

# Jeremiah 15 - The Lord Will Not Relent; Jeremiah's Dejection; The Lord's Reassurance

II. Thirteen prophecies of judgment upon Judah (Jer 2:1—25:38)

(1) Nine general prophecies of judgment that include offers of repentance (Jer 2:1—19:15)

(G) Seventh message: Jeremiah's complaint (15:1-21)

(a) Judah's coming judgment (15:1-9)

(b) Jeremiah's self-pity (15:10-21)

(i) Jeremiah articulates his self-pity (15:10)

(ii) God promises to restore Jeremiah (15:11-14)

(iii) Jeremiah doubts God (15:15-18)

(iv) God promises to restore Jeremiah (15:19-21)

## Jeremiah 15

(G) Seventh message: Jeremiah's complaint (15:1-21)

(a) Judah's coming judgment (15:1-9)

**1** Then the LORD said to me, “*Even* if Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My heart would not be with this people. Send them away from My presence and have them go!

**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!

**1** Then the LORD told me, “Even if Moses and Samuel were standing before me, I wouldn’t be favorably disposed toward this people. Send them out of my presence! Let them go!

**1** Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, *yet* my mind *could* not *be* toward this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth.

- God is upset. He makes mention to Jeremiah of two previous men who were also intercessors on behalf of the people.

— Even Moses and Samuel couldn’t move the people (Ex 32:11-14,30-38; Num 14:13-23; Deut 9:18-20,25-29; 1 Sam 7:5-9; 12:19-25; Ps 99:6-8).

— Moses and Samuel had petitioned the Lord on behalf of the people, and the Lord went forward. In the mind of Jeremiah’s readers, those were the two pillars, Moses with the Torah, and Samuel more recently.

2 And it shall be that when they say to you, 'Where should we go?' then you are to tell them, 'This is what the LORD says: "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."

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."

2 "When they say to you, 'Where can we go?', say to them, 'This is what the LORD says: "Those destined for death, to death will go; those destined for the sword, to the sword will go; and those destined for captivity, to captivity will go.

2 And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as *are* for death, to death; and such as *are* for the sword, to the sword; and such as *are* for the famine, to the famine; and such as *are* for the captivity, to the captivity.

- Similar phrase in Rev 6:1-8

3 And I will appoint over them four kinds *of doom*," declares the LORD: "the sword to kill, the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the sky and the animals of the earth to devour and destroy.

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.

3 "I'll appoint four kinds of judgment for them," declares the LORD: "the sword to kill, the dogs to drag off, the birds of the sky to devour, and the animals of the land to destroy.

**3** And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

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

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.

4 I'll make them a horrifying sight to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Hezekiah's son Manasseh, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.

4 And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for *that* which he did in Jerusalem.

- The reference here is Manasseh, who, at least by tradition, sawed Isaiah in half. Manasseh was the one who really led into idolatry, and all of the troubles that Judah is experiencing now derives from their foregoing of the worship of the Lord (2 Kings 21:3-7,10-15; 23:26-27; 24:3-4)

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

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?

5 "Who will have pity on you, Jerusalem, and who will grieve for you? Who will go out of his way to ask about your welfare?

5 For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?

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!

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!

6 You have deserted me," declares the LORD. "You keep going backward. I'll reach out my hand and destroy you. I'm tired of showing compassion.

6 Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.

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.

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.

7 I'll winnow them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land. I'll make them childless. I'll destroy my people, for they didn't change their ways.

7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave *them* of children, I will destroy my people, *since* they return not from their ways.

### **Widows as Sand of the Seas**

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 noon; I will suddenly bring down on her Shock and horror.

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.

8 I'll make their widows more numerous than the sand of the sea. At noontime I'll send a destroyer against the mother of a young man. I'll cause terror and anguish to come to her unexpectedly.

8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

- "A lot of widows", this is literal but in a more generic sense. There is a concept in Judaism that if you kill a man you destroy a nation, because if you kill a son you have, in effect, annihilated a nation that would have come out of his bowels in subsequent generations (Cf. 2 Chr 28:6).

9 "She who gave birth to seven *sons* withers away; Her breathing is labored. Her sun has set while it was still day; She has been shamed and humiliated. So I will turn over their survivors to the sword Before their enemies," declares the LORD.

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.

9 "The woman who gave birth to seven will grow faint, her life will expire. Her sun will set while it's still day. She will be disgraced and humiliated. I'll kill the rest of them with swords in the presence of their enemies," declares the LORD.

9 She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while *it was* yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

- Intrinsically Jewish. The concept of happiness for a woman is to have sons, complete happiness is to have seven sons, but here the woman with the seven sons has a very short happiness because they are killed in one day. Contained in the next couple of verses is one of the most moving confessions that a man could give. Jeremiah here is going to profess his loneliness.

(b) Jeremiah's self-pity (15:10-21)

(i) Jeremiah articulates his self-pity (15:10)

**10** Woe to me, my mother, that you have given birth to me As a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! I have not lent, nor have people lent money to me, *Yet* everyone curses me.

**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.

10 How terrible for me, my mother, that you gave birth to me, a man of strife and contention for the whole land! I've neither lent nor borrowed, yet everyone curses me.

10 Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me.

- This concept of lending or borrowing is usually in business (at least, that is the usual basis for a disagreement). He is not saying that there is anything wrong with borrowing or lending, he is saying that there is no commerce upon which someone would be frustrated or upset with him.

(ii) God promises to restore Jeremiah (15:11-14)

11 The LORD said, "I will certainly set you free for *purposes of* good; I will certainly make the enemy plead with you In a time of disaster and a time of distress.

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.

11 The LORD said, "Have I not set you free for a good purpose? Have I not intervened for you with your enemies in times of trouble and times of distress?

**11** The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

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

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

12 "Can anyone break iron— iron from the north—or bronze?

12 Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?

- Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. In this era, there was an unusually hard iron that was available from a region near the Black Sea, and as a result, there were certain kinds of iron that were sometimes translated by the King James translators differently. Steel didn't come until later.

13 "I will give your wealth and your treasures As plunder without cost, For all your sins And within all your borders.

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

13 "I'll give away your wealth and your treasures as plunder, for free, because of all your sins throughout your territory.

13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

14 "Then I will make your enemies bring *your possessions* Into a land *that* you do not know; For a fire has been kindled in My anger, *And* it will burn upon you."

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."

14 I'll make you serve your enemies in a land you don't know, for my anger has started a fire that will burn against you."

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you.

- God is upset, and as a result they are going to be enslaved in a land which they do not know: Babylon in the primary sense.

— And in many of these passages, you will get the sense that many of these go beyond the Babylonian captivity, which is very definitive, a major milestone in their history.

- Some of the language you will get the sense that it goes to the Diaspora, after the crucifixion of Christ, where they are scattered to all nations.

— There are many times where there is almost a slip of the pen with Jeremiah, where he talks about them scattered about broadly.

— In Jeremiah's mind, he may be dealing with the Babylonians as generic Gentiles, but in fact the prophecy is fulfilled after the crucifixion of Christ where they are scattered among many nations for almost 2,484 years, 2 months and 3 days. (But that is another story.)

### (iii) Jeremiah doubts God (15:15-18)

**15** You know, 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.

**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.

15 You are aware— LORD, remember me, pay attention to me, and vindicate me in front of those who pursue me. You are patient— don't take me away. Know that I suffer insult because of you!

15 O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

16 Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became a joy to me and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, LORD God of armies.

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.

16 Your words were found, and I consumed them. Your words were joy and my hearts delight, because I bear your name, LORD God of the Heavenly Armies.

16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

- Rev 3:8; 2:13 - avenge me of my persecutors. I thought we were supposed to turn the other cheek. The idea of Jeremiah calling down God's anger on his enemies sounds so non-New Testament, but in Revelation, study the pleas of the souls who are under the altar. That is a concept of being collinear with God's righteous indignation

- Ezek 3:1-3, we have a similar passage. It actually starts three verses earlier in the end of chapter 2 (Ezek 2:8-10). He is saying that you need to digest His food, His word. The scroll that is written inside and out and sealed with seven seals is the scroll that is in the Rev 5-6; 10:9.

17 I did not sit in a circle of revelers and celebrate. Because of Your hand *upon me* I sat alone, For You filled me with indignation.

17 I did not sit in the circle of merrymakers, Nor did I exult. Because of Your hand *upon me* I sat alone, For You filled me with indignation.

17 I didn't sit in the company of those who have fun, and I didn't rejoice. Because of your hand on me, I sat alone, for you filled me with indignation.

17 I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

### God's Answer to Jeremiah's Revised Complaint

18 Why has my pain been endless And my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will You indeed be to me like a **deceptive stream** With water that is unreliable?

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?

18 Why is my pain unending and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? You are like a deceptive brook, whose waters cannot be depended on.

18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, *and as waters that* fail?

- "...deceptive *stream*" - a brook that only occurs during flash floods, or snow melting; not a brook that you can count on to be there all the time (Cf. Job 6:15-20). He is really upset and God answers him.

(iv) God promises to restore Jeremiah (15:19-21)

**19** Therefore, this is what the LORD says: "If you return, then I will restore you— You will stand before Me; 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 are not to turn to them.

**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.

**19** Therefore, this is what the LORD says: "If you repent, I'll take you back and you will stand before me. If you speak what is worthwhile, instead of what is worthless, then you will be my spokesman. People will turn to you, but you aren't to turn to them.

**19** Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, *and* thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto 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 rescue you," declares the LORD.

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.

20 I'll make you a fortified wall of bronze to this people. They'll fight against you, but they won't prevail against you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you,"

20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

21 "So I will rescue you from the hand of the wicked, And I will redeem you from the grasp of the violent."

21 "So I will deliver you from the hand of the wicked, And I will redeem you from the grasp of the violent."

21 So I'll deliver you from the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless."

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

- Jeremiah had been grumbling and complaining and God stopped him right there. He is, in effect, to stop being so hasty in accusing the Lord and not to waste His time on worthless statements (Cf. Ex 4:16). Jeremiah from this point on doesn't complain anymore. Some scholars view this passage like a recommissioning of Jeremiah (Cf. 1:18-19). God does protect him. When we were talking about the plot to assassinate Jeremiah, consider that the people did succeed in assassinating Gedaliah (Jer 41:1-3).



- Separatist: Cf. 2 Cor 6:14-18; Is 52:11. "He that departest from evil maketh himself a prey" (Is 59:15). "Am I your enemy because I tell you the truth?" - Paul in Gal 4:16.
- Jeremiah's joy and refreshment in the Word of God is a theme that is popular throughout the Scripture. There is a Psalm that is called the Psalm of the Laver (Ps 119). Every verse extols the Word of God and its benefit to you, and how you should eat it, digest it, refresh yourself in it, etc. Look at v3,97,113,119,128 and 163.