

Jeremiah — Weeping

What would we do, as the people of God, if empire seized control, scattering the willing empirical participants across the rubble of idolatry and injustice? Would we weep?

What would we do if Babylon was in full control, that massive machine working to over-create and over-consume at whatever cost? Economic progress, wealth and prosperity, materialism and consumerism—seemingly good things that slowly tear focus from the point of the story being lived until such tools of progress are put on a pedestal, raised as idols we never saw coming. Would we say a thing?

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What would we do if innocent idols led to massive injustice, if time and space for hospitality were lost, the promise of the covenant forgotten, and calendars were filled so fully to the margins that sabbath itself had been forgotten? Comfort now more costly than ever expected as the world became complicit in the very evil the Story warned about? What would we do?

God used Jeremiah to warn His people and the empires of their day of where their idolatry had brought them as a people. He told them what they had forgotten, the promise they had left behind—and through all his words for repentance and justice alike, he wept.

Perhaps the question to ask is not what *would* we do, but what *will* we do?

What are we doing?

Are we pursuing justice, shalom, and sabbath, or are we crafting modern idols that have left us in a time of injustice?

Do we remember that we, and all our neighbors, were created very good?

Do we set aside time to rest?

Do we hear God calling, asking us simply to do the next right thing, to hinder the beast crouching at the door, even when it is so very difficult?

***opening our arms
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Do we trust the Story that God is writing, walking in faith?

Do we bind ourselves to our promise to Him, as He has to us?

Do we yearn to be a Kingdom of priests, opening our arms and our homes to all at the crossroads of the earth?

My family has been listening to the second book in Andrew Peterson's series, *The Wingfeather Saga*. Just this morning we saw a young hero kidnapped and hauled away to work in a factory. There, children are claimed and renamed as tools, working on a never-ending machine. They're ripped from their families, who go mad in their absence, and are told that they are nothing more than a tool to be used, a brick to be built upon, a small sacrifice of a greater good for the evil, monster-run empire.

When we look at fictional works such as these, we recognize the hypocrisy and the evil immediately. If the weak were cast into the fire of empire for profit and selfishness, we would do something. We would weep and fight and cry out for justice.

When we look at the historical events of the Bible and the words of Jeremiah, we disassociate ourselves from the empires of their day, saying we would do much better. Yet, are we so different?

The cycle of empire versus shalom continues, and we don't have to look very hard to find that our idolatry has led us to great injustice again. The name and word of God used in vain to fight our selfish wars. The desire for greatness now a machine using human beings as tools, cogs in a machine, to be disposed of. An exposed underbelly of inhumanity, and do we say or do a thing?

Will we pursue justice and shalom? Will we remember the Story?

Will we be part of the remnant that restores the Kingdom?

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PRAYER

*We weep for the lost and broken promises.
We weep for those who've abandoned the Story.
Weep with us for this world, God.*

*In our tears we cling to You
that we may never become the anti-story,
Instead following and being shepherds after Your own heart,
leading with knowledge and understanding
of Your creation and Kingdom as it should be.*

*Forgive us, God, when we miss the mark,
For ignoring the cries and causing the tears.
May we be characters in the story who don't forget, who heal,
who steward well, hallow Your name,
and remember the power of rest.*

Amen

THE FOUR PILLARS

BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:



TEXT

What stands out to you from the Text that you want to carry with you as you read the prophets? Try meditating and memorizing a bit of hope or challenge from this book. What is the impact?



COMMUNITY

How does your community react to the voice of Jeremiah? What does the image of weeping bring to mind for you? Where does hope reside in the conversation?



DISCIPLESHIP

Who walks with you, in front or behind, and reminds you to look back as you move forward? How do you seek justice and model it each day? What might you need to say or do differently?



WRESTLING

What are your thoughts on the call of Jeremiah? How does this prophet enlighten understanding of the end of 2 Chronicles? What in this text makes you struggle?



Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.



BEMA SESSION 2



MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE SPIRITUAL FORMATION

*True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of “Creating Space for God” in our lives. We believe that **if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it** as He desires. You’re already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

*We believe that young adults are shaping the **future of this world**. Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION THEOLOGY OF WORK

*This isn’t only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. **The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***