

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The Broken Covenant (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

Jeremiah 11–12

The Broken Covenant

11:1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 “Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

3 and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, “Cursed is the man who does not heed the words of this covenant

4 which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, ‘Listen to My voice, and do according to all which I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God,’

5 in order to confirm the oath which I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day.’” Then I said, “Amen, O LORD.”

6 And the LORD said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Hear the words of this covenant and do them.

7 ‘For I solemnly warned your fathers in the day that I brought them up from the land of Egypt, even to this day, warning persistently, saying, “Listen to My voice.”

8 ‘Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked, each one, in the stubbornness of his evil heart; therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded *them* to do, but they did not.’”

Inescapable Punishment of the Covenant Breakers

9 Then the LORD said to me, “A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 “They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.”

11 Therefore thus says the LORD, “Behold I am bringing disaster on them which they will not be able to escape; though they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them.

12 “Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they surely will not save them in the time of their disaster.

13 “For your gods are as many as your cities, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.

Jeremiah Forbidden to Pray for the People

14 “Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call to Me because of their disaster.

15 “What right has My beloved in My house
When she has done many vile deeds?
Can the sacrificial flesh take away from you your disaster,
So *that* you can rejoice?”

16 The LORD called your name,
“A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form”;
With the noise of a great tumult
He has kindled fire on it,
And its branches are worthless.

17 The LORD of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me by offering up sacrifices to Baal.

A Plot against Jeremiah's Life

- 18 Moreover, the LORD made it known to me and I knew it;
Then You showed me their deeds.
- 19 But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter;
And I did not know that they had devised plots against me, *saying*,
“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
And let us cut him off from the land of the living,
That his name be remembered no more.”
- 20 But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously,
Who tries the feelings and the heart,
Let me see Your vengeance on them,
For to You have I committed my cause.

God's Assurance of Punishment of the Conspirators

- 21 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, saying, “Do not prophesy in the name of the LORD, so that you will not die at our hand”;
- 22 therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, I am about to punish them! The young men will die by the sword, their sons and daughters will die by famine;
- 23 and a remnant will not be left to them, for I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth—the year of their punishment.”

Jeremiah's Question about the Prosperity of the Wicked

- 12:1 Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead *my* case with You;
Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You:
Why has the way of the wicked prospered?
Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease?
- 2 You have planted them, they have also taken root;
They grow, they have even produced fruit.
You are near to their lips
But far from their mind.
- 3 But You know me, O LORD;
You see me;
And You examine my heart's *attitude* toward You.
Drag them off like sheep for the slaughter
And set them apart for a day of carnage!
- 4 How long is the land to mourn
And the vegetation of the countryside to wither?
For the wickedness of those who dwell in it,
Animals and birds have been snatched away,
Because *men* have said, “He will not see our latter ending.”

God's Answer

- 5 “If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out,
Then how can you compete with horses?
If you fall down in a land of peace,
How will you do in the thicket of the Jordan?”

6 “For even your brothers and the household of your father,
Even they have dealt treacherously with you,
Even they have cried aloud after you.
Do not believe them, although they may say nice things to you.”

God’s Rejection of His Inheritance

7 “I have forsaken My house,
I have abandoned My inheritance;
I have given the beloved of My soul
Into the hand of her enemies.

8 “My inheritance has become to Me
Like a lion in the forest;
She has roared against Me;
Therefore I have come to hate her.

9 “Is My inheritance like a speckled bird of prey to Me?
Are the birds of prey against her on every side?
Go, gather all the beasts of the field,
Bring them to devour!

10 “Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard,
They have trampled down My field;
They have made My pleasant field
A desolate wilderness.

11 “It has been made a desolation,
Desolate, it mourns before Me;
The whole land has been made desolate,
Because no man lays it to heart.

12 “On all the bare heights in the wilderness
Destroyers have come,
For a sword of the LORD is devouring
From one end of the land even to the other;
There is no peace for anyone.

13 “They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns,
They have strained themselves to no profit.
But be ashamed of your harvest
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.”

A Conditional Promise for Israel’s Neighbors

14 Thus says the LORD concerning all My wicked neighbors who strike at the inheritance with which I have endowed My people Israel, “Behold I am about to uproot them from their land and will uproot the house of Judah from among them.

15 “And it will come about that after I have uprooted them, I will again have compassion on them; and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance and each one to his land.

16 “Then if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, ‘As the LORD lives,’ even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, they will be built up in the midst of My people.

17 “But if they will not listen, then I will uproot that nation, uproot and destroy it,” declares the LORD.

My Soul Waits for the LORD (c. 622 BC)

Psalm 130

A Song of Ascents.

- 1 Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD.
- 2 Lord, hear my voice!
Let Your ears be attentive
To the voice of my supplications.
- 3 If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,
O Lord, who could stand?
- 4 But there is forgiveness with You,
That You may be feared.
- 5 I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait,
And in His word do I hope.
- 6 My soul *waits* for the Lord
More than the watchmen for the morning;
Indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning.
- 7 O Israel, hope in the LORD;
For with the LORD there is lovingkindness,
And with Him is abundant redemption.
- 8 And He will redeem Israel
From all his iniquities.

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