

Jeremiah (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 0 0] as the lord may be pleased to help me i will try and speak to you this morning from words you will find in the chapter which we read together jeremiah chapter 31 and the ninth verse jeremiah chapter 31 verse 9 they shall come with weeping and with supplications will i lead them i will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble from a father to israel and ephraim is my firstborn jeremiah chapter 31 the ninth verse this word in the first place has reference to god's mercy in returning to his dear people to free them from their captivity and it gives us a description of that remnant which were delivered from captivity and wended their way to their loved land even the land of israel we know that when the 70 years were accomplished god in his great mercy and in his wondrous faithfulness did deliver his people from their captivity and indeed in in many senses their weeping there was turned into joy you will notice in the 12th verse therefore they shall come and sing in the height of zion and shall flow together to the goodness of the lord for wheat and for wine and for oil and for the young of the flock and of the herd and their soul shall be as a water garden and they shall not sorrow any more at all and this all through the mercy and faithfulness of god to his people his ancient nation but then there is a precious deep here to be considered for in so many ways the manner in which the lord is pleased to deal with his ancient israel is so descriptive the manner in which the lord is pleased to deal with his dear people down through the generations god's spiritual israel not exclusively to the jewish nation but other nations all sound god in his great mercy saw fit that there should be those from every nation tribe and tongue who should learn of his salvation but we think of god's people as the israel of god a chosen people a people in the lord is peace are dealing with in a particularly special way distinguishing them from the other nations of the earth and while many are left to go their own way and it is a solemn consideration that if grace prevent not then they reap the rewards of their deeds and come to that solemn place called hell walking determinedly in that broad road that leads to destruction but now over against all this we see the manifold mercy of god toward a people that they should not be left to go their wayward condition and way but to be wrought upon

to be graciously dealt with and it may well be dear friends there are times with you when it is a concern with you as to whether you are the subject of the gracious dealings of God and these are indeed matters that we do well to consider it is a dangerous place to be found settled as it were upon the leads of a profession and it is to be feared there are some who do and often we have to confess that we are left to ourselves and we may tend to settle down sometimes but what a mercy it is when the Lord is pleased to stir us up as it were and by some means or other according to his wise dealings he brings us to consider matters and to search our hearts as to where we do stand before a holy and a heart searching God and this brings one another into a concern as to how matters are with them and as to whether the Lord is indeed dealing graciously with them and how helpful is the word of God in the light of these things because in this chapter and in this verse before us we have those things concerning the manner in which the Lord is pleased to deal with his dear people gracious dealings and all flowing from his everlasting love there are great words in the opening part of this chapter in the third verse yea I have loved thee with everlasting love and therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee and in all God's dealings with his people whatever those dealings may be although sometimes it may be perhaps as it affects the history of people it may be sometimes a way of tribulation a way of trial and temptation a way of affliction yet it all proceeds from his love toward his people and for their eternal good so then when we come to consider and I hope we may be helped for a little while this morning to consider just a little of what we have before us in this verse may we keep that in mind that it all flows from his love to his people and although sometimes perhaps you may feel so cold and hard in your own spirit as it were and Satan may come and suggest that you have no evidence of an interest in God's love yet rightly considered surely

God's love being everlasting love it is upon his dear people irrespective of their state and condition in their pathway or their experience you see nothing can quench that love you know that they may stray sometimes and we have to confess that we do astray in heart mercy if kept outwardly but all are those wanderings of heart but this doesn't separate a child of God from his God and that love which the Lord has toward his dear people it is an unchanging love but now let's just try and consider this verse as it gives us some aspects of the manner in which the Lord is pleased to deal with his people and to bring them into those ways of blessing and to know what it is for their hearts to be established in the truth obviously the text reminds us of pilgrims as it were here are journeying ones and they're going in a way life is like a pathway isn't it the Lord

Jesus Christ as he preached his own truth described the two ways the broad way that leads to destruction and the narrow way that leads unto life eternal and what a great mercy if you and I have any evidence of being found in that narrow way and to be pilgrims and for there to be some resemblance to the description given in this verse concerning those who are pilgrims journeying to the heavenly Zion and how as we consider the word and I hope we may be helped to consider it and may the Lord help us to consider it rightly one thing seems to stand out so much and that is the manner in which the Lord deals with his people in the previous verse

God says behold I will bring them and then in this ninth verse they shall come you see we have the first cause as it were the Lord dealing with sinners bringing them and this being so there will be the evidence in this that they shall come it reminds us of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself when in those few words he encumbers such tremendous truths when he said all that the Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out embracing the whole election of God and they shall come and our text reminds us that they shall come it is no peradventure here there are no ifs and maybes here they shall come not of human effort there is no room for any thought of free will in this but it is by

[11 : 12] God's sovereign grace alone you see he is first the God of all grace in dealing with sinners and he brings them from afar the eighth verse speaks of this he brings them from the north country and gathers them from the coast of the earth so the word goes on enumerates these the description of this people but you see the point is the Lord brings them yes he will gather his people he brings them from afar and indeed by nature and through the Adam fall they are far far off the apostle Paul as he wrote to the church at Ephesus he reminded them didn't he that they who were once far off were now made nigh by the blood of Christ but you see they were far off and how this does demonstrate in the thought of it the wonder of

God's grace and mercy they should have thoughts of love toward a people so far off by reason of the fall and their condition as they are sinners actual and yet the Lord he will bring them bring them from afar the apostle Paul could declare couldn't he and he called me by his grace and you see this is the effect of that call as the Lord brings them from afar yes they're lost and ruined condition by nature and in their helpless condition and therefore in a hopeless condition as far as they're concerned and yet the Lord has a purpose of grace well the Lord bringing them one to another this is the way they come first there is then the certainty of it they shall come far they come as poor sinners they come because the

Lord has begun to deal with them yes and signal them out from the teeming millions of the earth as it were and begins to deal with them in a way which distinguishes them from others they shall come but the text says they should come with weeping they do not come as it were bringing some religion with them some good resolutions some promise to live better as it were but don't misunderstand me where grace is implanted in the heart there will be a concern to live right before God sin will be made exceeding sinful but you see they do not come and bring their good deeds as it were they certainly do not come in the way the

Pharisee went up to the temple to pray because if you consider how the Lord Jesus Christ describes the Pharisees he went up to the temple to pray in his prayer so called and then you look at this word before us what a contrast oh they do not come in all self sufficiency they do not come as it were to recommend themselves to the Lord no but our text reminds us they come they come with weeping they come as mourning souls and they come in this way because the Lord is dealing with them to reveal to them something of their sinful and unworthy condition and to be taught to know that they have no help in self and so they have to come with that spirit of dependence upon him but with this weeping not necessarily of course literal tears sometimes there are tears but good it is if they flow from the heart but this weeping is spiritual weeping it really describes a true mourning soul remember the

Lord Jesus Christ reminds us in the sermon on the mount that such are blessed he said blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted well these these come at weeping they come as mourning souls yes mourning over their sin and whether it is a true mourning there will be a mourning after him that is the sinner's friend yes a sinner's friend healed by his grace and through the power of his spirit brings these poor sinners he will bring them to himself they shall come with weeping remember how the word reminds us that God's ancient people in captivity and there were those a remnant there who had thoughts still concerning

[17 : 11] Zion and in one psalm we read this they wept when they remembered Zion and this text really describes them doesn't it they shall come with weeping their thoughts are Zion as it were and so it is spiritually they shall come with weeping yes there is this inward mourning they're such as have been emptied of themselves brought to that point where they realise that in no way in their own strength can they come into the favour of God but there is this inward power as the Lord brings one to another and you see this will be true concerning all the spiritual

Israel of God yes he brings each one of them that brought because they'd never come if they were not brought if there's not this constraining power in their souls they would never come it might be encouraging perhaps to one another to consider that yes if you're a poor coming sinner yes a true mourner he bears some evidence the Lord has brought you some evidence of his gracious dealings although perhaps you're still a poor mourner and you feel there's much to weep over much to be ashamed of they shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead that God leads his people he brings them yes this being so they come and he leads them yes he leads them and our text reminds us it is in this way and with supplications will I lead them these mourning ones are led into this path of prayer these pilgrims become suppliants they're not the self satisfied ones they're not those who lean on the arm of flesh they're not those who whose only concern is they might appear to be on the outward appearance as it were religious no but they come as mourners they come as suppliants and with supplications will I lead them what a great mercy dear friends if you've been taught to pray yes really taught to pray because these mourning souls are the ones that come into the secret of what it is to be brought a suppliance before the throne of grace and you see a suppliant suggests this that there's nothing in the suppliant to as it were recommend them to

God but rather humbly bowed his footstool he had to be brought to that throne of grace that throne of grace that the apostle speaks of as he writes to the Hebrews let us therefore come he says boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need suppliance you will notice as you consider the gospels how many there were that with their diseases and difficulties and hard cases were brought into this experience and exercises as it were to supplicate the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ all the petitions the leper if thou wilt thou canst make me clean the blind man

Lord that I might receive my sight and sign it in a spiritual way there will be these petitions which will spring up in the heart of these suppliants these who are pilgrims of suppliants before the throne of grace and maybe not also discern here the wonderful mercy of God's provision in this in the way the Lord leads his dear people in the path of prayer he leads them to that throne of grace you see if there's no throne of grace there could be no prayer meetings could there be no purpose for a poor sinner to try and pray secretly but blessed be God there's a throne of grace the mercy seed long ago the Lord said to

Moses there will I meet thee yes and come in with thee for off the mercy seed and what a strength and support that must have been to Moses in his arduous task as Israel's leader and sometimes these suppliants as the Lord leads them this way are enabled in some little measure to realise the wonderful provision that there is in that the Lord is approachable that God is a God that hears prayer and that he who by his spirit indicts prayer in the hearts of these suppliants he bows down his ear to these and with supplications will I lead them and good it is dear friends isn't it when sometimes you may feel to be led a little in this way what I mean is this while you're no stranger to the path of prayer no stranger to the secret of prayer but are there not times when you feel to need the

[24 : 08] Lord to lead you in this path and to give you a spirit of prayer to fulfil that great word in the scriptures pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication to be led a little into this gracious exercise of being a suppliant before the throne of grace because it has to be said that those who are truly suppliants praying souls being taught to pray such will realise sometimes how they do need particularly the Lord to lead them to the throne of grace to help them to call upon his name not always so easy as it might seem is it there are many hindrances many temptations Satan would stop up the path as it were if he could he attempts it and so then there are the difficulties the hindrances but then the Lord leads and good it is if at times you realise it is in this way the Lord leads you and those whom he deals with it will be so he may use various means to lead his dear people with supplications to his throne yet sometimes he sees fit to lay burdens upon them to bring them to his feet yes it may be in a way of affliction or adversity difficulty temptations perhaps a mysterious pathway for the time being but how the Lord is pleased to make these things to work together for good to bring his dear people to his feet and surely have you not realised sometimes that you need this to bring you to his feet oh there are those times when we feel to be so prayerless one has said in the hymn

I would but cannot pray the good it is when the Lord may perhaps in some way lay some burden upon your soul to bring you to his feet and you come into the meaning of this word with supplications will I lead them the Lord leads and you see has a purpose of grace to these he does not lead them to the throne of grace to turn them away no what did Jesus say him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out oh it is a path that will prove to a path of blessing though perhaps as a supplication you may have to call him on his name again again it may be some petitions as yet are not answered and you need grace to wait and grace to wait upon the

Lord and still to wait upon him and to wait patiently because he who leads in this way and he who sometimes it may well be lays a burden upon your spirit it is that in due season the Lord will appear for you and prove that he is indeed your God that he hears your cry and with supplications will I lead them and he is very instructed to notice the marginal rendering of this this word here with supplication will I lead them in the margin you will notice this with favours will I lead them another interpretation of this word and we can link these things together can't we all in the favour of God the Lord with favours leads his people and always see it like that especially when perhaps the path is difficult you cannot discern

God's favour in them yet rightly considered is this so yes he favours those whom he loves and everlasting love and he draws them to his throne of grace by his loving kindness therefore loving kindness have I drawn thee the Lord said to Jeremiah and it is in favour it is that favour that that God does bear to his people maybe sometimes you find an echo to the prayer of the psalmist when he prayed as a suppliant remember me oh Lord with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people visit me with thy salvation which is a favour you have to be a suppliant though it may be there are many desires as yet you feel have not been granted yet it is favour you have to be brought into and led into this path of prayer and as a mourning soul they shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them and you see in so many ways the emphasis is here isn't it the Lord's dealings will I lead them you follow it through the text yes the Lord's dealings is all of his grace it is by grace the Lord teaches poor sinners to pray and for his grace it is the effect the result of his gracious dealings certainly not for our duties or deserves these mourning souls as I led in this way of supplication at times are made to realise that it is all of

God's mercy that there is any hope raised up in their hearts because as after mourn over their felt condition as unworthy sinners it is indeed a great mercy to realise that the Lord condescends to deal with them unworthy though they are sinful though they are the Lord leads in his mercy flowing from his love and with that gracious purpose and the unfolding of his purpose toward them which is of grace it's a beautiful word in this prophecy of Jeremiah isn't it where the Lord speaks concerning his dealings in this way his thoughts toward his people and those thoughts can be considered in this way his purpose of grace toward them for I know the thoughts I think toward you said the

[31 : 43] Lord thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end and an expectation is the marginal rendering of that God's thoughts his purpose is toward his people and there's a purpose of grace in this and these poor pilgrims are being led in that way that way when the Lord will reveal his gracious purpose toward them and bring them at length indeed to sing in the height of Zion that is the prospect yes but meanwhile it is a journey through this wilderness yes of weeping and petition it very much suggests doesn't it a path of dependence upon their God you know there is a dreadful spirit of independence in us by nature or how easy we may lean upon ourselves or what we think upon our own understanding lean upon our own strength if left to ourselves but the

Lord does he deals with these he leads them in that way when they are made to realise their dependence upon him it is a humbling experience to know it man by nature would be something and do something but that is not the way the Lord deals with his people they ought to be brought down yes to realise their dependence upon him and so then really this description here before us describes these who are dependent upon his mercy and taught to supplicate before his throne of grace for that mercy though those who are humbled before him they shall come with weeping and with supplications when I need them recently my mind has often gone to the case of

Hannah you know and she was a godly soul she had a great burden and she was much stride in her path wasn't she yes she was provoked sore by another and she had a sad case and she was indeed a weeping one and she was a suppliant wasn't she when Eli saw her in the temple in the first place he misunderstood her because her lips were moving there was no no voice as it were thinking she was overcome with wine but Hannah had to say I'm a woman of sorrowful spirit and she got a burden but how did things work out or how she later on was able to come yes with singing to the height of Zion as it were to sing praise and thankfulness to God who was pleased to answer her request for this child I prayed but she was she was a weeping one she was a sorrowful one she was one of a sorrowful spirit but you see the Lord had brought her into this he had overruled these things and the provocations that she had to endure in her home and her condition all proved to be a burden to her but she brought it to the Lord and what a great mercy it is dear friends if perhaps when you have burdens maybe of a different kind altogether but if it is a means of bringing it to the

Lord what a mercy brought to his footstool as it were and to humbly lie there and wait his mercy they shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them the path of prayer path of dependence upon God and how gracious the Lord is to these whom he humbles thinking again of Hannah for a moment if you turn to that chapter where we have recorded Hannah's song how she was enabled to set forth really the gracious work of God in the heart of sinners in bringing down lifting up in making poor and making rich that is the

Lord's work and in many ways the Lord brings these things home to his dear people as they're led in this way he lays them low he brings them down but not to destroy he never casts off one of these even the weakest the humblest they will have an interest in his everlasting love and to these he will fulfil his gracious purpose and it is a profitable place to be brought into he has to be found amongst these pilgrims here as they come with weeping and with supplication because they're led you see they're not going their own way no they're going the way the Lord leads them and how effectual that will be what gracious leading what effectual leading and surely we can see here

[37 : 48] God's watchful eye over his people as they're led in this path and though maybe sometimes it seems strange to reason yet it is it is the right way the psalmist could say concerning God's dealings with his people and he led them forth by the right way they might go to a city of habitation it is the right way may sometimes be a painful way indeed as I have tried to say a way of dependence but it is the right way and he who leads he who brings these forth and he who leads them in this path he makes no mistake and it's all in wisdom although sometimes the path may seem mysterious it is the right way and it is the way that leads to blessing and a way that will lead to everlasting bliss and happiness these people you see at length they were brought into this as they were redeemed and ransomed from the hand of him that was stronger than they therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion yes their weeping shall be turned into joy they that sow in tears shall reap in joy we read in the psalm how true this is but the weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning they shall come with weeping and with supplications when I lead them

I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way when they shall not stumble for I am a father to Israel and Ephraim is my firstborn amen shall we conclude by singing hymn number 1038 to the tune Calvary 668 hymn number 1038 sinners in their deep affliction sigh and groan beneath their load long to read their own election and with pleasure say my

God trembling fearing hoping still in Jesus blood 1038 in said anything amen