

Adam Clarke:**Introduction**

On account of the evils which threatened his country, the prophet is forbidden to encumber himself with a wife and family, or to bear any share in the little joys and sorrows of his neighbors, which were to be forgotten and absorbed in those public calamities, Jeremiah 16:1-9, which their sins should draw on them, Jeremiah 16:10-13. A future restoration however is intimated, Jeremiah 16:14, Jeremiah 16:15, after these calamities should be endured, Jeremiah 16:16-18; and the conversion of the Gentiles is foretold, Jeremiah 16:19-21.

Verse 1

The word of the Lord came also unto me - This discourse Dahler supposes to have been delivered some time in the reign of Jehoiakim.

Verse 2

Those shalt not take thee a wife - As it would be very inconvenient to have a family when the threatened desolations should come on the place. The reason is given in the following verses.

Verse 4

They shall die of grievous deaths - All prematurely; see Jeremiah 14:16.

As dung upon the face of the earth - See Jeremiah 8:2.

Be meat for the fowls - See Jeremiah 7:33.

Verse 5

Enter not into the house of mourning - The public calamities are too great to permit individual losses to come into consideration.

Verse 6

Nor cut themselves - A custom of the heathen forbidden to the Jews, Leviticus 19:28; Deuteronomy 14:1, and which appears now to have prevailed among them; because, having become idolaters, they conformed to all the customs of the heathen. They tore their hair, rent their garments, cut their hands, arms, and faces. These were not only signs of sorrow but were even supposed to give ease to the dead, and appease the angry deities. The Hindoos, on the death of a relation, express their grief by loud lamentations, and not unfrequently bruise themselves in an agony of grief with whatever they can lay hold on.

Verse 8

Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting - Funeral banquets were made to commemorate the dead, and comfort the surviving relatives; and the cup of consolation, strong mingled wine, was given to those who were deepest in distress, to divert their minds and to soothe their sorrows. These kinds of ceremonies were common among almost all the nations of the world on funeral occasions. The Canaanites, the Jews, the Persians, Arabians, New Zealanders, Huns, etc., etc.

Verse 12

And ye have done worse than your fathers - The sins of the fathers would not have been visited on the children, had they not followed their example, and become even worse than they.

Verse 13

Will I cast you out of this land - See Jeremiah 7:15, and Jeremiah 9:15.

Verse 14

The Lord liveth, that brought up - See Isaiah 43:18.

Verse 15

The land of the north - Chaldea: and their deliverance thence will be as remarkable as the deliverance of their fathers from the land of Egypt.

Verse 16

I will send for many fishers - for many hunters - I shall raise up enemies against them some of whom shall destroy them by wiles, and others shall ruin them by violence. This seems to be the meaning of these

symbolical fishers and hunters.

Verse 18

The carcasses of their detestable - things - Either meaning the idols themselves, which were only carcasses without life; or the sacrifices which were made to them.

Verse 19

The Gentiles shall come - Even the days shall come when the Gentiles themselves, ashamed of their confidence, shall renounce their idols, and acknowledge that their fathers had believed lies, and worshipped vanities. This may be a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles by the Gospel of Christ; if so, it is a light amidst much darkness. In such dismal accounts there is need of some gracious promise relative to an amended state of the world.

Verse 20

Shall a man make gods unto himself? - Can any be so silly, and so preposterously absurd? Yes, fallen man is capable of any thing that is base, mean, vile, and wicked, till influenced and converted by the grace of Christ.

Verse 21

Therefore, behold, I will this once - I will not now change my purpose. They shall be visited and carried into captivity; nothing shall prevent this: and they shall know that my name is Jehovah. Since they would not receive the abundance of my mercies, they shall know what the true God can do in the way of judgment.