

An Everlasting Love



Jeremiah 31:1–17 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 44, “I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy,” on Gospel Library**

START

“I have loved thee with an everlasting love,” the Lord says in Jeremiah 31:3. He said it to a people who were about to lose their city.

READ TOGETHER

Jeremiah spent most of his life warning Jerusalem. Chapters 30 to 33 turn from warning to comfort, even as Babylon’s army closed in (Jeremiah 32:1–2).

JEREMIAH 31:3

³The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

JEREMIAH 31:15–17

¹⁵Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. ¹⁶Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

¹⁷And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

WHAT IT TEACHES

The word “lovingkindness” in verse 3 is the Hebrew *hesed*, the same covenant love Isaiah wrote about. The Lord says he has “drawn” his people with it, the way you pull someone close.

In verse 15, Rachel weeps for her children and will not be comforted. Rachel was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, and here she stands for every mother in Israel who lost children to war and exile. Matthew heard her weeping again when King Herod killed the young children of Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16–18).

The Lord answers her in verses 16 and 17. “Refrain thy voice from weeping,” he says, because “thy children shall come again to their own border.” Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, makes that promise sure. Because he rose from the dead, families parted by death will be together again.

Verse 13 gives this week’s title. “I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them.” He takes the sorrow itself and turns it, the way the Savior’s death led to the empty tomb.

TALK ABOUT IT

Who in our family or ward is mourning right now? How could we help the Lord turn their mourning into joy?

TAKE TO CHURCH

The Lord loves us with an everlasting love. He promised Rachel her children would come home, and through Jesus Christ he keeps that promise.

Written in Their Hearts



Jeremiah 31:31–34; 32:37–42 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

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START

The Lord wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18). Jeremiah saw a day when he would write his law somewhere else.

READ TOGETHER

Israel had broken the covenant the Lord made with them when he led them out of Egypt (Jeremiah 31:32). Instead of giving up on them, the Lord promised “a new covenant.”

JEREMIAH 31:31–34

31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: **32** Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: **33** But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. **34** And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

WHAT IT TEACHES

In the new covenant, the law lives inside a person. “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (verse 33). A law on stone tells you what

to do. A law written in the heart becomes what you want to do.

Verse 34 promises that everyone will know the Lord, “from the least of them unto the greatest,” and it ends with forgiveness. “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” In our day the Lord says the same about everyone who repents (Doctrine and Covenants 58:42).

At the Last Supper, Jesus took the cup and said, “This cup is the new testament in my blood” (Luke 22:20). In that verse, “testament” means covenant. Each time we take the sacrament, we renew our covenant with him.

Jeremiah 32:40 calls it “an everlasting covenant.” The Lord promises, “I will not turn away from them, to do them good.”

TALK ABOUT IT

What is one commandment you keep mostly because you have to, and one you keep because you want to? What helps a commandment move from the first kind to the second?

TAKE TO CHURCH

In the new covenant, the Lord writes his law in our hearts and remembers our sins no more. We renew that covenant each week when we take the sacrament.

Nothing Too Hard



Jeremiah 32:1–27; 33:3 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

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START

With Babylon’s army camped around Jerusalem and Jeremiah locked in the palace prison, the Lord told him to buy a field (Jeremiah 32:1–7).

READ TOGETHER

The field belonged to Jeremiah’s cousin Hanameel in Anathoth, Jeremiah’s hometown. The law gave Jeremiah “the right of redemption,” the right to buy family land so it would stay in the family (Jeremiah 32:7; Leviticus 25:25).

JEREMIAH 32:14–15

14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. **15** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

JEREMIAH 32:17

17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

WHAT IT TEACHES

Jeremiah paid seventeen shekels of silver, signed the deed before witnesses, and sealed it in a clay jar “that they may continue many days”

(verses 9 to 14). Buying land in a war zone looked foolish. It showed that Jeremiah believed the promise in verse 15, “Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.”

Afterward Jeremiah prayed. “There is nothing too hard for thee,” he said (verse 17). Ten verses later the Lord answers with his own question, “Is there any thing too hard for me?” (verse 27).

Jeremiah acted as a redeemer, buying back land his family was about to lose. Jesus Christ is our Redeemer. He buys back what sin and death would take from us, and his Resurrection promises that even a hair of the head will not be lost (Alma 40:23).

TALK ABOUT IT

Jeremiah 33:3 says, “Call unto me, and I will answer thee.” What feels too hard right now that you could bring to the Lord in prayer?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Jeremiah bought a field while the enemy was at the gate, because he trusted the Lord’s promise. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

The Burned Scroll



Jeremiah 36:1–32 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

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START

A king once cut a book of scripture into strips with a knife and fed it to the fire, a few columns at a time (Jeremiah 36:23).

READ TOGETHER

The Lord told Jeremiah to write down his warnings on a scroll, which the King James Version calls a roll. Jeremiah spoke, and his scribe Baruch wrote (Jeremiah 36:4). Baruch read the scroll at the temple, and it was carried to King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36:10–21).

JEREMIAH 36:2–3

²Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. ³It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

JEREMIAH 36:23–24

²³And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. ²⁴Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Verse 3 gives the Lord’s reason for the scroll. He hoped the people would hear, turn from their evil

ways, and let him forgive them. The warnings were written so that he could forgive.

The king and his servants heard every word. “Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments” (verse 24). To tear your clothes was a sign of grief or repentance. Three officials begged the king not to burn the scroll, and he would not listen (verse 25).

The Lord told Jeremiah to write it all again on another roll, and Baruch added “many like words” (verses 28 and 32). Lehi’s family later carried many of Jeremiah’s prophecies to the promised land on the brass plates (1 Nephi 5:13). A king burned one scroll, and the word of the Lord went on.

Jesus said the scriptures “are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). Each time we open them, we give the Lord the chance Jehoiakim refused, a chance to turn us and forgive us.

TALK ABOUT IT

Jehoiakim heard the Lord’s words and felt nothing. What helps you feel the scriptures instead of just hearing them?

TAKE TO CHURCH

A king burned Jeremiah’s scroll, and the Lord had it written again with more words. The Lord wrote his warnings so that he could forgive.

Is There Any Word



Jeremiah 37:15–17; 38:14–20 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

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START

King Zedekiah had Jeremiah brought to him in secret and asked, “Is there any word from the Lord?” Jeremiah answered, “There is” (Jeremiah 37:17).

READ TOGETHER

Zedekiah was the last king of Judah. In the first year of his reign, Lehi began to warn Jerusalem, and the Lord soon told him to take his family into the wilderness (1 Nephi 1:4; 2:2).

JEREMIAH 37:17

¹⁷Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out: and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

JEREMIAH 38:19–20

¹⁹And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. ²⁰But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Zedekiah believed Jeremiah was a true prophet. He kept asking him for the Lord’s word (Jeremiah 37:3; 38:14). He was also afraid of his own officials. When they wanted Jeremiah dead, he told them, “the king is not he that can do any thing against you” (Jeremiah 38:5).

In Jeremiah 38:19–20, the king admits what is stopping him. He is afraid people will mock him. Jeremiah pleads, “Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord.” Zedekiah wanted the Lord’s word, and fear of other people kept him from following it.

Then Jerusalem fell to Babylon. Zedekiah was captured, and his sons were killed (Jeremiah 39:4–7). Lehi had heard the same kind of warning years earlier and obeyed, and his family was saved. Their record, the Book of Mormon, testifies of Jesus Christ.

The Lord says that when his servants speak his words, it is the same as if he spoke them himself (Doctrine and Covenants 1:38). Asking for counsel is a good start. The blessing comes when we follow it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Zedekiah kept asking for the Lord’s word, then did not follow it because he feared what people would think. What makes it hard to follow counsel we already know is right?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Zedekiah asked for the Lord’s word and did not follow it. Lehi heard the same kind of warning and obeyed, and his family was saved.

Out of the Mire



Jeremiah 38:1–13; 39:15–18 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

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START

The king’s officials lowered Jeremiah on ropes into a dungeon with no water, only mud, and he sank into it (Jeremiah 38:6).

READ TOGETHER

The officials said Jeremiah’s warnings were weakening the soldiers, and King Zedekiah let them do what they wanted (Jeremiah 38:4–5). The Hebrew word for this dungeon also means a cistern, one of the rock tanks from last week’s lesson on broken cisterns.

JEREMIAH 38:7–9

⁷Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king’s house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; ⁸Ebed-melech went forth out of the king’s house, and spake to the king, saying, ⁹My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city.

JEREMIAH 38:12–13

¹²And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. ¹³So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Ebed-melech was an Ethiopian and a eunuch, a foreigner who served in the king’s house (verse 7). He went to the king at the city gate, in public, and said the officials had done evil (verse 9). He spoke up when it was dangerous to.

The king sent him with thirty men. Ebed-melech also brought old rags and had Jeremiah put them under his arms to cushion the ropes as the men pulled him up (verses 11 and 12). He was brave, and he was also kind.

Isaiah had promised foreigners and eunuchs who hold to the Lord’s covenant a place and a name that would never be cut off (Isaiah 56:3–5). Ebed-melech’s name is in the scriptures because of this day. The Lord promised to save his life, “because thou hast put thy trust in me” (Jeremiah 39:18).

A psalm of David praises the Lord in words that fit this day. “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock” (Psalm 40:2). The Savior does that for anyone stuck in sin or sorrow, and he often sends someone like Ebed-melech to help.

TALK ABOUT IT

Ebed-melech spoke up for someone no one else would defend. Who at school or in our neighborhood might need someone to speak up for them, and what would it take?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Ebed-melech pulled Jeremiah out of the mud with ropes and old rags. When we stand up for someone, we do a small part of what the Savior does for us.

New Every Morning

Lamentations 1:1–12; 3:19–33 • This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3



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START

After Babylon burned Jerusalem and its temple, someone wrote five poems of grief. We call them Lamentations. Jewish and Christian tradition says Jeremiah wrote them.

READ TOGETHER

Four of the five poems are acrostics. Their verses start with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order. Chapter 3 gives each letter three verses, which is why it has 66 verses.

LAMENTATIONS 1:12

¹² Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

LAMENTATIONS 3:21–26

²¹ This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. ²² It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. ²⁴ The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. ²⁵ The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. ²⁶ It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

WHAT IT TEACHES

In chapter 1, Jerusalem calls out to people passing by. “Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.” The city knew its own sins had brought this (Lamentations 1:8). Sorrow for sin can be the heaviest kind, because we know we had a part in it.

Then, in the middle of the book, the poet remembers something. “It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning” (Lamentations 3:22–23). The city was still in ruins. What changed was where he looked.

Verses 31 to 33 add that “the Lord will not cast off for ever” and that he “doth not afflict willingly.” Alma knew this kind of sorrow. When he remembered Jesus Christ and cried to him for mercy, his pain was gone and joy filled his soul (Alma 36:17–20).

Yesterday Jeremiah sank into the mud of a cistern, and help reached him there. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland made a promise like that about sin. “It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Laborers in the Vineyard,” General conference, April 2012

TALK ABOUT IT

What is one mercy from the Lord that was new this morning? How can the sacrament today be a fresh start for each of us?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Lamentations puts a whole alphabet of sorrow into words. In the middle of it, the poet found that the Lord's mercies are new every morning.