

# Jeremiah 22:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

## Analysis

**Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him**—the 'dead' refers to King Josiah, killed in battle at Megiddo in 609 BC (2 Kings 23:29-30). The Hebrew *al-tivku lamet* (אַל-תִּבְכּוּ לַמֵּת) uses the imperative negative: cease weeping for the deceased. Josiah was Judah's last good king, and his death devastated the nation (2 Chronicles 35:24-25). Yet God commands: stop mourning him. **But weep sore for him that goeth away** (*bakhu vacho laholech*, בָּכּוּ וַחֲכוּ לַהֲלֹךְ)—the emphatic construction 'weeping weep' (infinitive absolute) intensifies the command. The one 'going away' is Shallum/Jehoahaz, Josiah's son, taken captive to Egypt by Pharaoh Neco (2 Kings 23:31-34).

**For he shall return no more, nor see his native country** (*ki lo yashuv od ve'ra'ah et-eretz moladeto*, כִּי לֹא יָשׁוּב עוֹד וַיִּרְאֶה אֶת-אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתּוֹ)—the finality is absolute. *Lo yashuv od* (לֹא יָשׁוּב עוֹד, 'no more return') negates hope of restoration. **Native country** (*eretz moladeto*, אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתּוֹ) literally means 'land of his birth,' emphasizing what is lost: homeland, heritage, covenant land. Josiah died but was buried in Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:30); Jehoahaz lived but died in exile, never returning. The living exile is worse than honorable death. This introduces the theme of exilic judgment that dominates Jeremiah 22-29.

## Historical Context

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Josiah died in 609 BC attempting to stop Pharaoh Neco at Megiddo. His death was national tragedy: he was Judah's most righteous king since David, having led comprehensive religious reform (2 Kings 23:25). Mourning was intense and prolonged (2 Chronicles 35:25). His son Jehoahaz (called Shallum here) reigned only three months before Pharaoh Neco deposed him and took him to Egypt, installing Jehoiakim as puppet king (2 Kings 23:31-34). Jehoahaz never returned to Judah; according to verse 12, he died in Egypt. Jeremiah's command to redirect mourning from Josiah to Jehoahaz was counterintuitive: why mourn the living more than the dead? The answer: exile is a fate worse than death. To die in covenant land with honorable burial is preferable to living in exile, cut off from temple, land, and covenant community. This theology of exile dominates later prophets: life without covenant presence is spiritual death (Lamentations 1:3, Ezekiel 37:11-12, Psalm 137:1-4).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. What does the command to weep for the exile rather than the dead reveal about the covenant significance of land and the horror of being cut off from God's place?
2. How does Josiah's honorable death and burial contrast with Jehoahaz's living exile to teach that physical life apart from covenant blessing is worse than righteous death?
3. What does this verse's emphasis on 'never returning' to one's native land reveal about exile as the ultimate covenant curse (Deuteronomy 28:64-67)?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶל	בְּכוֹ	לִי ת	וְאֶל	תֵּן דּוֹ	לִי	בְּכוֹ	בְּכוֹ
H408	Weep H1058	ye not for the dead H4191	H408	neither bemoan H5110	H0	Weep H1058	Weep H1058
	לְהֵלֵךְ	כִּי	לֹא	יָשׁוּב	עֹד	וְרָא	ה
	for him that goeth away H1980	H3588	H3808	for he shall return H7725	H5750	no more nor see H7200	
אֶת	אֶרֶץ	מִלְדָּתוֹ:					
H853	country H776	his native H4138					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 22:11** (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more:

**Ecclesiastes 4:2** (Parallel theme): Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

**Isaiah 57:1** (Parallel theme): The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

**Lamentations 4:9** (Parallel theme): They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.

**2 Kings 22:20** (Parallel theme): Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

**Jeremiah 22:18** (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah

my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!

**Luke 23:28** (Parallel theme): But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

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