

# AUG 26

“This is what the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says: “Even now, if you quit your evil ways, I will let you stay in your own land. But don’t be fooled by those who promise you safety simply because the

Lord’s Temple is here. They chant, “The Lord’s Temple is here! The Lord’s Temple is here!” But I will be merciful only if you stop your evil thoughts and deeds and start treating each other with justice; only if you stop exploiting foreigners, orphans, and widows; only if you stop your murdering; and only if you stop harming yourselves by worshiping idols. Then I will let you stay in this land that I gave to your ancestors to keep forever.” Jeremiah 7:3-7 NLT

## [lectio] // JEREMIAH 7:1-15

listen to the text by reading out loud slowly and repeat up to 3x if desired

What a hard message to deliver! Of course, all of them were. Jeremiah makes his proclamation on the steps of the temple where thousands of Israelites come and go. It was a quick way to get the word out. The people had thought, “If we just continue doing religious things at the temple, then God will not bring disaster to us because it would also hurt his house. But although the temple “bore God’s name” he did not really live there. I find it interesting that the “sins” listed started with how unjustly they treated each other, then the foreigner, orphan and widow then, lastly, God himself (idol worship). Maybe in Hebrew the worst offenses are listed last not first. Either way, God points out that the majority of their ill-behaviors are towards others. This is thousands of years before “love one another.” This is before people were watching God followers to see if their “religion” was real. God has always been interested in our spirituality being processed, practiced and proven through our closest human contacts - each other. Jeremiah warns, God has destroyed his “house” before, he’ll do it again (Shiloh). Of course we don’t listen because it wasn’t about threatening God by holding his house hostage. It’s always been about our own selfishness, our own will to do what we want, whenever we want to do it.

## [oratio]

pray as responding to the words, phrase, sentence that God has stirred within you

Dad,

Of course I see a reflection of myself in this passage. Of course I see the church in a similar mindset. Humanity has not changed. We are being changed by the grace and power of your revelation through Jesus, but we are still very broken until that is complete. Your house today are many churches all a bit fractured and scattered across the world. We still hope that we can “do our own thing” and run into the church to find SANCTUARY from your will, your desires. We can still use the template of how we should be spiritual: get rid of idols, treat widows, orphans and foreigners well and for sure quit behaving unjustly towards each other! It’s still a thing!

## [contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root