



MIND  
session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

### Context

Start by asking:

- What is the most ill-advised thing you've ever talked someone else into doing?
- What's the craziest thing you've been talked into doing (so far)?
- What does our ability to be led astray say about us?
- How do we know when someone is leading us in the wrong direction?
- Why do you think some people may deliberately lead others in doing the wrong thing?

## Content

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- Of what, specifically, do you think Jeremiah is accusing the leaders of his day?
- What does it mean to have "driven people away," versus "not attending to them," and what are some modern parallels to this behavior?
- How did God ultimately "deal with them for their evil doings" and what danger might that indicate for our present leadership?
- Since Jeremiah used a plural here, to whom was he likely referring as "shepherds" who would restore the people?
- What does it mean to be part of a "remnant" in the sense Jeremiah uses here?
- If this passage was written to our current context, what might it look like and why?

## Closure

Continue by asking:

- What does the fact that we seem to accept questionable leadership, so long as that leadership caters to our personal agendas, say about us?
- When confronting questionable leaders, how does someone balance the necessity of speaking truth to power with the need to not validate them by adopting their methods?
- At what point has the church tried to address what it sees as a "social ill," only to hurt more than it helped, and what should we do about that?
- How can we minister to people who have turned away from faith due to abuse they feel they suffered from once-trusted leaders?

Close with prayer.

**Writer: Jon Parks**



# CURRENT

session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Thoroughly review all the referenced resources for this session in advance.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

### Context

Read coverage of Kentucky's decision to cut medical and dental Medicaid benefits [from this article](#), [this one](#) and [this one](#) then ask:

- With whom do you identify with in this situation and why?
- What would a prophet say if they were to walk down Kentucky's streets after this happened?
- Why do you think people blame the poor in situations like this?
- Why do you think some Christians are reluctant to get involved in this kind of thing?

### Content

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- Why would people find the prophet's words in this passage to be unsettling?
- Since prophetic works tell timeless truths, what most speaks to us in today's times and why?
- What roles did the established religion of the times play in this message and how has that carried forward to today's religions establishment?
- How do Christians, in general, figure into this message and why?
- What is the hope Jeremiah shares with his listeners and with us?

## Closure

Watch this [video on Mission Lexington](#) and ask:

- What hope does faith give us in today's culture where so many shun those less fortunate?
- What are the obstacles facing churches and other religious groups wanting to serve the poor and those struggling and how might they overcome them?
- At what points might religious leaders and organizations have sought to solve the wrong problems, and why did they do that?
- What happens when churches concern themselves with power, rather than doing things like addressing income inequality and other social problems?
- How might we help society move from the picture Jeremiah paints at the first part of this scripture to the picture he paints at the end?

Close with prayer.

**Writers: Crystal Shepherd and Steve McClain**



MYSTIC  
session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Create a focal point in the room with a container that has rice or dried beans, and rocks in it. You might want to include a large candle as well.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

### Context

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video.

*This is a reflective prayer, followed by a discussion of things that God might show us about ourselves.*

## Reflection

Invite the group to a time of prayer and begin by asking for God to grant the grace of an awareness of God's presence and work in the world, engaging in a few minutes of silence before continuing.

Encourage volunteers to share as many examples of humans working God's good in the world, in either large or small ways, as they can. Let this be a time of "looking for the helpers" – all those who are making the world a better place in different ways. Spend a good amount of time sharing, giving everyone a chance to reflect and "look for" examples in the world and in their own lives. When you run out of examples, ask:

- What are some times that you know of when people tried to do the right thing, but it turned out to be the wrong thing?
- When have you heard of someone claiming to be doing "good," only to discover that they were serving themselves?
- By what means might the good things we can do for God help repair the damage that so many others might do to our world?
- Take a moment to reflect on what is in your heart today. To what good act might God be calling you today and why?

Close the time with group prayer, inviting each person to share two things:

- "I am thankful for those who . . ."
- "Lord, help me/us to . . ."

After each person shares, invite the group to pray the refrain "Lord, hear our prayer."

**Writer: Joy Yee**



# MEDIA

session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

### Context

Share the [MSU Scandal video](#) and ask:

- Why do you think the media only seems to talk about big scandals?
- How do you feel after you hear about leaders abusing their position of authority and why?
- What do we mean when we talk about there being a "moral conscience?"
- Given that we so often hear about leaders who fail us in various public spheres, what can we do to preserve our sense of moral conscience?

## Content

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- How would you rate the leaders in this text and why?
- How might those “shepherds” have rocked the boat to their advantage and probably hurt others?
- In what ways did the people spoken about in this passage get hurt or damaged?
- What does it mean, in this passage, that God will gather a remnant?
- What does it mean that God will rise up a branch?
- In what ways do you see this passage applying to us today, and what promise are we being offered?

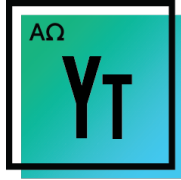
## Closure

Play the [Mr. Rogers video](#) and continue by asking:

- How do you respond in time of scandal or leader misconduct?
- In what ways have you seen people get hurt when leaders fail?
- How can we criticize leaders while being respectful of their office or of the organization they lead?
- As people of faith, what should we do about really bad leaders?
- How might we minister to people who have lost their faith through the actions of abusive leaders?

Lead a group time of prayer for yourself, your church leaders, and leaders in public life.

**Writer: Jon Self**



# YOUTH

session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Listen to the FaithElement podcast for this session.

### Intro

Share this [GEICO Commercial](#) and ask:

- How do you feel about this commercial and why?
- When have you experienced or heard about someone leading a group of people to do something ill-advised?
- How does someone recover from being part of a group that got led into something they shouldn't have done?
- What does our ability to sometimes be led into doing things we later wish we hadn't say about us?

## **Context**

*Form your group on one side of the meeting area and choose two volunteers. Tell everyone:*

*This is a game of "Simon says," where the two volunteers will take turns calling out commands, for the rest of the group. As usual, if the leader does not say "Simon says" before giving you an order, you're not supposed to follow them, and if they do say it, you have two seconds to follow the instruction. If you fail to do what you need to, instead of being "out," you just need to go back to your starting place and keep playing. We'll play twelve rounds and see what happens.*

*After making sure that everyone understands the rules, quietly tell the volunteers that they can't tell the rest of the group this, but they score points for each person who is totally on one side of the meeting area after round twelve, so one of them is trying to move people around while the other is trying to move them back or fool them. (Note: If the game goes too fast or is too easy for either leader, tell them that they cannot use the same instruction twice in a row.)*

*Play the game through, then announce both the secret instructions and final scores. Continue by asking:*

- Which of these two did you find it most easy to follow and why?
- How did you feel about learning the agendas that they had for the group?
- What did the way the two leaders played this game show you about yourself or them?
- In what ways does this game work like real life?
- Who in your world is providing you with "good" leadership and how do you know that from the people who are leading you badly?

## Content

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear this passage of scriptures and why?
- What kinds of things do you think the leaders of Jeremiah's day had done to get him to talk this way?
- If Jeremiah was writing this for our current situation, what kinds of leaders would he be talking about and why?
- What does it mean to be part of a "remnant" that God can use to rebuild?
- How can we be part of God's solution to a situation like the one found in this passage, as opposed to being part of the problem?

## Closure

Play the [Don't Rock the Boat clip](#). Follow clip by asking questions like:

- To which person in that clip do you most relate and why?
- How do you do the right thing when you have been taken advantage of by others?
- What should you do when leaders let you down or intentionally mislead you?
- To what degree do your personal feelings about a leader or their cause affect the way you feel about the need for them to have integrity and why?
- What can or should we do for people who have been hurt by people they looked up to and followed?

Close this session in prayer

**Writer: Don Breeden**



MIX  
session page

## Woe To Us

**Jeremiah 23:1-6 | Session 10.29**

### Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

### Context (From the Media Session Page)

Share the [MSU Scandal video]([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgXic\\_JHihA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgXic_JHihA)) and ask:

- Why do you think the media only seems to talk about big scandals?
- How do you feel after you hear about leaders abusing their position of authority and why?
- What do we mean when we talk about there being a "moral conscience?"
- Given that we so often hear about leaders who fail us in various public spheres, what can we do to preserve our sense of moral conscience?

## **Content (From the Mind Session Page)**

Read [Jeremiah 23:1-6](#), and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask:

- Of what, specifically, do you think Jeremiah is accusing the leaders of his day?
- What does it mean to have "driven people away," versus "not attending to them," and what are some modern parallels to this behavior?
- How did God ultimately "deal with them for their evil doings" and what danger might that indicate for our present leadership?
- Since Jeremiah used a plural here, to whom was he likely referring as "shepherds" who would restore the people?
- What does it mean to be part of a "remnant" in the sense Jeremiah uses here?
- If this passage was written to our current context, what might it look like and why?

## **Closure (From the Current Session Page)**

Watch this [video on Mission Lexington](#) and ask:

- What hope does faith give us in today's culture where so many shun those less fortunate?
- What are the obstacles facing churches and other religious groups wanting to serve the poor and those struggling and how might they overcome them?
- At what points might religious leaders and organizations have sought to solve the wrong problems, and why did they do that?
- What happens when churches concern themselves with power, rather than doing things like addressing income inequality and other social problems?
- How might we help society move from the picture Jeremiah paints at the first part of this scripture to the picture he paints at the end?

Close in prayer.