

Dear Women of the Word,

I am so eager to see what God will do in our lives this year through our study of Jeremiah, Lamentations and Daniel! It will be so exciting to see how these three books are connected to each other. I absolutely love studying the Old Testament. I love learning through stories, and seeing God's sovereignty and love played out in the lives of his people. I have to say, though, that Jeremiah has been...different. We will have to cling to God's promise in Romans 15:4 that

*"...whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."*

You will need endurance to keep going and trust that there is encouragement and hope in Jeremiah! There really is! And I have no doubt God will use his word to bring us into a deeper and more intimate relationship with himself. It will not be easy, but it will definitely be worth it! So don't be afraid of studying the Old Testament and don't give up in the middle. Hang in there with expectancy to see what God has for you!

There are a couple of new features in our study this year. Jeremiah is written with the assumption that the former history of Israel is well known. That assumption does not hold true for all of us so I have included a short paragraph when needed, marked with a symbol of a sun, to shed some light on past history and give you some helpful context.

Another new feature is on *Day Five* marked with a lightning bolt. On *Day Five* we will reflect on one theme that was revealed that week in our reading and how that theme reveals who God is.

The "Digging Deeper" questions take you to a different part of the Bible and will give added understanding to the subject at hand. If you are running short on time you can skip these questions.

The "Heart" questions require some inner examination and reflection. They help you to apply God's word to your own life. These are the ones you might be tempted to skip! : )

The "Scholar's Notes" and "Picture and Ponder" help to clarify and deepen understanding and application.

“For Discussion” are questions that are conducive to brainstorming. The answers aren’t found directly in the passage, but relate to it.

All Scriptures are ESV unless otherwise noted.

Jeremiah 15:16 says, “*Your words were found and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart.*” The “homework” is not meant to be only an intellectual task that you put on your to-do list, but more of a life-giving habit— like eating. It is a means of facilitating your relationship with your heavenly Father, of helping you find joy and delight in Him. As you read and answer the questions, engage your heart by talking with God about what you are reading. God is speaking to you in his word and you can engage in the conversation by speaking back to him!

My prayer for all of you is that you would know God better, love him more and know how loved you are by him, and follow him more closely as we study His word together.

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