Judah and the capital city of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

*Is America still the land that we all knew?

*What could bring relief and comfort in the midst of a national tragedy caused by sin and evil?

Jeremiah prays during this crisis...

Your words were found and I ate them, and **Your words became for me a joy** and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts. Jeremiah 15:16

*English word “joy” is **שִׂשׂוֹן** *sasown* in Hebrew – also translated rejoicing, gladness, exultation

*How can there be joy in the painful circumstances described in this passage?

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Jeremiah prays during this crisis...

I did not sit in the circle of merry-makers, nor did I exult.
Because of Your hand upon me **I sat alone**, for You filled me
with indignation. Why has my **pain** been perpetual and my
wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will You indeed be
to me like a deceptive stream with water that is unreliable?
Jeremiah 15:17-18

*If I must stand alone in serving and obeying God, am I willing?

*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates
day and night. Psalm 1:1-2

WORDS OF
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Jeremiah 15:16

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August 22, 2021

COVID stress could increase mental health issues, therapist warns

Unless there is some form of reprieve soon from the devastating impact of COVID-19, more persons will face mental health issues, noted respected western Jamaica-based family therapist Dr, Beverly Scott. With the third wave of the virus plunging the country into its worst phase yet, many are finding it difficult to cope. **And after being in a chokehold for over a year, many people are now overwhelmed with COVID fatigue – depression, loneliness, lack of motivation, exhaustion and isolation.**

<https://jamaica-gleaner.com>

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Even with social distancing, people can still say “I love you.” They can also share affectionate text messages and social media posts – and thanks to platforms such as Zoom and Skype, they can see each other’s faces and hear each other’s voices. The one experience it has not been able to facilitate, however, is touch. Individuals cannot hug their grandchildren, kiss their friends, or hold the hand of a dying loved one via Microsoft Teams or Google Hangout. **What people have suffered during the pandemic is “touch hunger,”** a colloquial term for what social scientists call “affection deprivation”, a state in which individuals want or need more affection than they receive. And here’s why that matters.



August 16, 2021

<https://theconversation.com/>

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Similar to regular hunger, **touch hunger** serves as an alert that something important is missing – in this case, the sense of security, intimacy, and care that comes with tactile contact. As people have taken pains to socially distance, many have discovered the sense of deprivation that can accompany the lack of affectionate touch. Touch hunger is essential to well-being throughout our life span. Touch is instrumental for healthy physical and cognitive development beginning in infancy. During adulthood, affectionate touch contributes to both psychological health and the body's ability to manage stress and reduce inflammation. And among the elderly, affectionate touch can enhance calmness and responsiveness for those suffering from dementia. **Touch is so powerful, in fact, that even imagining touch can reduce stress and pain.**

August 16, 2021

<https://theconversation.com/>



Touch hunger is associated with greater stress, anxiety and loneliness; lower-quality sleep; and reduced satisfaction and closeness in romantic relationships. Add to that the restrictions on touch introduced by COVID-19 and it makes sense why so many are suffering.

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Therefore, thus says the Lord, **“If you return, then I will restore you—** before Me you will stand; and if you extract the precious from the worthless, you will become My spokesman. **They for their part may turn to you, but as for you, you must not turn to them.”** Jeremiah 15:19

*Before one person can lead a nation to spiritual revival, that one person must return to the Lord and turn away from the world. That one person must be willing to obey God alone.

*Religious leaders today calling for America’s spiritual revival must start with personal repentance and renewal.

*America is full of worthless spokesmen, where are the godly ones?

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Therefore, thus says the Lord, “Then I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; and **though they fight against you, they will not prevail over you; for I am with you to save you and deliver you,**” declares the Lord. “So I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem you from the grasp of the violent.” Jeremiah 15:20-21

“Now behold, I have made you today as a fortified city and as a pillar of iron and as walls of bronze against the whole land, to the kings of Judah, to its princes, to its priests and to the people of the land. They will fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you,” declares the Lord. Jeremiah 1:18-19

*God’s promises never change!

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Can we learn from the past?

What could we learn from this story?

What could America learn from this story?

Theme verse for this teaching series

Your words were found and I ate them, and **Your words became for me a joy** and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.

Jeremiah 15:16

- Where else have we looked and not found joy?
- Whose words did we / do we depend on instead?
- When we lack joy, where do we look?

But I have trusted [past tense] in Your **lovingkindness**; my heart shall rejoice [future tense] in Your **salvation**. I will sing [future tense] to the Lord, because He has dealt bountifully [past tense] with me.

Psalm 13:5-6

*David trusted God and praised God even before the deliverance happened. (Source: Rabbi Chaim Eisen)



FIRST MELISSA

Your words were found and I ate them, and **Your words became for me a joy** and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts.

Jeremiah 15:16

What is the difference between God's Word and God's words?

- God's Word is the divinely inspired scriptures, the Bible. His Word can never and will never be replicated, replaced, improved or added to.
- God's words are the channel of communication between God the Holy Spirit and the children of God. God's words are trustworthy forever and guide God's people on the paths of righteousness.

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

What does it mean to “eat” God’s words?

- Then He said to me, “Son of man, **eat** what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” Ezekiel 3:1
- Apostle John wrote, “So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, ‘Take it and **eat** it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.’” Revelation 10:9
- Food signifies anything that we take in to satisfy us, sustain us, and strengthen us. For Jeremiah to take God’s Word as his food meant that he received God’s Word as his spiritual nourishment and satisfaction. We also can take the Word of God as food and eat it to satisfy our spiritual hunger and cause our heart to be joyful. – Living Stream Ministry

What is the benefit of “eating” God’s words?

- How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Psalm 119:103
- Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. Psalm 119:11
- Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:2-2

How can God's words become our joy and the delight of our hearts?

- “This book of the law [Torah תּוֹרָה] shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Joshua 1:8
- But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law [Torah תּוֹרָה] he **meditates** day and night. Psalm 1:2
- Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **dwell** on these things. Philippians 4:8
- Meditation is an appropriate response to God's Word. It's not our default response. We're prone to treat the Bible like a textbook and we're cramming for a test. We know how to read, analyze, color code, timeline, and graph the Scriptures, but **meditation** is a neglected skill. – Insight for Living

If meditation is like eating God's Word, then...

- **Chew Your Food** Scripture is to be chewed. Spend time with it. In meditation we return to a text, not just to swallow, but to process its truth reflectively for our whole life.
- **Take Small Bites** Gulping chapters of Scripture may provide chunks of information, but meditation is not about data. It's about heart change, which is often incremental. Small bites will go a long way.
- **Eat Slowly** The way we hurry our devotional space, God must wonder if we have somewhere better to be. Meditation by its nature can't be rushed. Take time to be present. There is no spiritual fast food.
- **Don't rush after eating** Indigestion results from eating and running. Let the pace of meditation guide your day. It invites us to rest in the truth God has given. Our feet may scurry but our souls don't have to.
- **Eat frequent small meals** David turned his soul Godward seven times in a day (Psalm 119:164). Seven times may be more than you can handle, but meditation is a discipline that flourishes with repetition.
- **Don't skip the table** Loss of appetite signals ill health. Avoiding reflective heart engagement of Scripture may suggest deeper problems.

WORDS OF
JOY
Jeremiah 15:16

Q: Where can I find God's words?

A: Find Jesus

Jesus said, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; **the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.**"

John 6:63