

Theme: In a collapsing culture, God calls His servants to live as signs—refusing false comforts, telling the truth in love, and pointing to hope beyond judgment.

1) A Life that Speaks: Jeremiah's Three Sign-Acts (Jeremiah 16:1–9)

A. “Do not take a wife” (Jeremiah 16:1–4)

Jeremiah is commanded to remain single. His bachelorhood becomes a sermon: the times are so severe that starting a family would only multiply heartbreak—children will perish by sword and famine, their bodies left unburied. God is not scorning marriage; He is warning a nation that refuses to repent.

Application: Sometimes obedience means swimming against the current of “normal.” Ask: *Lord, how do You want my life to signal Your message right now?*

B. “Do not enter the house of mourning” (Jeremiah 16:5–7)

Jeremiah must refrain from funerals and ritual grief. God says, “*I have taken away My peace... lovingkindness and mercies*” (Jeremiah 16:5, NKJV). The usual social signals of compassion will be overwhelmed by the sheer scale of judgment.

Application: There are moments when sentiment must give way to sobriety. Love tells the truth, even when the truth is heavy.

C. “Do not enter the house of feasting” (Jeremiah 16:8–9)

No wedding banquets. No noise of bride and bridegroom. The entertainments that once numbed the conscience will soon be silenced.

Application: Beware of distractions that keep you from hearing God. When the Spirit is warning, it is **not** the time to drown Him out with noise.

2) Why Judgment? Because of Fathers—and Worse than Fathers (Jeremiah 16:10–13)

When the people ask, “*Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us?*” Jeremiah answers: your fathers forsook God for idols, and you have surpassed them—“*you walk each one according to the imagination of his evil heart*” (Jeremiah 16:12, NKJV).

Theology (balanced and biblical):

- God is not eager to judge; He has pled and waited.
- Humans are truly responsible; inherited patterns do not excuse present choices.
- Grace remains available, but grace refused hardens the heart.

Application: Stop comparing yourself to yesterday's sinners. Repent today. God deals with *your* heart, not your family's legend.

3) Exile Decreed—Yet Hope Promised (Jeremiah 16:13–15)

Judah will be exiled to a foreign land (Jeremiah 16:13). But even here, hope breaks through: a future return will be so great that people will say, *“The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north”* (Jeremiah 16:15, NKJV). Judgment is penultimate, not ultimate; God disciplines to restore.

Application: God’s correction is severe mercy. When He closes one door, it is to open the door of returning. Do not waste the discipline—come home.

4) Fishers and Hunters, and the All-Seeing God (Jeremiah 16:16–18)

God will send fishers and hunters to track the people down—imagery of inescapable consequences. *“My eyes are on all their ways... neither is their iniquity hidden from My eyes”* (Jeremiah 16:17, NKJV). The land has been defiled; sin is never private—it stains people and places.

Application: Secret sin is a myth. Live clean before the God who sees, and let repentance be as public as the damage your sin has done.

5) A Surprising Horizon: Nations Coming to the LORD (Jeremiah 16:19–21)

Jeremiah breaks into worship: *“O LORD, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in the day of affliction”* (Jeremiah 16:19, NKJV). Then comes a prophetic surprise—Gentiles from the ends of the earth will confess, *“Surely our fathers have inherited lies”* (Jeremiah 16:19, NKJV). God will make His hand and might known; *“they shall know that My name is the LORD”* (Jeremiah 16:21, NKJV).

Biblical balance: Even in judgment God is missional. Israel’s fall and return become a witness to the nations. History is one story centered in the LORD who draws all peoples to Himself.

Application: Expect God to save in unexpected places. Pray for prodigals—and for the “far-off” who will say, *“Our fathers taught us emptiness; now we come to the living God.”*

A Challenge for Believers

1. Wear the Message (Jeremiah 16:1–9).
Let your choices—time, money, relationships—signal that Christ is your treasure. What *sign-act*¹ is the Spirit asking of you?
2. Refuse the Fog (Jeremiah 16:10–13).
Stop softening what God has hardened. Name the sin God names. Repent quickly; obey fully.

¹A sign-act is a symbolic action performed under God’s direction to convey a prophetic message. Instead of just speaking God’s word, the prophet acts it out so that people can see the truth being declared. It’s a form of visual prophecy — a sermon in motion.

In Hebrew prophetic literature, sign-acts often involve strange, striking, or uncomfortable actions that get people’s attention and force them to ask, *“Why is he doing that?”* The prophet’s explanation then becomes God’s message.

3. Receive Correction as Mercy (Jeremiah 16:13–15).
When discipline comes, run toward God, not away. His goal is restoration.
4. Live Seen (Jeremiah 16:17).
Practice open-book holiness. Invite accountability. Close the loopholes.
5. Join the Mission (Jeremiah 16:19–21).
Pray and labor for the nations—and for your neighbor. God is gathering unexpected worshipers.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

Idols promise rain but give drought. You may already feel it: busy yet empty, entertained yet thirsty. God sees you—and He loves you. He has made a way back through Jesus Christ.

- Jesus saved us when He shed His blood on the cross, taking our guilt and removing our shame.
- His resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord—able to forgive, cleanse, and make you new.
- He calls you now to turn from idols and trust Him.

Pray from your heart:

“Lord Jesus, I turn from my sin and the lies I believed. Thank You for shedding Your blood on the cross for me and rising from the dead. I believe You are God, Savior, and Lord. Forgive me, make me new, and fill me with Your Spirit. I will follow You. Amen.”

If you prayed that in sincerity, tell a mature believer, be baptized, and begin reading the **NKJV** daily. Start with the Gospel of John and the Book of Psalms.

Closing Prayer

Father in Heaven, make our lives a clear picture of Your love and grace in a confused culture. Teach us to grieve what You grieve, to refuse false feasts, to repent quickly, and to hope fiercely. Use us so that near and far, many will come to know that Your name is the LORD. Thank You for Jesus—crucified for our sins and risen as God, Savior, and Lord. Amen.