

Jeremiah's Vision of Two Baskets of Figs (597 BC)

Jeremiah 24

Description of the Figs

1 Yahweh showed me, and look, there were two baskets of figs placed before the temple of Yahweh—after Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had deported Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, with the officials of Judah, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, from Jerusalem and had brought them *to* Babylon.

2 The one basket *had* very good figs, like early figs, and the other basket *had* very bad figs that could not be eaten because of *their* bad quality.

3 And Yahweh asked me, “What *are* you seeing, Jeremiah?” And I said, “Figs—the good figs, very good, and the bad *figs*, very bad, that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality.”

Meaning of the Good Figs

4 Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

5 “Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, ‘Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles of Judah whom I have sent away from this place *to the* land of *the* Chaldeans.

6 For I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. And I will build them and not annihilate *them*, and I will plant them and not uproot *them*.

7 And I will give to them a heart to know me, that I *am* Yahweh, and they will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with the whole of their heart.

Meaning of the Bad Figs

8 But like the bad figs that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality—for thus says Yahweh—so I will treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who live in the land of Egypt.

9 And I will make them as a terror, an evil to all the kingdoms of the earth, as a disgrace and a proverb, as a taunt and a curse, in all the places where I will drive them.

10 And I will send among them the sword, the famine, and the plague, until they perish from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.”

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles in Babylon (597 BC)

Jeremiah 29

Sending of the Letter

1 And these *are* the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the exiles, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had deported from Jerusalem *to* Babylon,

2 after the going out of Jeconiah the king, and the queen mother, and the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the artisans, and the smiths from Jerusalem,

3 by the hand of Elasah, the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah, the son of Hilkiyah, whom Zedekiah, the king of Judah, sent to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, *to* Babylon, saying,

Settle Down in Babylon

4 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have deported from Jerusalem *to* Babylon,

5 ‘Build houses and live *in them*, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.

6 Take wives and father sons and daughters, and take for your sons wives, and give your daughters to men that they may bear sons and daughters, and multiply there, and you must not be few.

7 And seek the prosperity of the city where I have deported you, and pray on behalf of it to Yahweh, for in its prosperity you will have prosperity.’

Warning against False Prophets

8 For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who *are* in your midst, and your diviners, deceive you, and you must not listen to your dreams that you *are* causing *them* to dream.

9 For they *are* prophesying falsely to you in my name; I have not sent them,’ declares Yahweh.

10 For thus says Yahweh, ‘As soon as the time has passed, seventy years for Babylon, I will attend to you, and I will fulfill my good word to you, to bring you back to this place.

11 For I know the plans that I *am* planning concerning you,’ declares Yahweh, ‘plans for prosperity and not for harm, to give to you a future and a hope.

12 Then *when* you call me, and you come and pray to me, then I will listen to you.

13 When you search for me, then you will find *me*, if you seek me with all your heart.

14 And I will let myself be found by you,’ declares Yahweh, ‘and I will restore your fortunes, and I will gather you from all the nations

and from all the places to which I have driven you,' declares Yahweh, 'and I will bring you back to the place from which I deported you.'

15 Because you have said, 'Yahweh has raised up prophets for us *in* Babylon'—

16 for thus says Yahweh concerning the king who sits on the throne of David and concerning all the people who live in this city, your fellow kinsmen who did not go with you into the exile—

17 thus says Yahweh of hosts, 'Look, I *am* going to send among them the sword, the famine, and the plague, and I will make them like rotten figs that cannot be eaten because of *their* bad quality.

18 And I will pursue them with the sword, with the famine, and with the plague, and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, a curse, and a horror, and *an object of* hissing, and a disgrace among all the nations to which I have driven them,

19 because they did not listen to my words,' declares Yahweh, 'when I sent to them my servants the prophets, sending over and over again, and they would not listen,' declares Yahweh.

20 And you, hear the word of Yahweh, all *you* exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab, the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying to you in my name a lie, 'Look, I *am* going to give them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and he will strike them before your eyes.

22 And a curse will be taken *up* because of them by all the exiles of Judah who *are* in Babylon, saying, "May Yahweh make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,"

23 because they have done a disgraceful thing in Israel, and they have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors, and they have spoken words in my name, lies that I have not commanded them, and I *am* he who knows, and I *am* a witness,' declares Yahweh."

Shemaiah Resists Jeremiah's Message

24 And to Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall say, saying,

25 "Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, 'Because you yourself sent *a* letter in your name to all the people who *are* in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest, and to all the priests, saying,

26 "Yahweh made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, so that there are overseers *in* the house of Yahweh over any mad man *who* exhibits the behavior of a prophet, and you must put him into the stocks and into the neck iron,

27 and so then why have you not rebuked Jeremiah the Anathothite who exhibits the behavior of a prophet for you?

28 Because he has sent to us *in* Babylon, saying, 'It *will be* a long time, build houses and live *in them*, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'" "

God's Message to the Exiles About Shemaiah

29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 And the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

31 "Send to all the exiles, saying, 'Thus says Yahweh concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: "Because Shemaiah prophesied to you, though I have not sent him, and he has made you trust in a lie,"

32 therefore thus says Yahweh, "Look, I *am* going to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his offspring. There will not be for him a man who lives in the midst of this people, and he will not see the good that I *am* going to do to my people," declares Yahweh, "For he has spoken rebellion against Yahweh." "

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Promises of Restoration (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 30

Introduction

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

2 "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, saying, 'Write for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you in a scroll.

3 For look, days *are* coming,' declares Yahweh, 'when I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel and Judah,' says Yahweh, 'and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors and they will take possession of it.'"

Promise of Restoration for Israel

4 Now these *are* the words that Yahweh spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah.

5 "For thus says Yahweh:

'We have heard a sound of trembling,
terror, and there is no peace.

6 Ask please and see whether a male can bear a child.
Why *do* I see every strong man
with his hands on his loins like a woman giving birth?

- And *why* are all *their* faces changed to paleness?
- 7 Alas! For that day *is* great,
there is none like it.
And it *is* a time of distress for Jacob,
yet from it he will be delivered.
- 8 And it will happen on that day,' declares Yahweh of hosts,
'I will break his yoke from your neck
and your bonds I will tear to pieces.
And strangers will no longer let him work as a slave.
- 9 But they will serve Yahweh their God,
and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.
- 10 But you must not fear, my servant Jacob,' declares Yahweh,
'and you must not be dismayed, Israel,
for look, I *am* going to save you from far,
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.
And Jacob will return,
and he will be at rest,
and he will be at ease,
and there will be no *one who* makes *him* afraid.
- 11 For I am with you,' declares Yahweh, 'to save you.
For I will make a complete destruction
of all the nations to which I scattered you,
but you I will not make a complete destruction.
And I will chastise you to the measure,
and I will not leave you entirely unpunished.'

Promise of Healing for an Incurable Wound

- 12 For thus says Yahweh,

'Your injury *is* incurable,
your wound *is* overcome by sickness.
- 13 There is no *one who* pleads your cause,
for *your* boil there is no healing for you.
- 14 All your lovers have forgotten you,
they do not care for you.
I have struck you *with the* blow of an enemy,
the punishment of *the* cruel,
because of the greatness of your guilt,
your sins are numerous.
- 15 Why do you cry because of your wound?
Your pain *is* incurable.
Because of the greatness of your guilt—your sins are vast—
I have done these *things* to you.
- 16 Therefore all *those who* devour you will be devoured,
and all your foes, all of them will go into captivity,
and *those who* plunder you will be as plunder,
and all *those who* plunder you I will make as plunder.
- 17 For I will present healing to you,
and I will heal you of your wounds,' declares Yahweh.
'Because they have called you an outcast, *saying*,
"It is Zion, there is no *one who* cares for her."

Promise of Restoration of the Fortunes of Israel

- 18 Thus says Yahweh:

'Look, I *will* restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob,
and I will have compassion on his dwellings,
and *the* city will be rebuilt upon its mound,

- and *the* citadel fortress will stand on its rightful site.
- 19 And thanksgiving and *the* sound of merry-makers will come out from them, and I will make them numerous, and they will not be few. And I will make them honored, and they will not be lowly.
- 20 And their children will be as of old, and their community will be established before me. And I will punish all their oppressors.
- 21 And their noble will be from them, and their ruler will come out from their midst. And I will bring him near and he will approach me. For who *is* he that would pledge his heart to approach me?' declares Yahweh.
- 22 'And you will be to me a people, and I will be to you God.'"

The Fierce Anger of the Lord

- 23 Look, the storm of Yahweh! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest. It will whirl upon *the* head of *the* wicked.
- 24 The burning anger of Yahweh will not turn back until his doing, and until his accomplishing the plans of his mind. In the last of the days you will understand it.

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—The New Covenant (c. 597 BC)

Jeremiah 31

The Rebuilding of Israel

- 1 "At that time," declares Yahweh,
- "I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be to me a people."
- 2 Thus says Yahweh:
- "*The* people of *the* survivors of the sword found grace in the desert; Israel going to find their rest."
- 3 From afar Yahweh appeared to me, *saying*, "I have loved you *with* an everlasting love. Therefore I have drawn you *with* loyal love.
- 4 I will again build you, and you will be built, O virgin Israel. You will again adorn yourself *with* your tambourines, and you will go forth in *the* dancing in a ring of *the* merry-makers.
- 5 You will again plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. *The* planters will plant, and they will enjoy *it*.
- 6 For there will be a day *when* watchmen will call in the hill country of Ephraim, 'Stand up, and let us go up *to* Zion, to Yahweh our God.'"

Return of the Scattered People

- 7 For thus says Yahweh,
- "Sing for joy for Jacob *with* gladness, and shout out for the head of the nations. Proclaim, praise, and say, 'Save, O Yahweh, your people, the remnant of Israel.'

- 8 Look, I *am* going to bring them from *the* land of *the* north,
and I will gather them from *the* remotest part of *the* earth.
Among them *the* blind, and *the* lame,
those who are pregnant, and *those who* give birth,
together, a great assembly,
they will return here.
- 9 With weeping they will come,
and with pleas for mercy I will bring them;
I will let them walk by streams of water in a straight path.
They will not stumble in it,
for I have become to Israel a father,
and Ephraim, he *is* my firstborn.”
- 10 Hear the word of Yahweh, *O* nations,
and declare in the coastlands from afar, and say,
“The scatterer of Israel will gather him,
and he will keep him as a shepherd his flock.
- 11 For Yahweh has ransomed Jacob,
and he has redeemed him from *the* hand of *the* person stronger than he.
- 12 And they will come,
and they will sing for joy on the height of Zion,
and they will be radiant over the goodness of Yahweh,
over *the* grain, and over *the* wine, and over *the* olive oil,
and over *the* young ones of *the* flock, and over *the* cattle.
And their life will become like a well-watered garden,
and they will never languish again.”
- 13 “Then *the* young woman will rejoice in *the* dancing in a ring,
and *the* young men and *the* old men together.
And I will turn their mourning to jubilation,
and I will comfort them,
and I will gladden them from their sorrow.
- 14 And I will saturate the appetite of the priests *with* fatness,
and my people will be satisfied with my goodness,” declares Yahweh.

The End of Rachel’s Weeping for Her Children

- 15 Thus says Yahweh,
“A voice *is* heard in Ramah,
lamentation, *the* weeping of bitterness.
Rachel *is* weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted because of her children,
for they are no *more*.” [\[Matt 2:17–18\]](#)
- 16 Thus says Yahweh:
- “Restrain your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears,
for there is a reward for your work,” declares Yahweh,
“and they will return from *the* land of *the* enemy.
- 17 And there is hope for your future,” declares Yahweh,
“and *your* children will return to their territory.
- 18 Indeed I heard Ephraim pitying themselves,
‘You disciplined me, and I was disciplined,
like a calf that is not trained.
Bring me back and let me return,
for you *are* Yahweh my God.
- 19 For after my turning back I repented,
and after coming to understand I struck *my* thigh.
I was ashamed and also humiliated,
because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’

- 20 *Is Ephraim my dear son,
or the child of my delight?*
For as often as I have earnestly spoken against him,
I still remember him.
Therefore my bowels are turbulent for him,
surely I will have compassion on him,” declares Yahweh.
- 21 “Set up for yourself road markers,
make for yourself signposts,
set your mind to the main road,
the road by which you went.
Return, O virgin of Israel,
return to these your cities.
- 22 How long will you waver, O unfaithful daughter?
For Yahweh has created a new *thing* on the earth,
a woman, she shelters a man.”

Description of Future Blessing

23 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, “They will again say these words in the land of Judah and in its towns at my restoring their fortunes,

‘Yahweh bless you, O settlement of righteousness,
O hill of holiness.’

- 24 And Judah and all of its towns together will live in it,
farmers and those who travel with the flocks.
- 25 For I will saturate *the* thirst of *the* weary,
and every person *who* languishes I will replenish.”
- 26 At this I awoke and looked,
and my sleep was pleasant to me.

27 “Look, *the days are* coming,” declares Yahweh, “and I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah *with the* seed of humankind, and *with the* seed of animals.

28 And then as I have watched over them to pull up, and to tear down, and to annihilate, and to destroy, and to do evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares Yahweh.

Repudiation of a Popular Saying

- 29 “In those days they will say no longer, ‘Parents have eaten unripe fruit, and *the* teeth of *the* children are set on edge.’
30 But each will die because of his iniquity, everyone who eats the unripe fruit, their teeth will be set on edge.

Announcement of a New Covenant

- 31 Look, *the days are* coming,” declares Yahweh, “and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day of my grasping *them* by their hand, bringing them out from the land of Egypt, my covenant that they themselves broke, though I myself was a master over them,” declares Yahweh.
33 “But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares Yahweh: “I will put my law in their inward parts and on their hearts I will write it, and I will be to them God, and they themselves will be to me people.
34 And they will no longer teach each one his neighbor, or each one his brother, saying, ‘Know Yahweh,’ for all of them will know me, from their smallest and up to their greatest,” declares Yahweh, “for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will no longer remember.” [[Heb 8:8–12; 10:16–17](#)]

God’s Assurance of Israel’s Eternal Duration

- 35 Thus says Yahweh, who gives *the* sun for light by day, the regulations of *the* moon and *the* stars for light *by* night, who stirs up the sea and its waves roar—Yahweh of hosts *is* his name.
36 “If these rules would cease from before me,” declares Yahweh, “also the offspring of Israel would cease from being a nation before me forever.”
37 Thus says Yahweh, “If *the* heavens above can be measured, and *the* foundations of *the* earth below can be explored, also I will reject all the offspring of Israel because of all that they have done,” declares Yahweh.

God's Promise that Jerusalem Will be Rebuilt

38 "Look, days *are* coming," declares Yahweh, "and the city will be rebuilt for Yahweh, from the Tower of Hananel *to* the Corner Gate.

39 And the measuring line will still go out immediately in front *of* it to the hill of Gareb, and it will turn *to* Goah.

40 And the whole of the valley *of* the corpses, and the ashes, and all the cultivated fields up to the wadi of Kidron, up to the corner of the Gate of the Horses *toward the east will be* holy to Yahweh. It will not be uprooted, and it will not be overthrown again forever."

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