

Jeremiah's Prophecy to Judah—Condemnation of False Prophets (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 23:9–40

Condemnation of Godless Prophets and Priests

- 9 As for the prophets:
 My heart is broken within me,
 All my bones tremble;
 I have become like a drunken man,
 Even like a man overcome with wine,
 Because of the LORD
 And because of His holy words.
- 10 For the land is full of adulterers;
 For the land mourns because of the curse.
 The pastures of the wilderness have dried up.
 Their course also is evil
 And their might is not right.
- 11 “For both prophet and priest are polluted;
 Even in My house I have found their wickedness,” declares the LORD.
- 12 “Therefore their way will be like slippery paths to them,
 They will be driven away into the gloom and fall down in it;
 For I will bring calamity upon them,
 The year of their punishment,” declares the LORD.

Evil Prophets of Samaria Compared to Prophets of Jerusalem

- 13 “Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing:
 They prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray.
- 14 “Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing:
 The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood;
 And they strengthen the hands of evildoers,
 So that no one has turned back from his wickedness.
 All of them have become to Me like Sodom,
 And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.
- 15 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets,

 ‘Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood
 And make them drink poisonous water,
 For from the prophets of Jerusalem
 Pollution has gone forth into all the land.’”

God Warns Judah to Reject the Message of the False Prophets

- 16 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
 “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you.
 They are leading you into futility;
 They speak a vision of their own imagination,
 Not from the mouth of the LORD.
- 17 “They keep saying to those who despise Me,
 ‘The LORD has said, “You will have peace”’;
 And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart,
 They say, ‘Calamity will not come upon you.’
- 18 “But who has stood in the council of the LORD,
 That he should see and hear His word?
 Who has given heed to His word and listened?
- 19 “Behold, the storm of the LORD has gone forth in wrath,
 Even a whirling tempest;
 It will swirl down on the head of the wicked.
- 20 “The anger of the LORD will not turn back
 Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart;
 In the last days you will clearly understand it.

- 21 “I did not send *these* prophets,
But they ran.
I did not speak to them,
But they prophesied.
- 22 “But if they had stood in My council,
Then they would have announced My words to My people,
And would have turned them back from their evil way
And from the evil of their deeds.
- 23 “Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD,
“And not a God far off?
- 24 “Can a man hide himself in hiding places
So I do not see him?” declares the LORD.
“Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.

God’s Rejection of the Lying Prophets

- 25 “I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsely in My name, saying, ‘I had a dream, I had a dream!’
26 How long? Is there *anything* in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even *these* prophets of the deception of their own heart,
27 who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal?
28 The prophet who has a dream may relate *his* dream, but let him who has My word speak My word in truth. What does straw have *in common* with grain?” declares the LORD.
29 “Is not My word like fire?” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock?
30 Therefore behold, I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who steal My words from each other.
31 Behold, I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who use their tongues and declare, ‘*The Lord* declares.’
32 Behold, I am against those who have prophesied false dreams,” declares the LORD, “and related them and led My people astray by their falsehoods and reckless boasting; yet I did not send them or command them, nor do they furnish this people the slightest benefit,” declares the LORD.

The Burden of the Lord

- 33 “Now when this people or the prophet or a priest asks you saying, ‘What is the oracle of the LORD?’ then you shall say to them, ‘What oracle?’ The LORD declares, ‘I will abandon you.’
34 Then as for the prophet or the priest or the people who say, ‘The oracle of the LORD,’ I will bring punishment upon that man and his household.
35 Thus will each of you say to his neighbor and to his brother, ‘What has the LORD answered?’ or, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’
36 For you will no longer remember the oracle of the LORD, because every man’s own word will become the oracle, and you have perverted the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God.
37 Thus you will say to *that* prophet, ‘What has the LORD answered you?’ and, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’
38 For if you say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’ surely thus says the LORD, ‘Because you said this word, “The oracle of the LORD!” I have also sent to you, saying, “You shall not say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’”’
39 Therefore behold, I will surely forget you and cast you away from My presence, along with the city which I gave you and your fathers.
40 I will put an everlasting reproach on you and an everlasting humiliation which will not be forgotten.”

Jeremiah Calls on Jehoiakim and Judah to Repent (609/608 BC)

Jeremiah 26

Another Temple Sermon (see Jeremiah 7–10)

- 1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD, saying,
2 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Stand in the court of the LORD’s house, and speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship *in* the LORD’s house all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. Do not omit a word!
3 Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds.’
4 And you will say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD, “If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you,
5 to listen to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I have been sending to you again and again, but you have not listened;
6 then I will make this house like Shiloh, and this city I will make a curse to all the nations of the earth.”’”

Arrest and Trial of Jeremiah

7 The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

8 When Jeremiah finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded *him* to speak to all the people, the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, “You must die!

9 Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD saying, ‘This house will be like Shiloh and this city will be desolate, without inhabitant?’” And all the people gathered about Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king’s house to the house of the LORD and sat in the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD’s *house*.

11 Then the priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people, saying, “A death sentence for this man! For he has prophesied against this city as you have heard in your hearing.”

12 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and to all the people, saying, “The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that you have heard.

13 Now therefore amend your ways and your deeds and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will change His mind about the misfortune which He has pronounced against you.

14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hands; do with me as is good and right in your sight.

15 Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves, and on this city and on its inhabitants; for truly the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing.”

16 Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, “No death sentence for this man! For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.”

17 Then some of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying,

18 “Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, ‘Thus the LORD of hosts has said,

“Zion will be plowed *as* a field,
And Jerusalem will become ruins,
And the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.”’ [Mic 3:12]

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and the LORD changed His mind about the misfortune which He had pronounced against them? But we are committing a great evil against ourselves.”

Arrest and Slaying of Uriah the Prophet

20 Indeed, there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land words similar to all those of Jeremiah.

21 When King Jehoiakim and all his mighty men and all the officials heard his words, then the king sought to put him to death; but Uriah heard *it*, and he was afraid and fled and went to Egypt.

22 Then King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor and *certain* men with him *went* into Egypt.

23 And they brought Uriah from Egypt and led him to King Jehoiakim, who slew him with a sword and cast his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

Jeremiah is Released

24 But the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that he was not given into the hands of the people to put him to death.

Jeremiah Warns Judah About the Coming Babylonian Attack (early 605 BC)

Jeremiah 25

Judah’s Refusal to Listen to the Prophets

1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon),

2 which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

3 “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

4 And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear,
5 saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever;

6 and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm.’

7 Yet you have not listened to Me," declares the LORD, "in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

Seventy Years of Punishment

8 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words,
9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and *I will send* to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.
10 Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.
11 This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.
12 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.
13 I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.
14 (For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.)'"

The Cup of God's Wrath

15 For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, says to me, "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it.
16 They will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them."
17 Then I took the cup from the LORD's hand and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it:
18 Jerusalem and the cities of Judah and its kings *and* its princes, to make them a ruin, a horror, a hissing and a curse, as it is this day;
19 Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his princes and all his people;
20 and all the foreign people, all the kings of the land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the Philistines (even Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and the remnant of Ashdod);
21 Edom, Moab and the sons of Ammon;
22 and all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon and the kings of the coastlands which are beyond the sea;
23 and Dedan, Tema, Buz and all who cut the corners *of their hair*;
24 and all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the foreign people who dwell in the desert;
25 and all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam and all the kings of Media;
26 and all the kings of the north, near and far, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the earth which are upon the face of the ground, and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.
27 "You shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "Drink, be drunk, vomit, fall and rise no more because of the sword which I will send among you."
28 And it will be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you will say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "You shall surely drink!
29 For behold, I am beginning to work calamity in *this* city which is called by My name, and shall you be completely free from punishment? You will not be free from punishment; for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," declares the LORD of hosts.'

God's Coming Judgment on All Nations

30 "Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them,

'The LORD will roar from on high
And utter His voice from His holy habitation;
He will roar mightily against His fold.
He will shout like those who tread *the grapes*,
Against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 'A clamor has come to the end of the earth,
Because the LORD has a controversy with the nations.
He is entering into judgment with all flesh;
As for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,' declares the LORD."
32 Thus says the LORD of hosts,
"Behold, evil is going forth
From nation to nation,

And a great storm is being stirred up
From the remotest parts of the earth.

33 “Those slain by the LORD on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground.

34 “Wail, you shepherds, and cry;
And wallow *in ashes*, you masters of the flock;
For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions have come,
And you will fall like a choice vessel.

35 “Flight will perish from the shepherds,
And escape from the masters of the flock.

36 “*Hear* the sound of the cry of the shepherds,
And the wailing of the masters of the flock!
For the LORD is destroying their pasture,

37 “And the peaceful folds are made silent
Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

38 “He has left His hiding place like the lion;
For their land has become a horror
Because of the fierceness of the oppressing *sword*
And because of His fierce anger.”

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