

*Jeremiah 31 7 28*

*(7) For thus says the Master: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and shout for the head of the nations [on account of the chosen people, Israel]. Proclaim, praise, and say, The Master has saved His people, the remnant of Israel!*

*(8) Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and among them will be the blind and the lame, the woman with child and she who labors in childbirth together; a great company, they will return here to Jerusalem.*

*(9) They will come with weeping [in penitence and for joy], pouring out prayers [for the future]. I will lead them back; I will cause them to walk by streams of water and bring them in a straight way in which they will not stumble, for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim [Israel] is My firstborn.*

*(10) Hear the word of the Master, O you nations, and declare it in the isles and coastlands far away, and say, He Who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.*

*(11) For the Master has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from the hand of him who was too strong for him.*

*(12) They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion and shall flow together and be radiant with joy over the goodness of the Master--for the corn, for the juice [of the grape], for the oil, and for the young of the flock and the herd. And their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow or languish any more at all.*

*(13) Then will the maidens rejoice in the dance, and the young men and old together. For I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice after their sorrow.*

*(14) I will satisfy fully the life of the priests with abundance [of offerings shared with them], and My people will be satisfied with My goodness, says the Master.*

*(15) Thus says the Master: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. [Mat 2:18]*

*(16) Thus says the Master: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work shall be rewarded, says the Master; and [your children] shall return from the enemy's land.*

*(17) And there is hope for your future, says the Master; your children shall come back to their own country.*

*(18) I have surely heard Ephraim [Israel] moaning thus: You have chastised me, and I was chastised, like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; bring me back, that I may be restored, for You are the Master my Almighty.*

(19) Surely after I [Ephraim] was turned [from You], I repented; and after I was instructed, I penitently smote my thigh. I was ashamed, yes, even confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth [as a nation].

(20) Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a darling child and beloved? For as often as I speak against him, I do [earnestly] remember him still. Therefore My affection is stirred and My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy, pity, and loving-kindness for him, says the Master.

(21) Set up for yourselves highway markers [back to Canaan], make for yourselves guideposts; turn your thoughts and attention to the way by which you went [into exile]. Retrace your steps, O Virgin Israel, return to these your cities.

(22) How long will you waver and hesitate [to return], O you backsliding daughter? For the Master has created a new thing in the land [of Israel]: a female shall compass (woo, win, and protect) a man.

(23) Thus says the Master of hosts, the Almighty of Israel: Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in her cities when I release them from exile: The Master bless you, O habitation of justice and righteousness, O holy mountain!

(24) And [the people of] Judah and all its cities shall dwell there together-- [nomad] farmers and those who wander about with their flocks.

(25) For I will [fully] satisfy the weary soul, and I will replenish every languishing and sorrowful person.

(26) Thereupon I [Jeremiah] awoke and looked, and my [trancelike] sleep was sweet [in the assurance it gave] to me.

(27) Behold, the days are coming, says the Master, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed (offspring) of man and of beast.

(28) And it will be that as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow, destroy, and afflict [with evil], so will I watch over them to build and to plant [with good], says the Master.