

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

Jeremiah 24

Description of the Figs

1 After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the officials of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths from Jerusalem and had brought them to Babylon, the LORD showed me: behold, two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD!

2 One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten due to rotteness.

3 Then the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" And I said, "Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad *figs*, very bad, which cannot be eaten due to rotteness."

Meaning of the Good Figs

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

5 "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place *into* the land of the Chaldeans.

6 For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them up and not overthrow them, and I will plant them and not pluck them up.

7 I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart.

Meaning of the Bad Figs

8 'But like the bad figs which cannot be eaten due to rotteness—indeed, thus says the LORD—so I will abandon Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land and the ones who dwell in the land of Egypt.

9 I will make them a terror *and an* evil for all the kingdoms of the earth, as a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse in all places where I will scatter them.

10 I will send the sword, the famine and the pestilence upon them until they are destroyed from the land which I gave to them and their forefathers.'"

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

Jeremiah 29

Sending of the Letter

1 Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

2 (This was after King Jeconiah and the queen mother, the court officials, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.)

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

Settle Down in Babylon

4 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon,

5 'Build houses and live *in them*; and plant gardens and eat their produce.

6 Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease.

7 Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.'

Warning against False Prophets

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream.

9 For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,' declares the LORD.

10 "For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.

11 For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

13 You will seek Me and find *Me* when you search for Me with all your heart.

14 I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the

places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

15 "Because you have said, 'The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon' —

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

17 thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I am sending upon them the sword, famine and pestilence, and I will make them like split-open figs that cannot be eaten due to rotteness.

18 I will pursue them with the sword, with famine and with pestilence; and I will make them a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse and a horror and a hissing, and a reproach among all the nations where I have driven them,

19 because they have not listened to My words,' declares the LORD, 'which I sent to them again and again by My servants the prophets; but you did not listen,' declares the LORD.

20 You, therefore, hear the word of the LORD, all you exiles, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying to you falsely in My name, 'Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will slay them before your eyes.

22 Because of them a curse will be used by all the exiles from Judah who are in Babylon, saying, "May the LORD make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire,

23 because they have acted foolishly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives and have spoken words in My name falsely, which I did not command them; and I am He who knows and am a witness," declares the LORD."

Shemaiah Resists Jeremiah's Message

24 To Shemaiah the Nehelamite you shall speak, saying,

25 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Because you have sent letters in your own 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 "The LORD has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, to be the overseer in the house of the LORD over every madman who prophesies, to put him in the stocks and in the iron collar,

27 now then, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who prophesies to you?

28 For he has sent to us in Babylon, saying, '*The exile will be long; build houses and live in them and plant gardens and eat their produce.*'"

God's Message to the Exiles About Shemaiah

29 Zephaniah the priest read this letter to Jeremiah the prophet.

30 Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying,

31 "Send to all the exiles, saying, 'Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite, "Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, although I did not send him, and he has made you trust in a lie,"

32 therefore thus says the LORD, "Behold, I am about to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his descendants; he will not have anyone living among this people, and he will not see the good that I am about to do to My people," declares the LORD, "because he has preached rebellion against the LORD.'"

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

Jeremiah 30

Introduction

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book.

3 For behold, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.' The LORD says, 'I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they shall possess it.'"

Promise of Restoration for Israel

4 Now these are the words which the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah:

5 "For thus says the LORD,

'I have heard a sound of terror,
Of dread, and there is no peace.

6 'Ask now, and see

If a male can give birth.

Why do I see every man

With his hands on his loins, as a woman in childbirth?

And *why* have all faces turned pale?

7 'Alas! for that day is great,
There is none like it;
And it is the time of Jacob's distress,
But he will be saved from it.

8 'It shall come about on that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck and will tear off their bonds; and strangers will no longer make them their slaves.

9 But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

10 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant,' declares the LORD,
'And do not be dismayed, O Israel;
For behold, I will save you from afar
And your offspring from the land of their captivity.
And Jacob will return and will be quiet and at ease,
And no one will make him afraid.

11 'For I am with you,' declares the LORD, 'to save you;
For I will destroy completely all the nations where I have scattered you,
Only I will not destroy you completely.
But I will chasten you justly
And will by no means leave you unpunished.'

Promise of Healing for an Incurable Wound

12 "For thus says the LORD,
'Your wound is incurable
And your injury is serious.

13 'There is no one to plead your cause;
No healing for your sore,
No recovery for you.

14 'All your lovers have forgotten you,
They do not seek you;
For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy,
With the punishment of a cruel one,
Because your iniquity is great
And your sins are numerous.

15 'Why do you cry out over your injury?
Your pain is incurable.
Because your iniquity is great
And your sins are numerous,
I have done these things to you.

16 'Therefore all who devour you will be devoured;
And all your adversaries, every one of them, will go into captivity;
And those who plunder you will be for plunder,
And all who prey upon you I will give for prey.

17 'For I will restore you to health
And I will heal you of your wounds,' declares the LORD,
'Because they have called you an outcast, saying:
"It is Zion; no one cares for her."

Promise of Restoration of the Fortunes of Israel

18 "Thus says the LORD,
'Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob
And have compassion on his dwelling places;
And the city will be rebuilt on its ruin,
And the palace will stand on its rightful place.

19 'From them will proceed thanksgiving
And the voice of those who celebrate;
And I will multiply them and they will not be diminished;
I will also honor them and they will not be insignificant.

- 20 ‘Their children also will be as formerly,
And their congregation shall be established before Me;
And I will punish all their oppressors.
- 21 ‘Their leader shall be one of them,
And their ruler shall come forth from their midst;
And I will bring him near and he shall approach Me;
For who would dare to risk his life to approach Me?’ declares the LORD.
- 22 ‘You shall be My people,
And I will be your God.’”

The Fierce Anger of the Lord

- 23 Behold, the tempest of the LORD!
Wrath has gone forth,
A sweeping tempest;
It will burst on the head of the wicked.
- 24 The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back
Until He has performed and until He has accomplished
The intent of His heart;
In the latter days you will understand this.

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

Jeremiah 31

The Rebuilding of Israel

- 1 “At that time,” declares the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.”
- 2 Thus says the LORD,
“The people who survived the sword
Found grace in the wilderness—
Israel, when it went to find its rest.”
- 3 The LORD appeared to him from afar, *saying*,
“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
- 4 “Again I will build you and you will be rebuilt,
O virgin of Israel!
Again you will take up your tambourines,
And go forth to the dances of the merrymakers.
- 5 “Again you will plant vineyards
On the hills of Samaria;
The planters will plant
And will enjoy *them*.
- 6 “For there will be a day when watchmen
On the hills of Ephraim call out,
‘Arise, and let us go up *to* Zion,
To the LORD our God.’”

Return of the Scattered People

- 7 For thus says the LORD,
“Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
And shout among the chief of the nations;
Proclaim, give praise and say,
‘O LORD, save Your people,
The remnant of Israel.’
- 8 “Behold, I am bringing them from the north country,
And I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth,
Among them the blind and the lame,
The woman with child and she who is in labor with child, together;
A great company, they will return here.

- 9 “With weeping they will come,
And by supplication I will lead them;
I will make them walk by streams of waters,
On a straight path in which they will not stumble;
For I am a father to Israel,
And Ephraim is My firstborn.”
- 10 Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
And declare in the coastlands afar off,
And say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him
And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.”
- 11 For the LORD has ransomed Jacob
And redeemed him from the hand of him who was stronger than he.
- 12 “They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion,
And they will be radiant over the bounty of the LORD—
Over the grain and the new wine and the oil,
And over the young of the flock and the herd;
And their life will be like a watered garden,
And they will never languish again.
- 13 “Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance,
And the young men and the old, together,
For I will turn their mourning into joy
And will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow.
- 14 “I will fill the soul of the priests with abundance,
And My people will be satisfied with My goodness,” declares the LORD.

The End of Rachel’s Weeping for Her Children

- 15 Thus says the LORD,
“A voice is heard in Ramah,
Lamentation *and* bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
She refuses to be comforted for her children,
Because they are no more.” [\[Matt 2:17–18\]](#)
- 16 Thus says the LORD,

“Restrain your voice from weeping
And your eyes from tears;
For your work will be rewarded,” declares the LORD,
“And they will return from the land of the enemy.”
- 17 “There is hope for your future,” declares the LORD,
“And *your* children will return to their own territory.
- 18 “I have surely heard Ephraim grieving,
‘You have chastised me, and I was chastised,
Like an untrained calf;
Bring me back that I may be restored,
For You are the LORD my God.
- 19 ‘For after I turned back, I repented;
And after I was instructed, I smote on *my* thigh;
I was ashamed and also humiliated
Because I bore the reproach of my youth.’
- 20 “Is Ephraim My dear son?
Is he a delightful child?
Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him,
I certainly *still* remember him;
Therefore My heart yearns for him;
I will surely have mercy on him,” declares the LORD.
- 21 “Set up for yourself roadmarks,
Place for yourself guideposts;

Direct your mind to the highway,
The way by which you went.
Return, O virgin of Israel,
Return to these your cities.

- 22 “How long will you go here and there,
O faithless daughter?
For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth—
A woman will encompass a man.”

Description of Future Blessing

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Once again they will speak this word in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes,

‘The LORD bless you, O abode of righteousness,
O holy hill!’

24 Judah and all its cities will dwell together in it, the farmer and they who go about with flocks.

25 For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes.”

26 At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.

27 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.

28 As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares the LORD.

Repudiation of a Popular Saying

- 29 “In those days they will not say again,
‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

30 But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.

Announcement of a New Covenant

31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” [[Heb 8:8–12](#); [10:16–17](#)]

God’s Assurance of Israel’s Eternal Duration

- 35 Thus says the LORD,
Who gives the sun for light by day
And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar;
The LORD of hosts is His name:
36 “If this fixed order departs
From before Me,” declares the LORD,
“Then the offspring of Israel also will cease
From being a nation before Me forever.”

37 Thus says the LORD,

“If the heavens above can be measured
And the foundations of the earth searched out below,
Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel

For all that they have done,” declares the LORD.

God’s Promise that Jerusalem Will be Rebuilt

38 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.

39 The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah.

40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever.”

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