



## [Jeremiah 31:7-9](#)

(7) For thus says the LORD:

“ Sing with gladness for Jacob,  
And shout among the chief of the nations;  
Proclaim, give praise, and say,  
‘ O LORD, save Your people,  
The remnant of Israel!’

(8) Behold, I will bring them from the north country,  
And gather them from the ends of the earth,  
*Among* them the blind and the lame,  
The woman with child  
And the one who labors with child, together;  
A great throng shall return there.

(9) They shall come with weeping,  
And with supplications I will lead them.  
I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters,  
In a straight way in which they shall not stumble;  
For I am a Father to Israel,  
And Ephraim *is* My firstborn.

*New King James Version*

This is one place among several where [God](#) calls Israel His son. This is an unfulfilled prophecy of the "[second exodus](#)," when God re-gathers the [nations of Israel](#) and Judah. Notice that God will bring back a remnant—all that remains of decimated Israel. They return with weeping and supplication to God. These are the ones who have survived the sword (verse 2). They have been humbled and returned to God, who returns them to His land.

Why will God humble His son in such a way? The answer is in [Proverbs 3:12](#) (NET): "For the Lord disciplines [corrects, chastens, punishes, scourges] those He loves, just as a

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father disciplines the son in whom he delights." God confirms this in [Jeremiah 46:28](#) (NET): "Though I completely destroy all the nations where I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will indeed discipline you, but only in due measure. I will not allow you to go entirely unpunished."

In Jeremiah's day (and before), God loved the Judeans so much that He would not allow them to continue on their path of self-destruction. They resisted Him strongly, but He loved them far too much to allow them to continue without a course correction that they could not ignore. It was painful and bloody. Yet, it resulted in their being humbled enough that the survivors were at least somewhat more inclined to listen to God.

The same thing is playing out in the nations of Israel and Judah today. God loves His people, and He plans a bright future for them. But He does not [love](#) their disregard of Him. He loves them too much to allow them to self-destruct fully. He *will* allow them to make terrible decisions and reap the wretched consequences. He will also intervene to get their attention with pain that will only get worse when they try to ignore it.

Either way, conditions will continue to deteriorate as we approach Christ's return because they must. If God allowed the nations of Israel to turn away from Him without consequence, their hearts would be fully set in them to do evil ([Ecclesiastes 8:11](#)). Rather than allow that to happen, God will cause many to die, knowing they can be resurrected and given a new heart. He loves them too much to allow them to become incorrigible.

We have tremendous [hope](#), but our hope is not in the brotherhood of man becoming less dysfunctional on its own. Our hope is in the Creator God who is making man in His image ([Genesis 1:26](#)), despite that effort involving pain, death, resurrection, and thousands of years in between. Our hope is in the One who will cut short the days ahead, for the sake of—for the love of—theelect. He loves His creation more than we can comprehend, but that love is sometimes demonstrated in ways that we also do not comprehend.

— David C. Grabbe

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