

JEREMIAH

Warning Leviticus 18:28: *Do not defile yourselves in any of those ways, for it is by such that the nations that I am casting out before you defiled themselves. Thus the land became defiled; and I called it to account for its iniquity, and the land spewed out its inhabitants. But you must keep My laws and My rules, and you must not do any of those abhorrent things, neither the citizen nor the stranger who resides among you; for all those abhorrent things were done by the people who were in the land before you, and the land became defiled. So let not the land spew you out for defiling it, as it spewed out the nation that came before you.*

Numbers 34:34: *You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I Myself abide, for I the Lord abide among the Israelite people.”*

The Call. Jeremiah 1 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiyah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. ²The word of the LORD came to him in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign, ³and throughout the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah, when Jerusalem went into exile in the fifth month. ⁴The word of the LORD came to me:

⁵Before I created you in the womb, I selected you;

Before you were born, I consecrated you;

I appointed you a prophet concerning the nations.

⁶I replied: Ah, Lord God! I don't know how to speak, for I am still a boy.

⁷And the LORD said to me: Do not say, "I am still a boy," but go wherever I send you

And speak whatever I command you. ⁸Have no fear of them,

For I am with you to deliver you —declares the LORD.

⁹The LORD put out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me:

Herewith I put My words into your mouth. ¹⁰See, I appoint you this day

Over nations and kingdoms: To uproot and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

¹³And the word of the LORD came to me a second time: What do you see? I replied: I see a steaming pot, tipped away from the north. ¹⁴And the LORD said to me: From the north shall disaster break loose Upon all the inhabitants of the land! ¹⁵For I am summoning all the peoples of the kingdoms of the north —declares the LORD. They shall come, and shall each set up a throne Before the gates of Jerusalem, Against its walls roundabout, And against all the towns of Judah. ¹⁶And I will argue My case against them For all their wickedness: They have forsaken Me And sacrificed to other gods And worshiped the works of their hands.

The Charge. Jeremiah 7 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²Stand at the gate of the House of the LORD, and there proclaim this word: Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD! ³Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Mend your ways and your actions, and I will let you dwell in this place. ⁴Don't put your trust in illusions and say, "The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD are these [buildings]." ⁵No, if you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one man and another; ⁶if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place; if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt—⁷then only will I let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for all time. ⁸See, you are relying on illusions that are of no avail. ⁹Will you steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods whom you have not experienced, ¹⁰and then come and stand before Me in this House which bears My name and say, "We are safe"?—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! ¹¹Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves? As for Me, I have been watching—declares the LORD.

¹²Just go to My place at Shiloh, where I had established My name formerly, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³And now, because you do all these things—declares the LORD—and though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen; and though I called to you, you would not

respond—¹⁴therefore I will do to the House which bears My name, on which you rely, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, just what I did to Shiloh. ¹⁵And I will cast you out of My presence as I cast out your brothers, the whole brood of Ephraim.

²¹Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! ²²For when I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. ²³But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your God and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you. ²⁴Yet they did not listen or give ear; they followed their own counsels, the willfulness of their evil hearts. They have gone backward, not forward, ²⁵from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today. And though I kept sending all My servants, the prophets, to them daily and persistently, ²⁶they would not listen to Me or give ear. They stiffened their necks, they acted worse than their fathers.

Jeremiah 22 Thus said the LORD: Go down to the palace of the king of Judah, where you shall utter this word. ²Say: “Hear the word of the LORD: O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, and your courtiers and your subjects who enter these gates! ³Thus said the LORD: Do what is just and right; rescue from the defrauder him who is robbed; do not wrong the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; commit no lawless act, and do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place. ⁴For if you fulfill this command, then through the gates of this palace shall enter kings of David’s line who sit upon his throne, riding horse-drawn chariots, with their courtiers and their subjects. ⁵But if you do not heed these commands, I swear by Myself—declares the LORD—that this palace shall become a ruin.” ⁶For thus said the LORD concerning the royal palace of Judah: You are as Gilead to Me, As the summit of Lebanon; But I will make you a desert, Uninhabited towns. ⁷I will appoint destroyers against you, Each with his tools; They shall cut down your choicest cedars And make them fall into the fire. ⁸And when many nations pass by this city and one man asks another, “Why did the LORD do thus to that great city?” ⁹the reply will be, “Because they forsook the covenant with the LORD their God and bowed down to other gods and served them.”

Jeremiah 16 ⁶Great and small alike shall die in this land, They shall not be buried; men shall not lament them/Nor gash and tonsure themselves for them. ⁷They shall not break bread for a mourner/To comfort him for a bereavement, Nor offer one a cup of consolation/For the loss of his father or mother. ⁸Nor shall you enter a house of feasting,/To sit down with them to eat and drink. ⁹For thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to banish from this place, in your days and before your eyes, the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride.

¹⁰And when you announce all these things to that people, and they ask you, “Why has the LORD decreed upon us all this fearful evil? What is the iniquity and what the sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?” ¹¹say to them, “Because your fathers deserted Me—declares the LORD—and followed other gods and served them and worshiped them; they deserted Me and did not keep My Instruction. ¹²And you have acted worse than your fathers, every one of you following the willfulness of his evil heart and paying no heed to Me. ¹³Therefore I will hurl you out of this land to a land that neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you will serve other gods, day and night; for I will show you no mercy.”

***The Idolatry of Power* Jeremiah 27** ²Thus said the LORD to me: Make for yourself thongs and bars of a yoke, and put them on your neck. ³And send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by envoys who have come to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem; ⁴and give them this charge to their masters: Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Say this to your masters:

⁵“It is I who made the earth, and the men and beasts who are on the earth, by My great might and My outstretched arm; and I give it to whomever I deem proper. ⁶I herewith deliver all these lands to My servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; I even give him the wild beasts to serve him. ⁷All nations shall serve him, his son and his grandson—until the turn of his own land comes, when many nations and great kings shall subjugate

him. ⁸The nation or kingdom that does not serve him—King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—and does not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will visit—declares the LORD—with sword, famine, and pestilence, until I have destroyed it by his hands. ⁹As for you, give no heed to your prophets, augurs, dreamers, diviners, and sorcerers, who say to you, ‘Do not serve the king of Babylon.’ ¹⁰For they prophesy falsely to you—with the result that you shall be banished from your land; I will drive you out and you shall perish. ¹¹But the nation that puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serves him, will be left by Me on its own soil—declares the LORD—to till it and dwell on it.”

Jeremiah 26 The priests and prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the House of the LORD. ⁸And 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, shouting, “You shall die! ⁹How dare you prophesy in the name of the LORD that this House shall become like Shiloh and this city be made desolate, without inhabitants?” And all the people crowded about Jeremiah in the House of the LORD.

The Lonesome Prophet Jeremiah 15 ¹⁰Woe is me, my mother, that you ever bore me—A man of conflict and strife with all the land !I have not lent, And I have not borrowed; Yet everyone curses me.

Jeremiah 20 ⁷You enticed me, O LORD, and I was enticed; You overpowered me and You prevailed.

I have become a constant laughingstock, Everyone jeers at me.

⁸For every time I speak, I must cry out, Must shout, “Lawlessness and rapine!”

For the word of the LORD causes me constant disgrace and contempt.

⁹I thought, “I will not mention Him, No more will I speak in His name”—

But [His word] was like a raging fire in my heart, Shut up in my bones;

I could not hold it in, I was helpless.

¹⁰I heard the whispers of the crowd—Terror all around:“Inform! Let us inform against him!”

All my [supposed] friends are waiting for me to stumble:“Perhaps he can be entrapped,

And we can prevail against him and take our vengeance on him.”

¹⁴Accursed be the day that I was born! Let not the day be blessed

When my mother bore me! ¹⁵Accursed be the man who brought my father the news

And said, “A boy is born to you,”and gave him such joy!

¹⁶Let that man become like the cities which the LORD overthrew without relenting!

Let him hear shrieks in the morning and battle shouts at noontide—

¹⁷Because he did not kill me before birth so that my mother might be my grave,

And her womb big [with me] for all time.

¹⁸Why did I ever issue from the womb, to see misery and woe, to spend all my days in shame!

The Climax Jeremiah 32 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. ²At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the prison compound attached to the palace of the king of Judah. ³For King Zedekiah of Judah had confined him, saying, “How dare you prophesy: ‘Thus said the LORD: I am delivering this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall capture it. ⁴And King Zedekiah of Judah shall not escape from the Chaldeans; he shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon,

⁶Jeremiah said: The word of the LORD came to me: ⁷Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, will come to you and say, “Buy my land in Anathoth, b-for you are next in succession to redeem it by purchase.”-b⁸And just as the LORD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the prison compound and said to me, “Please buy my land in Anathoth, in the territory of Benjamin; for the right of succession is yours, and you have the duty of redemption. Buy it.” Then I knew that it was indeed the word of the LORD. ⁹So I bought the land in Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel. I weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰I wrote a deed, sealed it, and had it witnessed; and I weighed out the silver on a balance. ¹¹I took the deed of purchase, the sealed text and the open one c-according to rule and law,-c¹²and gave the deed to Baruch son of

Neriah son of Mahseiah in the presence of my kinsman Hanamel, of the witnesses d-who were named-d in the deed, and all the Judeans who were sitting in the prison compound. 13In their presence I charged Baruch as follows: 14Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: “Take these documents, this deed of purchase, the sealed text and the open one, and put them into an earthen jar, so that they may last a long time.” 15For thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: “Houses, fields, and vineyards shall again be purchased in this land.”

The Promise of Restoration Jeremiah 31 ²Thus said the LORD: The people escaped from the sword, found favor in the wilderness; when Israel was marching homeward ³The LORD revealed Himself to me of old.

Eternal love I conceived for you then; therefore I continue My grace to you.

⁴I will build you firmly again, O Maiden Israel! Again you shall take up your timbrels
And go forth to the rhythm of the dancers.

⁵Again you shall plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria; men shall plant and live to enjoy them.

⁶For the day is coming when watchmen shall proclaim on the heights of Ephraim:

Come, let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God!

³¹See, a time is coming—declares the LORD—when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant which they broke, though I espoused them—declares the LORD. ³³But such is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel after these days—declares the LORD: I will put My Teaching into their inmost being and inscribe it upon their hearts. Then I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴No longer will they need to teach one another and say to one another, “Heed the LORD”; for all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall heed Me—declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 33 ⁶I am going to bring her relief and healing. I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of true favor. ⁷And I will restore the fortunes of Judah and Israel, and I will rebuild them as of old. ⁸And I will purge them of all the sins which they committed against Me, and I will pardon all the sins which they committed against Me, by which they rebelled against Me. ⁹And she shall gain through Me renown, joy, fame, and glory above all the nations on earth, when they hear of all the good fortune I provide for them. They will thrill and quiver because of all the good fortune and all the prosperity that I provide for her.

¹⁰Thus said the LORD: Again there shall be heard in this place, which you say is ruined, without man or beast—in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man, without inhabitants, without beast—¹¹the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride, the voice of those who cry, “Give thanks to the LORD of Hosts, for the LORD is good, for His kindness is everlasting!” as they bring thanksgiving offerings to the House of the LORD. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as of old—said the LORD.

Jeremiah 32 But now, assuredly, thus said the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, “It is being delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon through the sword, through famine, and through pestilence”: ³⁷See, I will gather them from all the lands to which I have banished them in My anger and wrath, and in great rage; and I will bring them back to this place and let them dwell secure. ³⁸They shall be My people, and I will be their God. ³⁹I will give them a single heart and a single nature to revere Me for all time, and it shall be well with them and their children after them. ⁴⁰And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them and that I will treat them graciously; and I will put into their hearts reverence for Me, so that they do not turn away from Me. ⁴¹I will delight in treating them graciously, and I will plant them in this land faithfully, with all My heart and soul.

The Nightmare Ends Jeremiah 31: ²³Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: They shall again say this

in the land of Judah and in its towns, when I restore their fortunes:

“The LORD bless you, Abode of righteousness, O holy mountain!”

²⁴Judah and all its towns alike shall be inhabited by the farmers and such as move about with the flocks.

²⁵For I will give the thirsty abundant drink, and satisfy all who languish.

²⁶At this I awoke and looked about, and my sleep had been pleasant to me.