

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—A Corrupt People and Their Punishment (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 13:1–14

The Ruined Linen Garment

- 1 Thus Yahweh said to me: "Go and buy for yourself a loincloth of linen and put it on your loins, but you must not place it in water."
 2 So I bought the loincloth according to the word of Yahweh and I put *it* on my loins.
 3 Now the word of Yahweh came to me a second *time*, saying,
 4 "Take the loincloth that you bought, that *is* on your loins, and stand up, go *to the* Euphrates and hide it there in the cleft of the rock."
 5 So I went and hid it by *the* Euphrates just as Yahweh had commanded me.
 6 And then, after a long time, then Yahweh said to me, "Stand up, go *to the* Euphrates and take from there the loincloth that I commanded you to hide there."
 7 Then I went *to the* Euphrates and I dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had hidden it, and look, the loincloth was ruined; it was not good for anything.
 8 And then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
 9 "Thus says Yahweh: 'So I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.
 10 This evil people, who refuse to listen to my words, who go in the stubbornness of their hearts, and have gone after other gods, to serve them, and to bow in worship to them, let them be like this loincloth which is not good for anything.
 11 For as the loincloth clings to *the* loins of a person, so I caused to cling to me all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah,' declares Yahweh, 'to be for me a people, and a name, and a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen.'

The Smashed Wineskins

- 12 "Therefore, you shall say to them this word, 'Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: "Every jar must be filled with wine." ' And they will say to you, 'Do we not certainly know that every jar should be filled with wine?'
 13 Then you shall say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh: "Look, I *am* about to fill all the inhabitants of this land, and the kings who sit on David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem *with* drunkenness.
 14 And I will smash them, each one against his brother, and the fathers and the sons together," declares Yahweh. "I will not have compassion, and I will not take pity, and I will not show compassion from destroying them."'"

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Catastrophes That Cannot Be Averted (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 14:1–15:9

A Severe Drought

14:1 *That* which came *as* the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah concerning the matter of the severe drought.

- 2 "Judah mourns, and her gates languish,
 they are in mourning on the ground,
 and the cry of lament of Jerusalem goes up.
 3 And their nobles send their servants for water.
 They come to *the* pits, they find no water.
 They return *with* their vessels empty.
 They are ashamed, and they are confounded,
 and they cover their heads.
 4 Because of the ground, *which* is cracked
 because there was no rain on the ground.
The farmers are ashamed,
 they cover their heads.
 5 For even *the* doe in the field gives birth and forsakes *her* young,
 because there is no green growth.
 6 And wild asses stand on *the* barren heights,
 they gasp *for* breath like the jackals.
 Their eyes fail
 because there is no vegetation."

Jeremiah Intercedes for the People

- 7 Although our iniquities testify against us, *O* Yahweh,
 act for the sake of your name.
 Yes, our apostasies are many;
 we have sinned against you.

- 8 *You are* the hope of Israel,
its savior in time of distress.
Why should you be like an alien in the land,
or like a traveler who spreads out *his tent* to spend the night?
- 9 Why should you be like a confused man,
like a warrior *who* is not able to help?
Yet you *are* in our midst, *O Yahweh*,
and your name is called upon us.
You must not leave us!

God Commands Jeremiah to Stop Praying

10 Thus says Yahweh concerning this people:

“They have loved so much to wander,
they have not spared their feet.
Therefore Yahweh is not favorable to them,
now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.”

11 So Yahweh said to me, “You must not pray for this people, for *their* happiness.

12 Although they fast, I *am* not listening to their cry of entreaty. And although they present burnt offering and grain offering, I *am* not favorable to them. But by the sword, and by the famine, and by the plague, I *am* about to destroy them.”

Jeremiah Blames False Prophets

13 Then I said, “Ah, Lord Yahweh, look, the prophets *are* saying to them, ‘You will not see *the* sword, and famine will not be yours, but reliable peace I will give to you in this place.’”

God’s Judgment on the False Prophets

14 And Yahweh said to me, “The prophets *are* prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them, and I have not commanded them, and I have not spoken to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, and a divination, worthless, and the deceitfulness of their minds.”

15 Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the prophets who prophecy in my name though I have not sent them, yet they *are* saying, “Sword and famine will not be in this land.” “By the sword and by the famine those prophets will perish.

16 And the people *to* whom they *are* prophesying will be cast out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword. And there will be no *one who* buries them, their wives, or their sons, or their daughters. And I will pour out on them their wickedness.

Jeremiah’s Lament and Supplication

17 “And you shall say to them this word,

‘Let my eyes melt *with* tears night and day,
and let them not cease,
for *with* a great wound the virgin daughter of my people is broken,
with a very incurable wound.

- 18 If I go out *into* the field,
then look, those slain by *the* sword.
And if I enter the city,
then look, the sickness of *the* famine.
For both prophet and priest wander around through the land,
they do not know what is going on.”

- 19 Have you completely rejected Judah?
Or has your soul loathed Zion?
Why have you struck us
so that there is no healing for us?
We hope for peace, but there is no good,
and for a time of healing, but look, there is terror.

- 20 We know, *O Yahweh*, our wickedness,
the iniquity of our ancestors,
for we have sinned against you.

- 21 You must not spurn *us* for the sake of your name,
you must not dishonor your glorious throne.
Remember *us*!
You must not break your covenant with us.
- 22 Are there *any* among the idols of the nation *who* cause rain to pour?
Or can the heavens give showers?
Is it not you, O Yahweh our God?
Therefore, we hope in you, for you do all these *things*.

The Futility of Intercession

15:1 Then Yahweh said to me, “*Even* if Moses and Samuel stood before me, my heart *would* not *be* to this people. Send *them* away from my sight, and let them go out.

2 And then if they say to you, ‘Where shall we go?’ Then you shall say to them, ‘Thus says Yahweh,

“*Those who are destined* for the plague, to the plague,
and *those who are destined* for the sword, to the sword,
and *those who are destined* for the famine, to the famine,
and *those who are destined* for the captivity, to the captivity.”

3 “And I will summon over them four types of calamity,” declares Yahweh, “the sword to kill, and the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth to devour and to destroy.

4 And I will make them a terror to all of the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, because of what he did in Jerusalem.

The End of God’s Pity

- 5 “For who will have compassion on you, O Jerusalem,
or who will show sympathy to you,
or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?
- 6 You have forsaken me,” declares Yahweh.
“You go backward, so I have stretched my hand against you,
and I have destroyed you.
I am tired of becoming remorseful.
- 7 And I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land.
I am bereaved.
I have destroyed my people.
They did not turn back from their ways.
- 8 Their widows will be more numerous before me than *the* sand of *the* seas.
I have brought to them, against *the* mothers of young men,
a destroyer at noon.
I will suddenly drop on her anguish and horror.
- 9 She who gave birth to seven has withered away.
She gasps her breath.
Her sun set while still day.
She has been put to shame and disgraced.
And the remainder of them I will give to the sword
before their enemies,” declares Yahweh.

Jeremiah’s Prophecy to Judah—Jeremiah’s Complaint and God’s Rebuke (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 15:10–21

Jeremiah Feels Sorry for Himself

- 10 Woe to me, O my mother, that you gave birth to me,
a man of contention and quarreling to the whole land.
I have not lent out and I have not borrowed.
All of them *are* cursing me.

11 Yahweh said,

“Surely I will set you free to be good for you,
surely I will cause the enemy to intercede with you
in a time of trouble,
and in a time of distress.

- 12 Can anyone break iron,
iron from the north, or bronze?
- 13 I will give your wealth and your treasures
as plunder without price,
even because of all your sins,
and throughout all your territories.
- 14 And I will make you serve your enemies
in a land *that* you *do* not know,
for a fire will kindle in my anger.
Upon you it will be kindled.”
- 15 You who know, *O* Yahweh, remember me, and attend to me,
and take revenge for me against my persecutors in your forbearance.
You must take me away.
Know *that I am* carrying disgrace because of you.
- 16 Your words were found and I ate them,
and your words became to me as jubilation,
even as the joy of my heart,
for your name is called on me, *O* Yahweh God of hosts.
- 17 I sat not in the assembly of jokers,
nor did I exult.
Because of the presence of your hand I sat alone,
for you filled me *with* indignation.
- 18 Why is my pain endless, and my wound incurable?
It refuses to become healed.
Truly you are to me like a deceitful *brook*,
waters *that* are not trustworthy.

God Rebukes Jeremiah

19 Therefore thus says Yahweh,

“If you turn back, then I will take you back.
You will stand before me.
And if you utter *what is* precious and not *what is* worthless,
you will be as my mouth.
They will turn back to you,
and you will not turn back to them.

- 20 And I will make you to this people
a wall of fortified bronze,
and they will fight against you,
but they will not prevail over you,
for *I am* with you, to save you,
and to deliver you,” declares Yahweh.
- 21 “And I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked,
and I will redeem you from *the* hand of *the* tyrant.”

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Threats and Promises (c. 620–609 BC)

Jeremiah 16

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry

- 1 And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
2 “You shall not take for yourself a wife, there shall not be for you sons and daughters in this place.”
3 For thus says Yahweh concerning the sons and concerning the daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who gave birth to them, and concerning their fathers who fathered them in this land:
4 “They will die by diseases, they will not be mourned, and they will not be buried. They will be as dung on the face of the earth. And

they will perish by the sword and they will perish by the famine. And their dead bodies will become food for the birds of the air, and for the wild animals of the earth.”

Jeremiah Forbidden to Mourn or Feast

5 For thus says Yahweh, “You must not enter *the* house of *the* funeral meal, and you must not go to lament, and you must not show sympathy for them, for I have taken away my peace from this people,” declares Yahweh, “the loyal love and the compassion.

6 Both the great and small will die in this land. They will not be buried, and they will not mourn for them, and no one will cut himself with a blade, and no one will shave himself for them.

7 And they will not break bread for *the* mourning ceremony for them, to comfort him because of *the* dead. And they will not give drink to them, *the* cup of desolation, for their fathers, or for their mothers.

8 And you shall not enter *the* house of *the* banquet, to sit with them, to eat and drink.”

Judah’s Coming Punishment

9 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “Look, I *am* about to cause to disappear from this place, before your eyes and in your days, *the* voice of jubilation, and *the* voice of joy, and *the* voice of *the* bridegroom, and *the* voice of *the* bride.

10 And then when you tell this people all these words and they ask you, ‘Why has Yahweh pronounced against us all this great evil, and what *is* our iniquity, and what *is* our sin that we have sinned against Yahweh our God?’

11 Then you shall say to them, ‘Because your ancestors have forsaken me,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and they have gone after other gods, and they have served them, and they have bowed down in worship to them, and they have forsaken me, and they have not kept my laws.

12 And you have behaved badly more than your ancestors, and look, you *are* going each one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, without listening to me.

13 So I will throw you from this land to the land that you have not known, you or your ancestors, and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will not show you favor.

God Foresees a Future Restoration

14 Therefore look, days *are* coming,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and it will no longer be said, “As Yahweh lives, who led up the Israelites from the land of Egypt,”

15 but only “As Yahweh lives, who led up the Israelites from *the* land of *the* north, and from all the lands where he had driven them,” for I will bring them back to their ground that I gave to their ancestors.

Futility of Hiding from God

16 Look, I *am* sending for many fishermen,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and they will fish them out, and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and from the clefts of the cliffs.

17 For my eyes *are* on all their ways, they are not hidden from before me, and their iniquity is not concealed from before my eyes.

18 And I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin because of their profaning my land with the dead bodies of their abhorrences, and *with* their abominations they have filled up my inheritance.”

All Nations Will One Day Acknowledge the Lord

19 O Yahweh, my strength, and my stronghold,
and my refuge in *the* day of distress,
to you *the* nations will come from the ends of *the* earth,
and they will say, “Our ancestors have inherited only lies,
vanity, and there is no profit in them.

20 Can a human make for himself gods?
Yet they *are* not gods!”

21 “Therefore look, I *am* about to let them know,
this time I am going to let them know
my power and my might,
and they will know that my name *is* Yahweh.”