

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 the LORD said to me, "Go and buy yourself a linen waistband and put it around your waist, but do not put it in water."
 2 So I bought the waistband in accordance with the word of the LORD and put it around my waist.
 3 Then the word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying,
 4 "Take the waistband that you have bought, which is around your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates and hide it there in a crevice of the rock."
 5 So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the LORD had commanded me.
 6 After many days the LORD said to me, "Arise, go to the Euphrates and take from there the waistband which I commanded you to hide there."
 7 Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the waistband from the place where I had hidden it; and lo, the waistband was ruined, it was totally worthless.
 8 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
 9 "Thus says the LORD, 'Just so will I destroy the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.
 10 This wicked people, who refuse to listen to My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their hearts and have gone after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them, let them be just like this waistband which is totally worthless.
 11 For as the waistband clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me,' declares the LORD, 'that they might be for Me a people, for renown, for praise and for glory; but they did not listen.'

The Smashed Wineskins

- 12 "Therefore you are to speak this word to them, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "Every jug is to be filled with wine.'" And when they say to you, 'Do we not very well know that every jug is to be filled with wine?'
 13 then say to them, 'Thus says the LORD, "Behold I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—the kings that sit for David on his throne, the priests, the prophets and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness!
 14 I will dash them against each other, both the fathers and the sons together," declares the LORD. "I will not show pity nor be sorry nor have compassion so as not to destroy 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 the LORD to Jeremiah in regard to the drought:

- 2 "Judah mourns
 And her gates languish;
 They sit on the ground in mourning,
 And the cry of Jerusalem has ascended.
 3 "Their nobles have sent their servants for water;
 They have come to the cisterns and found no water.
 They have returned with their vessels empty;
 They have been put to shame and humiliated,
 And they cover their heads.
 4 "Because the ground is cracked,
 For there has been no rain on the land;
 The farmers have been put to shame,
 They have covered their heads.
 5 "For even the doe in the field has given birth only to abandon *her young*,
 Because there is no grass.
 6 "The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights;
 They pant for air like jackals,
 Their eyes fail
 For there is no vegetation.

Jeremiah Intercedes for the People

- 7 "Although our iniquities testify against us,
 O LORD, act for Your name's sake!
 Truly our apostasies have been many,

We have sinned against You.

- 8 “O Hope of Israel,
Its Savior in time of distress,
Why are You like a stranger in the land
Or like a traveler who has pitched his *tent* for the night?
9 “Why are You like a man dismayed,
Like a mighty man who cannot save?
Yet You are in our midst, O LORD,
And we are called by Your name;
Do not forsake us!”

God Commands Jeremiah to Stop Praying

10 Thus says the LORD to this people, “Even so they have loved to wander; they have not kept their feet in check. Therefore the LORD does not accept them; now He will remember their iniquity and call their sins to account.”

11 So the LORD said to me, “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.

12 When they fast, I am not going to listen to their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I am not going to accept them. Rather I am going to make an end of them by the sword, famine and pestilence.”

Jeremiah Blames False Prophets

13 But, “Ah, Lord GOD!” I said, “Look, the prophets are telling them, ‘You will not see the sword nor will you have famine, but I will give you lasting peace in this place.’”

God’s Judgment on the False Prophets

14 Then the LORD said to me, “The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them; they are prophesying to you a false vision, divination, futility and the deception of their own minds.

15 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who are prophesying in My name, although it was not I who sent them—yet they keep saying, ‘There will be no sword or famine in this land’—by sword and famine those prophets shall meet their end!

16 The people also to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and there will be no one to bury them—*neither* them, *nor* their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters—for I will pour out their *own* wickedness on them.

Jeremiah’s Lament and Supplication

17 “You will say this word to them,
‘Let my eyes flow down with tears night and day,
And let them not cease;
For the virgin daughter of my people has been crushed with a mighty blow,
With a sorely infected wound.

18 ‘If I go out to the country,
Behold, those slain with the sword!
Or if I enter the city,
Behold, diseases of famine!
For both prophet and priest
Have gone roving about in the land that they do not know.’”

19 Have You completely rejected Judah?
Or have You loathed Zion?
Why have You stricken us so that we are beyond healing?
We waited for peace, but nothing good *came*;
And for a time of healing, but behold, terror!

20 We know our wickedness, O LORD,
The iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You.

21 Do not despise *us*, for Your own name’s sake;
Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory;
Remember *and* do not annul Your covenant with us.

22 Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain?
Or can the heavens grant showers?
Is it not You, O LORD our God?
Therefore we hope in You,
For You are the one who has done all these things.

The Futility of Intercession

15:1 Then the LORD said to me, “Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people; send them away from My presence and let them go!

2 And it shall be that when they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ then you are to tell them, ‘Thus says the LORD:

“Those *destined* for death, to death;
 And those *destined* for the sword, to the sword;
 And those *destined* for famine, to famine;
 And those *destined* for captivity, to captivity.”

3 “I will appoint over them four kinds of *doom*,” declares the LORD: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag off, and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.

4 I will make them an object of horror among all the kingdoms of the earth because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.

The End of God’s Pity

5 “Indeed, who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem,
 Or who will mourn for you,
 Or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?

6 “You who have forsaken Me,” declares the LORD,
 “You keep going backward.
 So I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you;
 I am tired of relenting!

7 “I will winnow them with a winnowing fork
 At the gates of the land;
 I will bereave *them* of children, I will destroy My people;
 They did not repent of their ways.

8 “Their widows will be more numerous before Me
 Than the sand of the seas;
 I will bring against them, against the mother of a young man,
 A destroyer at noonday;
 I will suddenly bring down on her
 Anguish and dismay.

9 “She who bore seven *sons* pines away;
 Her breathing is labored.
 Her sun has set while it was yet day;
 She has been shamed and humiliated.
 So I will give over their survivors to the sword
 Before their enemies,” declares the LORD.

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, my mother, that you have borne me
 As a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land!
 I have not lent, nor have men lent money to me,
 Yet everyone curses me.

11 The LORD said, “Surely I will set you free for *purposes of good*;
 Surely I will cause the enemy to make supplication to you
 In a time of disaster and a time of distress.

12 “Can anyone smash iron,
 Iron from the north, or bronze?

13 “Your wealth and your treasures
 I will give for booty without cost,
 Even for all your sins
 And within all your borders.

14 “Then I will cause your enemies to bring *it*

Into a land you do not know;
For a fire has been kindled in My anger,
It will burn upon you.”

- 15 You who know, O LORD,
Remember me, take notice of me,
And take vengeance for me on my persecutors.
Do not, in view of Your patience, take me away;
Know that for Your sake I endure reproach.
- 16 Your words were found and I ate them,
And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart;
For I have been called by Your name,
O LORD God of hosts.
- 17 I did not sit in the circle of merry-makers,
Nor did I exult.
Because of Your hand *upon me* I sat alone,
For You filled me with indignation.
- 18 Why has my pain been perpetual
And my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?
Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive *stream*
With water that is unreliable?

God Rebukes Jeremiah

- 19 Therefore, thus says the LORD,
“If you return, then I will restore you—
Before Me you will stand;
And if you extract the precious from the worthless,
You will become My spokesman.
They for their part may turn to you,
But as for you, you must not turn to them.
- 20 “Then I will make you to this people
A fortified wall of bronze;
And though they fight against you,
They will not prevail over you;
For I am with you to save you
And deliver you,” declares the LORD.
- 21 “So I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked,
And I will redeem you from the grasp of the violent.”

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

Jeremiah 16

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry

- 1 The word of the LORD also came to me saying,
2 “You shall not take a wife for yourself nor have sons or daughters in this place.”
3 For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bear them, and their fathers who beget them in this land:
4 They will die of deadly diseases, they will not be lamented or buried; they will be as dung on the surface of the ground and come to an end by sword and famine, and their carcasses will become food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth.”

Jeremiah Forbidden to Mourn or Feast

- 5 For thus says the LORD, “Do not enter a house of mourning, or go to lament or to console them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people,” declares the LORD, “My lovingkindness and compassion.
6 Both great men and small will die in this land; they will not be buried, they will not be lamented, nor will anyone gash himself or shave his head for them.
7 Men will not break *bread* in mourning for them, to comfort anyone for the dead, nor give them a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or mother.
8 Moreover you shall not go into a house of feasting to sit with them to eat and drink.”

Judah's Coming Punishment

9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I am going to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your time, the voice of rejoicing and the voice of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride.

10 Now when you tell this people all these words, they will say to you, 'For what reason has the LORD declared all this great calamity against us? And what is our iniquity, or what is our sin which we have committed against the LORD our God?'

11 Then you are to say to them, '*It is* because your forefathers have forsaken Me,' declares the LORD, 'and have followed other gods and served them and bowed down to them; but Me they have forsaken and have not kept My law.

12 You too have done evil, *even* more than your forefathers; for behold, you are each one walking according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart, without listening to Me.

13 So I will hurl you out of this land into the land which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers; and there you will serve other gods day and night, for I will grant you no favor.'

God Foresees a Future Restoration

14 "Therefore behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when it will no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,'

15 but, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.' For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers.

Futility of Hiding from God

16 "Behold, I am going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will fish for them; and afterwards I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and from the clefts of the rocks.

17 For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes.

18 I will first doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable idols and with their abominations."

All Nations Will One Day Acknowledge the Lord

19 O LORD, 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 say,
"Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood,
Futility and things of no profit."

20 Can man make gods for himself?
Yet they are not gods!

21 "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know—
This time I will make them know
My power and My might;
And they shall know that My name is the LORD."

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>.