

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.

Josiah Renews the Covenant (c. Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:1–3	2 Chronicles 34:29–32
<p>1 Then the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.</p> <p>2 The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.</p> <p>3 The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all <i>his</i> heart and all <i>his</i> soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book.</p> <p>And all the people entered into the covenant.</p>	<p>29 Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.</p> <p>30 The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites and all the people, from the greatest to the least; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.</p> <p>31 Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book.</p> <p>32 Moreover, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand <i>with him</i>. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.</p>

Josiah Celebrates the Passover (14–21 Nisan [April] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:21–23	2 Chronicles 35:1–19
<p>21 Then the king commanded all the people saying, “Celebrate the Passover to the LORD your God as it is written in this book of the covenant.”</p>	<p>1 Then Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem,</p> <p>and they slaughtered the Passover <i>animals</i> on the fourteenth <i>day</i> of the first month.</p> <p>2 He set the priests in their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD.</p> <p>3 He also said to the Levites who taught all Israel <i>and</i> who were holy to the LORD, “Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel built; it will be a burden on <i>your</i> shoulders no longer. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel.</p> <p>4 “Prepare <i>yourselves</i> by your fathers’ households in your divisions, according to the writing of David king of Israel and according to the writing of his son Solomon.</p> <p>5 “Moreover, stand in the holy place according to the sections of</p>

the fathers' households of your brethren the lay people, and according to the Levites, by division of a father's household.

6 "Now slaughter the Passover *animals*, sanctify yourselves and prepare for your brethren to do according to the word of the LORD by Moses."

7 Josiah contributed to the lay people, to all who were present, flocks of lambs and young goats, all for the Passover offerings, numbering 30,000 plus 3,000 bulls; these were from the king's possessions.

8 His officers also contributed a freewill offering to the people, the priests and the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the officials of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover offerings 2,600 *from the flocks* and 300 bulls.

9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the officers of the Levites, contributed to the Levites for the Passover offerings 5,000 *from the flocks* and 500 bulls.

10 So the service was prepared, and the priests stood at their stations and the Levites by their divisions according to the king's command.

11 They slaughtered the Passover *animals*, and while the priests sprinkled the blood *received* from their hand, the Levites skinned *them*.

12 Then they removed the burnt offerings that *they* might give them to the sections of the fathers' households of the lay people to present to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. *They did* this also with the bulls.

13 So they roasted the Passover *animals* on the fire according to the ordinance, and they boiled the holy things in pots, in kettles, in pans, and carried *them* speedily to all the lay people.

14 Afterwards they prepared for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, *were* offering the burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron.

15 The singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* also at their stations according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the gatekeepers at each gate did not have to depart from their service, because the Levites their brethren prepared for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared on that day to celebrate the Passover, and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD according to the command of King Josiah.

17 Thus the sons of Israel who were present celebrated the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days.

18 There had not been celebrated a Passover like it in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet; nor had any of the kings of Israel celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did with the priests, the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign this Passover was celebrated.

22 Surely such a Passover had not been celebrated from the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah.

23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was observed to the LORD in Jerusalem.

Josiah Removes Idolatry That Had Appeared Since His Twelfth Year (c. Iyyar [May] 622 BC)

2 Kings 23:24–27

24 Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem,

that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

25 Before him there was no king like him who turned to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

26 However, the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him.

27 The LORD said, "I will remove Judah also from My sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'"

2 Chronicles 34:33

33 Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the LORD their God.

Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the LORD God of their fathers.

Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation La Habra, Calif. Used by permission. All rights reserved. For Permission to Quote Information visit <http://www.lockman.org>.