

Jeremiah

Introduction

Jeremiah, the 7th century prophet, lived during the tumultuous times that were taking place in the Middle East. The Assyrian Empire was about to crumble before the armies of the Babylonia and Chaldea. Little Judah was under the leadership of King Josiah, and hoped to survive this uncertain political and military scene. There was a renewal of faith in Judah under Josiah which caused the people to be united during his lifetime but upon his death that unity disappeared. In the light of the uncertainty of domination, Egypt sought to gain an advantage by capturing Judah and Jerusalem. However, just as this was about to take place the Egyptians were soundly defeated at the battle of Carchemish.

As the Babylonian army marched against Palestine, the city of Jerusalem and the temple were plundered by Babylonian soldiers. A puppet king was established in Palestine. Babylon experienced an internal revolt, resulting in Egypt's hope to gain control but the Babylonians were able to become firmly established.

Jehoahaz (*also called Shallum*) ruled for three months and then was taken to Egypt by Pharaoh Neco. Jehoiakim (*also called Eliakim*) reigned for eleven years during which time Judah was a buffer state between the two great powers: Egypt and King Nebuchadnezzar. During this time the current Canaanite religion came into vogue and was practiced by many residents. Zedekiah then reigned for eleven years and was taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar as a prisoner. Jehoichin (*also called Jeconiah or Coniah*) tried to rule, though his rule lasted only three months and he was taken to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar at the same time that Ezekiel was taken into captivity in Babylon.

Archaeological discoveries, including letters found on pieces of pottery in Lachish, give a picture of the morale in Jerusalem and verify the weakened condition of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah was thrust into this turmoil as a prophet. He did not set out to be a prophet, preferring the quiet life to the life of leadership. He was uncompromising, often speaking against public opinion, which resulted in his imprisonment and possible death. He felt the people had simply followed their own wishes and disregarded the will of God. He recognized a false confidence in priests and the temple, as if these would be a kind of talisman; warding off death and destruction. The priests had failed, as he saw it. They had not led nor had they adhered to the teachings of their ancestors, as declared in the teachings of the book of Deuteronomy (which had been found in a niche in the temple in recent years). Thus the priests were false leaders, holding up false hope. Jeremiah felt the power of Babylon was included in the will of God to bring the Israelites to a proper understanding of faith in God. This was to be accepted and to become a lesson learned. He felt that in due time God would again restore the land and as a result would again restore the land by establishing a new and better covenant which in turn would establish a more personal relationship between God and his people. Under no circumstances were they to cooperate with, or flee to, Egypt. He had confidence in God and felt once the needed lessons were learned God would establish a permanent and cleansed nation.

Jeremiah told of the fall of Jerusalem, the captivity, as well as the return of the people from their captivity in Babylon and the restoration of Jerusalem and of the nation.

In the last quarter of the 20th century there was a renewal of understanding that Jeremiah's prophecy was not in chronological order in the book bearing his name. Passages refer to situations but these are not in historical order. Numerous suggestions as to the historical 'sitz im leben' for the passages have been given. Below is one of the many suggestions which has been selected as an example which in turn is followed in this translation.

- I. Under Joash; 1:1 – 19; 2:1 – 3:5; 3:6 – 6:30; 7:1 – 10:25; 18:1 – 20:18.
- II Under Jehoiakin: 11:1 – 13:14; 14:1 – 15:21; 16:1 – 17:27; 22:1 – 30; 23:1 – 8, 9 – 40; 25:1 – 14, 15 – 38; 26:1 – 24; 35:1 – 19; 36:1 – 32; 45:1 – 5; 46:1 – 12, 13 – 28; 47:1 – 7; 48:1 – 47.
- III Under Jehoiachin: 31:15 – 27.
- IV Under Zedekiah: 21:1 – 22:30; 24:1 – 10; 27:1 – 22; 28:1 – 17; 29:1 – 32; 30:1 – 31:40; 32:1 – 44; 33:1 – 20; 34:1 – 7, 8 – 11, 12 – 22; 37:1 – 21; 38:1 – 28; 39:1 – 18; 49:1 – 22, 23 – 33, 34 – 39; 50:1 – 51:64.
- V Under Gedaliah 40:1 – 42:22; 43:1 – 44:30.
- VI Historical Appendix 52:1 – 34.

The Hebrew text of Jeremiah, like Job and Daniel, exhibits a divergence in the MT and the LXX texts. It is estimated that the equivalent of about 7 chapters of Hebrew is the amount omitted in the LXX since the LXX seems to have condensed the Hebrew version in an attempt to intentionally omit of the Hebrew doublets. Interestingly, there are about 100 words in the LXX which are not represented in the MT.

Earlier scholars thought this was simply something done by the translators of the LXX and not found in any MT manuscripts. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls a manuscript 4QJer^b was found which supports, in Hebrew, the LXX text. Manuscripts with the MT text were also found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Thus it is possible that Jeremiah was circulated among the Hebrew people in two recensions. The most glaring differences between the MT and the LXX are found in chapters 40 – 44.

A large portion of Jeremiah is Hebrew poetry. To minimize the number of pages those passages that are in this translation of the poetry are enclosed in brackets { } to designate the poetry, rather than having them in poetic form, using considerably more paper. The reader will be assured of the poetic nature of the passage in this simple way.

When the Hebrew chapters and verses do not correspond to the chapters and verses in the English Bible the following will note the difference. 1 [H. 2] (Verse 1 in English and verse 2 in Hebrew).

Large passages of Jeremiah are poetry. To keep the number of pages of this translation at a minimum poetry will be designated with { }.

Jeremiah¹

<CHAPTER 1>

I. Superscription 1:1 - 3

¹ The word ² of Jeremiah, ³ the son of Hilkiyah, a priest from Anathoth ⁴ located in the territory of Benjamin, ² to whom the Lord's word came during the days of the reign of Josiah, ⁵ son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign. ⁶ ³ [It was also at the time when Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah was the prince regent, ⁷ at the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah reigned until the captivity of Jerusalem ⁸ in the fifth month.]⁹

II. Inaugural Visions 1:4–19

A. Call of Jeremiah 1:4 – 10

⁴ "The word of the Lord came to me, saying: ⁵ { 'Before you were created in your mother's womb, I selected you and appointed you to be a prophet to the nations' . } ¹⁰

⁶ Then I replied: { "Ah, Lord God! I do not know how to speak, for I am a youth." } ¹¹ ⁷ The Lord said to me: { "Do you say, 'I am only a youth?' ¹² Go to whoever I send you, and speak whatever I command you! ¹³ ⁸ Have no fear of them!" } The Lord said to me: { "Watch this action. I have put my words in your mouth. ¹⁴ Today I have appointed you to be over nations and kingdoms to uproot and to pull down." }

B. Vision of the Almond Tree 1:11 – 12

¹¹ "The word of the Lord came to me, saying: 'Jeremiah, what do you see?' I replied: 'I see an almond branch.' ¹⁵ ¹² Then the Lord said to me, 'You have seen

¹ Originally the book of Jeremiah was called "Until the Downfall."

² The Hebrew word can mean "acts" or history, (*deeds*)." LXX: "The word of the God who came to Jeremiah." LXX: "τορημα του θεου ο εγενετο ερεμιαν."

³ The name means "The Lord shook" or "The Lord breaks" referring to the time of birth. A possible translation might be "The Lord exalts."

⁴ Scholars traditionally thought of this as modern Anata which was located about 1 ½ miles north east of Jerusalem. More recent archaeological studies question this as the location though it was a priestly city. Cf.: Joshua 21:18.

⁵ Josiah ruled from 640 (or, 638) - 609 BCE. The people of Judah were on the brink of a national and spiritual catastrophe when Jeremiah was called to be a prophet. He was called to stem the tide of social and moral decay that was rampant in Judah.

⁶ Ca.: 626 BCE.

⁷ Jehoiakim reigned from 598 – 537 BCE. Other scholars have the following dates for his reign: 609 – 598 or: 608 – 597 BCE.

⁸ TAN: "when Jehoiakim went into exile in the fifth month."

⁹ Some scholars feel this verse is a later interpolation.

¹⁰ Passages within { } are poetry in Hebrew.

¹¹ The Hebrew word "na'ar" could mean "infant" or "a young man of marriageable age." LXX: "I am young." TAN: "I appointed you as a spokesman to the world."

¹² LXX: "child."

¹³ Jeremiah's protesting is due to timidity.

¹⁴ The touching of Jeremiah's mouth symbolizes God's commissioning him, thus establishing his ministry. What is corrupt must be uprooted and torn down for only then can God undertake to rebuild.

¹⁵ The Hebrew word "shaqed" = "waken." There is a word play or pun. The almond tree was considered to be the first tree to bloom following winter, and some translators use "wake tree" since this was considered to be the sign for people of the spring awakening of vegetation. MFT: "the wake tree."

correctly, for I am watching ¹⁶ over my word to carry it out.” ¹³”The word of the Lord came to me a second time, saying: “What do you see?” “I see a boiling pot, ¹⁷ tipped away, toward the north.” ¹⁸ ¹⁴ Then the Lord said to me: “It is from the north that [*peril*] will come upon the inhabitants of the land. ¹⁹ ¹⁵ Look! I am summoning all the tribes of the kingdom of the north, says the Lord, and they will come and every one will set his throne at the entrance of the gate of Jerusalem, against all its walls round about, and against all the cities of Judah. ¹⁶ I will pronounce my judgments against them ²⁰ because of their wickedness. They have abandoned me. They have offered incense to other gods, and worshiped that which they have made with their own hands. ¹⁷ Brace your self for war. ²¹ Stand tall! Tell them all that I have commanded you. Do not be frightened by them, for if that is the case I will make you ashamed in their presence. ²² ¹⁸ I will make you a fortified city, a pillar of iron, a wall of bronze, able to confront all who oppose ²³ the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. ²⁴ ¹⁹ They will attack you; but they will not overcome you, for I am with you, to deliver you. This is truly the word of the Lord.

<CHAPTER 2>

III Oracles of the Early Ministry 2:1 – 6:30 ²⁵

1. Israel’s Faithfulness to the Lord 21 – 37

A. Israel’s Exchange of the Lord for Other Deities 2:1 - 13

¹ The word of the Lord came to me, saying: ² “This is what God proclaims ²⁶ for Jerusalem to hear. This is the word of the Lord! {I remember your devotion ²⁷ to me in your youth, and your love as a bride, how you followed me through the wilderness (*or, desert*); in the land that was not tilled. ³ Israel, you were devoted to the Lord (*or, my*

¹⁶ This is the second part of the play on words. The Hebrew word “shoqed” = “watch over.” Earlier translators used “lasting.” Recent scholarship learned that this translation was incorrect. MFT: “I am wakeful over my word.”

¹⁷ The pot would be a wide mouthed cooking pot, perhaps with two handles, used for cooking or washing.

¹⁸ The Hebrew is uncertain. LXX: “a cauldron on the fire, and the face of it toward the north.” The Hebrew word for “north” that is used here is also “shaged.” Ashurbanipal, the last powerful Assyrian died within ten years of Jeremiah’s prophecy and the Assyrian Empire was on the brink of destruction. CB: “a pot blown upon, and its blowing is in the north.”

¹⁹ Literally: “poured out.” LXX: “εκκαυθησεται.”

²⁰ TAN: footnote: “i.e. against Jerusalem and Judah.”

²¹ Literally: “gird up your loins.”

²² TAN; “Do not break down before them; lest I break you before them.” MFT: “I command you, never be scared at them, lest I scare you at the sight of them.”

²³ LXX: “πασι τοις βασιλευσιν.”

²⁴ CF.: ANET p. 484c.

²⁵ Some scholars feel the six oracles in 3:1 – 6:36 come largely from the prophet’s early life. These oracles are powerful messages which were certainly delivered with all the zeal of an evangelist.

²⁶ LXX: “και ειπε.”

²⁷ LXX; “I accounted to your favor.” In Hebrew the word “hesedh” = “faith, obedience, fulfilling diligence.”

sacred possession). All who ate of the first fruits of his harvest became guilty²⁸ and misfortune (*or, desecration*) came on them. This is truly the word of the Lord. }²⁹

4 Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families (*or, clans*) of the house of Israel. 5 This is the word of the Lord: {What wrong³⁰ accusation did your ancestors find in me that they abandoned (*or, deserted*) me, and went after worthlessness³¹ 6 They did not ask (*or, care*). ‘Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, as well as the land of desolation and pits, a land of drought and deep darkness; ³² into a land that no one traveled and in which no one resided. ³³ 7 I brought you into a fertile land ³⁴ to enjoy its harvests and its good things: but when you arrived you defiled (*or, ruined*) the land, and made my heritage detestable. 8 The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’ Those who administer the law ignored me; the rulers³⁵ rebelled against me; the prophets prophesied in the name of Baal; and went after things that do not profit. }³⁶

9 {”Therefore I will state my case against you, declares the Lord. ³⁷ {I will accuse (*or, bring charges against*) your descendants!³⁸ 10 Cross over to the coasts of Cyprus and see, or, send messengers to Kedar³⁹ and carefully examine these to see if there has been an occurrence like this! 11 Has any nation changed its gods (even though they are not real gods)? My people, on the other hand, have changed their glory⁴⁰ for that which is imperfect (*or, that does not help them*).⁴¹ 12 Be appalled at this, O heavens! Be shocked! }⁴²

²⁸ The people of Israel felt they comprised God’s people among the harvest of nations. However, the might of such a covenant relationship had been nullified by Israel’s rejection of loyalty to God. Cf.: Leviticus 23:10, 17; Deuteronomy 26:1 – 4.

²⁹ LXX: “I remember the kindness of your youth, and the love of your faithfulness in following the Holy One of Israel., says the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase: all that devoured him with offend; evils will come on them, says the Lord.”

³⁰ LXX: “treasure.”

³¹ There is a play on words here. The Hebrew word “hebhēl” is translated in Ecclesiastes as “vanity.” It is usually used to decry the gods of Canaan. There is also a play on words in this passage on the word “Ba’al.” TAN: ‘went after delusion and were disillusioned.’ NEB: “pursuing empty phantoms and themselves became empty.”

³² This could be translated as “the shadow of death.” LXX: “καὶ ἀκαρπῶ.”

³³ The prophet stresses that God is reliable, but the people, as a nation, are not grateful. LXX: 6 “They did not say ‘Where is the Lord,’ who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, who guided us in the wilderness in an untried and trackless land, in a land which no one at all traveled through and in which no one resided.”

³⁴ LXX: “the land of Carmel.”

³⁵ Literally: “shepherds” here and in 3:15 & 23:1ff.

³⁶ In Hebrew there is a play on words with the Hebrew words for “Ba’al” and “do not profit.” Note the four groups of people: 1. Priests. 2. Those who carry out the law. 3. Shepherds (*or, rulers*). 4. Prophets who prophesied by Ba’al. NEB: “they followed gods, powerless to help.”

³⁷ This phrase is not in the LXX though it does appear in Codex A.

³⁸ Literally: “children’s children.”

³⁹ Kedar was an Arab tribe living in Trans-Jordan, in the desert east of the Jordan.

⁴⁰ MT: “my glory.” The Hebrew word translated “glory” could almost be translated as “majesty.”

⁴¹ This is another play on words based on the name “Ba’al.” NIV: (yet they are not gods at all.)

⁴² LXX: “ἐπι πλεῖον.” TAN: “be horrified.”

13 {“My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water,⁴³ and hewn out cisterns for themselves, cisterns that are cracked and hold no water.”}

2. *Results of Israel’s Apostasy 2:14 – 19*⁴⁴

14 {“Is Israel a slave? Has Israel been born in serfdom?⁴⁵ Why then has Israel become prey? 15 Like lions they have roared⁴⁶ against Israel. They have roared loudly!⁴⁷ They have made the land a waste and ruined the cities (*or, made the cities desolate*) and left the area abandoned. 16 Moreover the men of Memphis and Tahpanhes⁴⁸ have broken (*or, shaved*) the crown of Israel’s head.⁴⁹ 17 Have you not brought this on yourselves by forsaking the Lord your God⁵⁰ while he led you in the way.”}

18 {“What do you think you will gain by going to Egypt? What gain is there to drink the waters of the Nile?⁵¹ Or: what would you gain by going to Assyria to drink the water of the Euphrates?⁵² 19 Your wickedness (*or, misfortune*)⁵³ will cause you to be punished, and you will be rebuked. Know and recognize that it is evil and bitter for you to forsake the Lord your God! Reverence (*or, loyalty*) of God is not found in you. This is truly the word of the Lord.”}

3. *Depth of Israel’s Sin 2:20 – 29*

20 {“Long ago you rejected my position of authority,⁵⁴ and burnt your bonds, for you said, ‘I will not serve.’ Thus, on every high hill and under every green (*or, spreading*) tree you have reclined like a harlot⁵⁵ 21 Yet I planted [*you as*] a choice vine.

⁴³ The reference is to water from a spring or fountain in contrast to cistern or other stagnant water. Cf.: John 4:10 – 14; Revelation 21:6.

⁴⁴ These verses possibly date from a time just after the death of Josiah at Megiddo, at the hands of Pharaoh Neco of Egypt. A slave could be one who was purchased, a war captive, or one whose parents also were slaves.

⁴⁵ TAN: “bondsmen.”

⁴⁶ Literally: “given their voice.”

⁴⁷ Interestingly, after the fall of Samaria the number of Asiatic lions in the area increased significantly.

⁴⁸ Memphis was the capital of Lower Egypt. Tahpanhes, Daphnae in Greek, was modern Tell Defenneh on the east side of the Egyptian delta, a frontier town.

⁴⁹ A shaved head was a symbol of subservience. LXX: “και κατεπαζον.” The Hebrew is unclear. Literally: “graze upon” or “pasture upon.” With a very slight emendation: “They have fractured.” Another possibility is the alternate translation shown above. JB: “have even shaved your skull.” A footnote adds: “This alludes to Egyptian intervention during 608 – 605 BCE.”

⁵⁰ Literally: “that is what forcibly the Lord your God is doing to you.” LXX: “Has not your forsaking me brought these things on you?”

⁵¹ In Hebrew there is a sarcastic reference to the river Nile. “Shiher” is the word that is used which is a tributary of the Nile.

⁵² Egypt and Assyria were the two rival powers who longed to have power over Israel. There were people in Israel who felt Egypt could rescue them from Assyria. There were others who desired an alliance with Assyria and the rejection of Egypt as a world power.

⁵³ LXX: “your apostasy will come to you.”

⁵⁴ Literally: “you broke your yoke.”

⁵⁵ NEB: “Ages ago you broke your yoke and snapped your traces, crying, ‘I will not be your slave’, thus you sprawled in promiscuous vice on all the hill tops and under every spreading tree.” LXX ends the verse with “There I will indulge (*literally: be spread abroad*) in my fornication.” Harlotry was the descriptive word for the love by Israel for Ba’al and other local and national gods. The reason for the word “harlotry” is because Israel was considered to be the bride of God. Jeremiah is clearly speaking of Israel’s arrogance and willfulness.

How have you turned degenerate and how have you become a wild vine?⁵⁶ 22 Even though you wash yourself, using much soap,⁵⁷ the stain of your guilt will remain in my sight.} This is truly the word of the Lord.}

23 {"How can you say, 'I am not defiled. I have not gone after the Baalim.' Look at your footprints in the valley.⁵⁸ Realize what you have done. You have been like a lustful young racing camel that is in heat, running from place to place⁵⁹ 24 wildly, acquainted with the desert, snuffing the air eagerly, whose lust can not be restrained. No one can control her when she is in season. She will be found.} ⁶⁰

25 {"Keep from going barefooted and your throat from thirst, but you say: 'It is desperate (*or, hopeless*), for I have loved other gods, and I must go after them (*or, be loyal to them*).'} ⁶¹

26 {"Just as there is disgrace when caught, so the house ⁶² of Israel will be disgraced: they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets 27 who say to a [*carved*] tree, 'You are my father,' and to a [*sculpted*] stone, 'You gave me birth.' This will take place because you have turned your back to me, instead of turning your face toward me. But in the time of calamity (*or, evil*) you say, 'Come and save me!'}
28 {"Where are your gods that you made for yourselves? Let them come and save you in your time of trouble, if they can. You have as many gods as there are cities in Judah.} ⁶³

29 {"Why do you complain ⁶⁴ and speak evilly about me? You have rebelled against me. This is truly the word of the Lord."} ⁶⁵

⁵⁶ LXX: "Yet I planted you, a fruitful vine entirely of the right sort (*literally: "all true"*). How is it that you have turned to bitterness?" JB: "a bastard vine."

⁵⁷ TAN: "though you wash yourself with natron and use much lye, your guilt is ingrained before me." LXX: "potash" is the word translated as: soap" above. The Hebrew translated as "guilt will remain" literally is: "cause to be great to you." MFT: "I see your sin of the deepest dye."

⁵⁸ The reference to "the valley" is surely the valley of Hinnom where sacrifices of children and other abominable rites took place. LXX: "εν τω πολυανδρειω."

⁵⁹ Hebrew uncertain! In verse 23 the reference is to a young camel (*or, dromedary*). In verse 24 the first word in Hebrew: "hrp" means "wild." Translators have made the word mean "wild ass" with the assumption that the word "wild" implies an "ass." Some more recent translators have stayed with the "camel" metaphor, as has been done in this translation. A translation using the traditional assumption along with the word "wild" would be as follows: "like a wild ass which is acquainted with the desert, eagerly snuffing the wind. Who can restrain her when she is in season?" NEB; "She is easily found at mating time." MFT: "a heifer running wild, heated with passion, snuffing the breeze in rutting season --- who can control her? No male need trouble to search for her: all can find her at mating time."

⁶⁰ LXX:24 "She has extended her ways over the waters of the desert, she was hurried along by the lust of her soul; she is given up to them. Who will turn her back? None that took her will be weary. At the time of her humiliation they will find her." NAB: 23 "A frenzied she-camel, coursing near and far, in her ardor --- who can restrain her? No beasts need to tire themselves searching for her, in her month they will meet her."

⁶¹ LXX: "I will strengthen (*literally: act like a man*) myself; for she loved strangers and went after them."

⁶² LXX: "υιοι."

⁶³ The LXX adds: "και κατ αριθμον διοδων της Ιερουσαλημ εθουον τη Βααλ." "and as the streets in Jerusalem, so sacrifices abound to Ba'al."

⁶⁴ Literally: "bring charges."

⁶⁵ LXX: "Why do you speak to me? You have all been ungodly and have transgressed against me says the Lord."

4. Usefulness of the Lord's Chastening 2:30 – 37

30 {“I have punished your children in vain! They would not accept any correction. Your own sword destroyed the prophets like a ravenous lion. ⁶⁶ 31 You, O generation [of Israelites] listen to the word of the Lord. ⁶⁷ Have I been like a desert (*or, wilderness*) to Israel, or treated it like a land of thick darkness? Why then do you who are my people, say, ‘We are free, ⁶⁸ we will not come to you any more!’. ³² Can a girl forget her finery, or can a bride forget her bridal attire? ⁶⁹ Yet my people have forgotten me for more days that they can count.}

33 {“How skilled you are in seeking a lover, even a wicked woman (*or, a woman in wickedness can learn from you*) can be taught your ways by you. ⁷⁰ 34 Your clothing is stained with the lifeblood of the innocent poor, ⁷¹ even though you did not find them guilty, yet, in spite of all these things ³⁵ you say, ‘I am blameless (*or have been acquitted*). Surely God’s anger is not turned against me.’ But: I will bring you to judgment for saying, ‘I am blameless.’} ⁷²

36 {“How lightly you gad about, ⁷³ changing your ways: you will be put to shame by Egypt just as you were put to shame by Assyria. ³⁷ You will be taken away with your hands clasped on your head [*for shame*] for the Lord has rejected those in whom you trust, and you will not prosper by them.”}

<CHAPTER 3>

B. A Place for Israel's Repentance 3:1 – 4:4 ⁷⁴

1. Israel, the Faithless Wife 3:1 - 5

1 {“If ⁷⁵a man divorces his wife and she goes from him and becomes another man’s wife, will he return to her? ⁷⁶ Would not the ⁷⁷ land be greatly defiled? ⁷⁸ You have prostituted yourself with many lovers. Would you return to me? ² Look up ⁷⁹ to the bare heights and see! Where have you not prostituted yourself? You have sat by the wayside

⁶⁶ LXX: “και ουκ εφοβηθητε.”

⁶⁷ Hebrew uncertain. LXX: “ακουσατε λογον κυριου Ταδε λεγει κυριος.”

⁶⁸ Literally: “we can roam.” LXX: “ου κυριευθησεμεθη.” Codex A has: “ου δουλευθησομεθαα.”

⁶⁹ LXX: “the girdle of her bosom,”

⁷⁰ Literally: “you can teach the wicked woman.” LXX: “σο επονηρευσω.”

⁷¹ LXX: “in your hands the blood of innocent souls has been found.” Wicked behavior always involves innocent people to some extent.

⁷² LXX: “Yet you said, I am innocent; only let his wrath be turned away from you. Behold, I will plead with you, whereas you say, I have not sinned.”

⁷³ TAN: “How you cheapen yourself.” LXX: “For you have been exceedingly contemptuous in repenting your ways, but you will be ashamed of Egypt just as you were ashamed of Assyria.”

⁷⁴ Some scholars feel portions of 3:1 – 4:4 are to be dated after the fall of Jerusalem. Other passages, as noted by [] are considered by some scholars to be later insertions. These insertions are generally considered to be from the writings of Jeremiah which had been inserted at a later date than the original writing of the chapter. Similar passages will be found throughout the book of Jeremiah.

⁷⁵ The Hebrew text begins with “Saying if.” The LXX & Syriac provide the text used above. MFT: “...saying” appears to be a correct translation of the Hebrew text.

⁷⁶ The Hebrew word “sub” occurs here and in verses 12, 14, and 22. It has the sense of returning to God in repentance. LXX: “

will she return to him? Will not that woman be utterly defiled?”

⁷⁷ LXX “η γυνη.” JB: “Has not that piece of land been totally polluted?”

⁷⁸ Literally: “alienated.” Cf.: Deuteronomy 24:14.

⁷⁹ LXX: “look straight forward.”

awaiting your lovers, just as a bandit ⁸⁰ would wait in the wilderness [*to attack a passer by*], thereby polluting the land with your prostitution and vices. ³ Therefore the showers have been withheld, and the spring rain has not come. ⁸¹ Yet you have the brazen look [*of a street prostitute*] and refuse to be ashamed. ⁸² ⁴ Have you not just now ⁸³ called to me, ‘My father, you are the companion of my youth.’ ⁸⁴ ⁵ Will he be angry (*or, does one hate*) forever? Will he be indignant (*or, rage*) to the end? Look! You have spoken, but you have continued to do all the evil that you could!}” ⁸⁵

2. Judah is Worse than Israel 3:6 – 11

⁶ [The Lord said to me during the days of King Josiah: “Have you seen what disloyalty (*or, faithlessness*) ⁸⁶ has gone on in Israel, how she has gone up on every high hill and also under every green (*or, spreading*) tree, prostrating herself? ⁷ I thought, ‘After she has done all this she will come back to me;’ but she did not come back, and her disloyalty (*or, faithlessness*) was observed by her sister. ⁸ She ⁸⁷ saw that for all the adulteries of disloyal (*or, faithless*) Israel. I had sent her away with a divorce certificate; yet her false sister Judah did not fear, but she too played the prostitute. ⁸⁸ ⁹ Because her prostitution to her was considered to be casual, ⁸⁹ she polluted the land, committing adultery with images of stone and tree. ⁹⁰ ¹⁰ Yet for all this her faithless (*or, disloyal*) sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but insincerely pretended, says the Lord.”

¹¹ The Lord said to me, “Disloyal (*or, faithless*) Israel has shown herself less guilty than faithless (*or, disloyal*) Judah.”

3. Call to return to God 3:12 – 14

¹² “Go and proclaim these words to the north, and declare: {Come back, disloyal (*or, faithless*) Israel, says the Lord. I will not look at you in anger; ⁹¹ for I am compassionate, says the Lord. ⁹² I will not hold a grudge for ever. ¹³ Acknowledge ⁹³ your guilt, recognize that you have rebelled against the Lord your God and have spread

⁸⁰ Literally: “a nomad.” The reference is no doubt to a marauding nomad who lay in wait for caravans. LXX: “ὡσει κορνη” “like a nomad.”

⁸¹ LXX: “καὶ εσχες ποιμενας; πολλους εις πρισκομμα σεαυτη.”

⁸² The Hebrew word translated as “brazen look” is “forehead.” LXX: “You retained many shepherds, for a stumbling block to yourselves. You had the facial appearance of a prostitute: you became shameless toward everyone.”

⁸³ LXX: “ὡς οικον.”

⁸⁴ LXX; “Didn’t you call me as it were a home and the father and guide of your virginity? MFT: ‘Dear bridegroom of my youth! He will not keep it up,’ you say, ‘he will not be angry for ever.’

⁸⁵ Hebrew uncertain.

⁸⁶ TAN: “Have you seen what rebel Israel did.” NEB: “See what apostate Israel did.” MFT: “turncoat Israel.”

⁸⁷ So: One Dead Sea Scroll manuscript, LXX & Syriac. MT: “I saw.”

⁸⁸ LXX: “And I saw that (for all the sins of which she was convicted, wherein the house of Israel had committed adultery, and I put her away and gave her hands a divorce certificate) yet faithless Judah did not fear but went and committed fornication herself.”

⁸⁹ LXX: “Εις ουτεν.” Vulgate: “facilitate.”

⁹⁰ I.e.: she committed idolatry by worshiping gods carved from wood and stone.

⁹¹ Literally: “cause my countenance to fall.”

⁹² This last phrase of the sentence is only found here and in Psalm 145:17. The Hebrew word “hasiah” is often translated as “godly” or “holy.”

⁹³ Literally: “know.”

your faithlessness ⁹⁴ among strangers under every green (*or, spreading*) tree, and you have not obeyed my voice, says the Lord.}] ¹⁴ [The Lord declares: ⁹⁵ Come back, O faithless children, for I am your Master: I will take you --- one from a city and two from a clan (*or, family*), and I will bring you to Zion.”}]

¹⁵ “I will provide you with rulers ⁹⁶ who show obedience to me. They will feed you with knowledge ⁹⁷ and discretion (*or, understanding*). ¹⁶ When ⁹⁸ your population has grown and you are successful in the land, ⁹⁹ and at that time one will no longer speak about the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord.” ¹⁰⁰ It will not come to mind, nor will it be remembered or missed for a new covenant will be established. ¹⁰¹ ¹⁷ When that time comes Jerusalem will be called the Throne of the Lord, ¹⁰² and all nations will gather there because of the presence of the Lord in Jerusalem, and they will no longer stubbornly follow the dictates of their own hearts. ¹⁸ In those days the house of Judah will join the house of Israel, and they will be together, coming from the land to the north to the land that I have given their ancestors as a heritage.]

5. *Israel's Infidelity 3:19 – 20*

¹⁹ {“I thought about how ¹⁰³ I would set you among my sons, and provide you will a pleasant land, a patrimony (*or, heritage*) that is more beautiful ¹⁰⁴ than the gentiles, ¹⁰⁵ and I thought you would then say to me, “My father,” and would never turn away from following me. ²⁰ Just as certainly as a faithless ¹⁰⁶ woman who betrays her husband, so too you have been betraying me, O house of Israel, says the Lord.” ¹⁰⁷

6. *Summons to Genuine Repentance 3:21 – 4:2*

²¹ {A voice on the barren heights ¹⁰⁸ was heard, weeping, and the pleading of Israel's children, because they have perverted their way. ¹⁰⁹ They have forgotten the Lord their God. ²² “Turn back, O disloyal children! I will heal your faithlessness.” “Look! We

⁹⁴ Literally: “ways.” JB: “flirted with strangers.”

⁹⁵ Those scholars who feel that verses 8 to 13 are a later interpolation generally feel that verses 14 – 18 are interpolations stemming from a different time period in Jeremiah's life.

⁹⁶ Cf. 2:8, footnote 35.

⁹⁷ LXX: “παιραινοντες.”

⁹⁸ LXX: “if.”

⁹⁹ TAN: “When you increase and are fertile in the land.”

¹⁰⁰ The Ark of the Covenant was no doubt destroyed or taken away to Babylon when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem in 586 BCE.

¹⁰¹ LXX: “And it will happen that if you have multiplied and increased in the land, says the Lord, in those days they will no longer say, the ark, the covenant of the Holy One of Israel, it will not even be considered; it will not be mentioned; nor will it be visited, nor will it be worshiped any more.”

¹⁰² The Ark of the Covenant was considered to be the throne of God .

¹⁰³ LXX: “Γενοιτο κυριε οτι.”

¹⁰⁴ LXX: “Θεου παντοκρατορος.”

¹⁰⁵ Literally: “all nations.”

¹⁰⁶ LXX: “ηθετησεν.”

¹⁰⁷ LXX: “But as a wife acts treacherously against her husband, so has the house of Israel dealt treacherously against me, says the Lord.”

¹⁰⁸ LXX: “εκ χειλεων.” CB: “Hark, on the bare heights is heard the suppliant weeping of the children of Israel.”

¹⁰⁹ NEB: “For they have taken crooked ways and ignored the Lord their God.” LXX: “A voice from the lips was heard, even of weeping and supplication of the children of Israel, for they have dealt unrighteously in their ways, they have forgotten their Holy One.”

come to you! ¹¹⁰ You are the Lord our God! ²³ The hills truly are a deception with their orgies on the mountains. The Lord our God is truly the salvation of Israel.”} ¹¹¹ ²⁴ “Beginning in our youth shameful things took place which consumed our labors, our ancestors, our flocks, our herds, as well as our sons and daughters. ²⁵ Let us lie down in our shame for all of us are wrapped up in our dishonor. We have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our ancestors, are guilty, even to this day, and we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.” ¹¹²

<CHAPTER 4>

6. *The Prospect of Unconditional Return 4:1 – 4*

¹ The Lord says, “If ¹¹³ you return, O Israel, {You should return to me! If you do away with your abominations, removing them from my presence, and do not waver, ² and if you swear, saying ‘As the Lord lives,’ ¹¹⁴ saying it in all honesty, justice and in uprightness, then nations will bless themselves ¹¹⁵ in him, and will give him glory.”} ³ This is the word of the Lord: The Lord is the Sovereign ¹¹⁶ of Judah and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem! (Break up your fallow ground. ¹¹⁷ Do not sow among thorns. ¹¹⁸ ⁴ Circumcise ¹¹⁹ yourselves to the Lord. ¹²⁰ Remove the foreskin ¹²¹ of your hearts, you people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath flare up like fire, and burn with no one being able to quench it because of the evil of your deeds’.”}

C. *The Foes* ¹²² *from the North 4:5 – 31*

1. *The Alarm 4:5 – 8*

⁵ “Declare to Judah, and proclaim to Jerusalem, and say {Blow the trumpet¹²³ through the land! Cry aloud! Mobilize [*the recruits*] and let us go into the fortified cities. ¹²⁴ ⁶ Erect a signpost (*or, signal*) ¹²⁵ toward Zion; flee for safety, do not delay, for I will bring evil from the north along with great destruction. ⁷ The lion ¹²⁶ has gone up from his lair (*or, thicket*), as a destroyer (*or, predator*) of nations. He has been roused. He has

¹¹⁰ LXX: “ἴδου δούλοι ἡμεῖς ἐσομεθα σοι.”

¹¹¹ Hebrew uncertain.

¹¹² LXX: “We have lain down in our shame and our disgrace has covered us; because we and our ancestors have sinned before our God from our youth until this day: and we have not listened to the voice of the Lord our God.”

¹¹³ Some scholars feel this is an insertion dating from a later time in Jeremiah’s life. LXX: “Israel will return.”

¹¹⁴ This vow implies a sincere return to God and loyal adherence to him.

¹¹⁵ LXX: “will bless him, and by him they will praise God in Jerusalem.”

¹¹⁶ Literally: “man.”

¹¹⁷ Literally: “plow for yourselves plowed ground.” NIV: “Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns.”

¹¹⁸ Probably a quote from Hosea 10:12.

¹¹⁹ TAN: “open your hearts to the Lord.” The external physical rite does not avail anything, unless this rite is accompanied by the removal of blunders and blemishes.

¹²⁰ LXX: “τῷ Θεοῦ ἐμῶν.”

¹²¹ Harrison in TOTC says: “The foreskin typified unregenerate nature with its inbred passions and lusts.”

¹²² The armies are not identified.

¹²³ This was a signal of danger. Cr.: Amos 3:6.

¹²⁴ Probably to retreat to the fortified cities since they were not able to withstand attacks in open areas.

¹²⁵ LXX: “φευγετε.”

¹²⁶ The lion can represent either Assyria or Babylon, based on the bas-reliefs in both countries.

departed from his place to make your land desolate; your cities ruined and uninhabited. 8 Clothe yourselves in sackcloth! Lament and wail! The blazing anger of the Lord has been turned on us.” Declare this says the Lord. }

2. *Failure of Courage 4:9 – 10*

9 [“In that day, says the Lord, the courage (*or, heart*) of the king will perish, the priests will be appalled, the prophets stupefied (*or, aghast*).”] 10 Then I said,¹²⁷ {“Ah, Lord, God, surely you have utterly deceived these people¹²⁸ and Jerusalem [*who*] say, [‘Peace will be with you,’ whereas the sword threatens everyone’s life.”]}

3. *Word of Judgments 4:11 – 12*

11 At that time it will be said about the people of Jerusalem: {“A searing wind¹²⁹ from the bare heights (*or, the trails*) of the desert, blowing toward the women of my people.¹³⁰ It will not serve to winnow or to cleanse. 12 A full blast of the wind comes from me.¹³¹ Now it is I who speaks of judgment that will befall them.”]}

4. *Call to Repent 4:13 – 18*¹³²

13 {“Behold [*the invaders*] move like the clouds, their chariots move like a tempest, their horses are as swift as eagles.¹³³ Woe to us, for we are ruined! 14 O Jerusalem, cleanse your heart of wickedness, that you might be rescued (*or, saved*). How long will your evil thoughts remain with you? 15 Messengers (*or, runners*) from Dan announce disaster from Mount Ephraim! 16 Warn the nations that [*the invader*] is coming; announce to Jerusalem: Besiegers¹³⁴ come from a distant land. They shout against the cities of Judah. 17 Like pickets (*or, guards*) they close in, surrounding on all sides, because of rebellion against me, says the Lord. 18 Your way of life and your actions have caused this to happen. This is your doom, and it is bitter! It has pieced your heart!”}¹³⁵

5. *The Prophet’s Suffering 5:19 – 22*

19 {“My anguish! My anguish!¹³⁶ I writhe in pain! Oh, the walls¹³⁷ (*or, the throbbing*) of my heart! My heart is beating wildly.¹³⁸ I cannot keep silent; for I hear the sound¹³⁹ of the trumpets, which is the alarm of war.¹⁴⁰ 20 Disaster overtakes us! The

¹²⁷ LXX: “and they will say.” Many scholars feel verses 10 – 12 are prose though KIT and BHS recognize the verses as poetry.

¹²⁸ I.e.: the false prophets.

¹²⁹ The hot wind was called the Sirocco which blows from the eastern desert. The LXX has: “There is a spirit of error in the wilderness.” “πλανησεως.”

¹³⁰ Literally: “daughter people, the conduct people.”

¹³¹ LXX: “But a sprit of accomplished vengeance will come on me.”

¹³² Some scholars alter the order of the verses assuming this makes for a better read. 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 14, 19.

¹³³ In Hebrew the meaning of the word for “eagles” and “vultures” is determined by the usage. The words are the same. The Hebrew word used here comes from the Akkadian.

¹³⁴ The Hebrew word should be translated as something less than “besiegers.” “Invaders” is perhaps a better translation. Literally: “watchers.” MFT and CB both translate the word as “Leopards.” MFT: “Leopards are leaping from a far land, leaping and growling at the townships of Judah, lurking there in the fields round her on every side.” LXX: “Συστροφαί.”

¹³⁵ NEB: “and all this comes of your rebellion.”

¹³⁶ Literally: “my entrails.” So also in LXX. The Hebrews considered the entrails as the seat of the emotions.

¹³⁷ LXX: “the sensitive powers of my heart.”

¹³⁸ MFT: “my heart moans inside me.”

¹³⁹ Literally: “You, O my being, hear.” Emended it would read: “I hear the blare of horns. My inner being, the alarms of war.”

entire land is ravaged! Suddenly my tents have been razed, my curtains torn to shreds. ¹⁴¹
21 How long must I see the (*enemies*) banners ¹⁴² and hear the sound of the trumpet?}

22 {“My people ¹⁴³ are foolish ¹⁴⁴ for they do not listen. They are stupid children!
They have no intelligence! They are skilled in doing evil, but are unable to do what is
right (*or, good*). They do not know how to do good.”}

6. Visitation of Cosmic Destruction 4:23 – 26

23 {“I saw the earth which was nothing but wasteland and nothingness. ¹⁴⁵ and
looking toward the heavens I saw no light. 24 I saw the mountains, and they were quaking.
The hills moved to and fro. ¹⁴⁶ 25 I saw that there was no person left, and all the birds of
the sky had fled. ¹⁴⁷ 26 I saw that the fruitful farm land ¹⁴⁸ and it became like a desert, and
its cities were ruined because of the blazing anger of the Lord.”} ¹⁴⁹

7. Desolation of the Lord 4:27 – 29

27 {“This is what the Lord says: The entire land will become a desolation; yet I
will not make a complete end. 28 The earth will mourn; and the sky will be black; but I
have spoken, I have had a purpose; I have not relented ¹⁵⁰ nor will I turn back.} ¹⁵¹

29 {At the noise of the horsemen and bowmen (*or, archers*) the entire city will
flee, going into hiding. ¹⁵² They will clamber up among the rocks. ¹⁵³ The cities will be
forsaken, and no people will reside in them.”}

8. The Harlot's Murder 4:30 – 31

30 {“You, O desolate one, what is the significance of your dress of crimson? Why
do you adorn yourself with golden ornaments? Why do you enlarge your eyes with kohl?
¹⁵⁴You beautify yourself in vain. Your lovers (*or, paramours*) ¹⁵⁵ despise you: they seek
your life. 31 I heard a cry that sounded like that of a woman in travail; ¹⁵⁶ agonizing as if
giving birth to her first child. The city of the daughter of Zion: ¹⁵⁷ panting for breath,
stretching out her hands, saying, ‘Woe is me! I am fainting before murderers.’”} ¹⁵⁸

¹⁴⁰ This passage no doubt reflects the personal anguish of the prophet .

¹⁴¹ LXX: “my curtains have been torn apart.” “διεσπασθησαν.”

¹⁴² LXX; “How long will I see fugitives and hear the sound of the trumpet?” “φευγοντος.”

¹⁴³ LXX: “for the princes of my people.”

¹⁴⁴ LXX: “οι ηγουμενοι.” TAN: “stupid.”

¹⁴⁵ Literally: “a waste and an emptiness.” TAN: “unformed and void.”

¹⁴⁶ Literally; “were frightened.” TAN: “were rocking.”

¹⁴⁷ In verses 24 – 25 cosmic disturbances are matched to the turbulent upheaval of invasion and warfare.

¹⁴⁸ LXX: I saw Carmel was a desert.”

¹⁴⁹ LXX adds: “ηφανισθησαν.” God’s wrath is always tempered with mercy. The new covenant is the deliverer from divine wrath.

¹⁵⁰ Literally: “be sorry.”

¹⁵¹ LXX: “repent.”

¹⁵² Literally: “enter thickets.” LXX: “εις τα σπηλαια και εξρυβασαν.”

¹⁵³ NEB: “They scramble up the crags.”

¹⁵⁴ As in Egypt antimony was used to enlarge the eyes/

¹⁵⁵ The Hebrew word means “to lust.” The word is used here and in Ezekiel 37.

¹⁵⁶ LXX: “του στεναγμου σου.”

¹⁵⁷ This is generally considered to be a reference to a specific woman. In this case, however, it is a reference to Jerusalem.

¹⁵⁸ TAN: “I am doomed, they are coming to kill me.” CEV: “She was gasping for breath and begging for help. ‘I am dying,’ she said. ‘They have murdered me.’” The prophet uses the figure of a fatal miscarriage to depict the price Israel is paying for her iniquity.

<CHAPTER 5>

D. Israel's Utter Sinfulness 5:1 – 31

1. Jeremiah's Vain Search for an Upright Person 5:1 – 14

1 {"Run up and down the streets of Jerusalem. Look around and take note! Search the market places to see if you can find a person, just one, who acts justly and seeks the truth (*or, integrity*).¹⁵⁹ On that basis I will pardon Jerusalem. 2 [*The Lord says:*] Even though they say, 'As the Lord lives!' yet they purger themselves. 3 O Lord, our eyes have looked for truth (*or, integrity*). You have struck them, but they did not pay attention or felt any pain! You commanded them, and they rejected any correction.¹⁶⁰ They have hardened their faces --- harder than stone, they have refused to repent.}

4 {"Then I said, These are only the poor,¹⁶¹ they have no sense; for they do not know the requirements of the Lord their God. 5 So I will go to the wealthy (*or, the great*), and will speak to them; for they know the ways of the Lord, and the requirements of God. But they were all alike for all had broken the yoke and had torn the traces.}¹⁶²

6 {"Therefore a lion from the forest will kill them, a wolf from the desert¹⁶³ will ravage them, a leopard (*or, panther*) will lurk around their cities. Whoever gors out of the cities will be torn to pieces, because of their many transgressions, for their rebellious acts are countless.}

7 {"How can I forgive you? Your children have forsaken me, and have believed in those who are not gods (*or, idols*). When I fed them until they were satisfied, under my direction they committed adultery and trooped off to the houses of prostitution.¹⁶⁴ They were well-fed, lusty¹⁶⁵ stallions, each lusting (*or, neighing*) for his neighbor's wife. 9 Shouldn't I punish them for these things, says the Lord. Shouldn't I provide retribution (*or, avenge myself*) on a nation such as this one?}

10 {"Go up through the vineyard rows and destroy; but do not destroy totally. Strip away the foliage for these people are not the Lord's.¹⁶⁶ 11 The house of Israel and the house of Judah have betrayed me, says the Lord.}

12 {"They have lied¹⁶⁷ concerning the Lord, and have said, 'He will do nothing.¹⁶⁸ There will be no evil coming upon us, nor will we see the perils of sword or famine.

¹⁵⁹ Literally: "faithfulness."

¹⁶⁰ CB: "Thou didst smite them, but they smarted not, thou didst consume them, but they would not take the warning."

¹⁶¹ LXX adds: "they are weak." TAN: "'They are just the poor folk.' They act foolishly." Even the poor were expected to know the Law of God.

¹⁶² NAB: "torn off the harness."

¹⁶³ LXX reads the Hebrew vocalization differently and translates the Hebrew as: "εος των οικτων." "A wolf has destroyed them even to their houses."

¹⁶⁴ NIV: "They committed adultery and thronged to the houses of prostitutes." Hebrew uncertain! The Hebrew word *wddgty* can mean "trooped" or "assembled themselves." "It can also mean "to castrate oneself" which was included in some Canaanite rituals. The last phrase can mean "they became guests in prostitute's houses." The MT is "gash oneself." The LXX is used in this translation.

¹⁶⁵ LXX: "wanton" "θηλυμηνεις," Targum: "ελκοντες." Vulgate: "furentes circa feminas testiculati." TAN: "They are like full fed stallions, wild with desire, each lusting for his neighbor's wife."

¹⁶⁶ Hebrew unclear. NAB: "Climb to her terraces, and ravage them, destroy them [not wholly]. Tear away her tendrils, they do not belong to the Lord." TAN: "Go up among her vine [rows] and destroy: lop off her trailing branches, for they are not of the Lord (But do not make an end.)"

¹⁶⁷ Some scholars consider the remainder of this chapter to be prose though KIT and BHS show the passage to be poetry.

¹⁶⁸ Literally: "He is not."

13 The prophets will simply speak mere words for they are not true prophets. That is what will happen to them!”}

14 “Therefore this is what the Lord the Almighty God says: {“Because they have spoken in this manner I am making my word in your mouths as if it were fire, and the people as wood and the fire will consume them,} declares the Lord.”}

2. *The Coming of a Foe 5:15 – 17*

15 {“Be aware: I am bringing you a nation from afar, O house of Israel, declares the Lord. It is an enduring nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor will you understand what is spoken. ¹⁶⁹ 16 Their quiver is like an open tomb. They are all mighty warriors. 17 They will devour your harvest and your food. They will devour your sons and your daughters. They will devour your flocks and herds. They will devour your vineyards and your fig trees. This will be accomplished with their swords and they will crush your fortified cities in which you seek to rely for safety. These will be destroyed with their swords.”}

3. *Explanation of the Exile 4:18 – 19*

18 [“Even in those days, says the Lord, I will not cause your total destruction. 19 When your people ask, ‘Why has the Lord our God done all these things to us,’ you will say to them: ‘Because you have forsaken God and served alien gods in your land, so you will serve foreigners in a land that is not yours.”]

4. *Denial of the Lord’s Power in Nature 5:20 – 25*

20 {“Proclaim this in the house of Jacob! Proclaim this in the house of Judah! 21 Hear this, O foolish and senseless ¹⁷⁰ people for you have eyes but are unable to see and you have ears but are unable to hear. 22 Don’t you fear me? says the Lord.}

{“Don’t you tremble before me? I brought the sand as a boundary for the sea, a perpetual barrier which the sea is unable to pass; though the breakers may toss they cannot prevail, though the breakers roar they cannot pass over it. 23 But these people have stubborn and rebellious hearts. They have turned aside and gone away. 24 They do not say to themselves: ‘Let us revere the Lord our God, who gives the rain and the seasons, the autumn rain and the spring rain, and maintains the appointed weeks until harvest. 25 Your crimes have prevented your recovery of blessings and your sins have kept you from receiving.”}

5. *Wickedness of the Wealthy 5:26 – 29*

26 {“Wicked ¹⁷¹ persons are among my people. They lust like fowlers, lying in wait, ¹⁷² to catch persons (*or, lay snares like a fowlers net, and set deadly traps to catch people*). 27 Like a basket of trapped birds, their houses are filled with fraud (*or, deceit*); therefore they have become powerful and rich. 28 They have grown fat and sleek. They excel in deeds of wickedness, ¹⁷³ they make judgments but not justly as they deal with the fatherless, not dealing properly, and they do not defend the rights of the needy.”} ¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ LXX: “ου ουκ ακουση τες γλωσσης αυτου.” “the sound of whose language no one will understand.”

¹⁷⁰ Literally: “without heart.” TAN: “Hear this, O foolish people, void of intelligence.”

¹⁷¹ MFT: “Rogues.”

¹⁷² Hebrew uncertain. NRSV: “have set a trap.” Vulgate: “quasi aucupes.” LXX: “ως δικτουν ιξευτου.”

¹⁷³ LXX: “have transformed my words into evil.”

¹⁷⁴ LXX: “χηρας.” TAN: “They have become fat and sleek. The pass beyond the bounds of wickedness and they prosper. They will not judge the case of the orphan nor give a hearing to the plea of the needy.”

6. *Sins of Prophets and Priests 5:30 – 31*

30 {An appalling and horrible thing has happened to the land! 31 The prophets prophesy falsely; the priests make rulings as they wish. 175 My people love having it like that, but what will they be able to do when the end comes?}

<CHAPTER 6>

F. Threats and Warnings 6:1 – 31

1. Jerusalem Threatened with Siege 6:1 – 8

1. {"Flee to safety, 176 O people of Benjamin. 177 from the midst of Jerusalem. Sound the trumpet in Tekoa, 178 and light a signal fire 179 in Beth-haccherem; 180 for evil is coming from the north, along with great destruction. 181 2 I will destroy the attractive and delicate socialite daughters of Zion. 182 3 Shepherds who come against her (*Zion*) will pitch their tents around her. They will pasture their flocks there. 183 4 Declare (*or, sanctify*) war against her. Let us begin waging war at noon. 'Woe to us! The day declares it. The shadows of evening lengthen.' 5 'Be up! Let us attack by light, and destroy her palaces (*or, fortresses*). 184}

6 This is what the Almighty Lord declares: {"Chop down her trees! Build up a siege ramp against Jerusalem. 185 This is the city which must be (*or, is destined to be*) punished. 186 There is nothing but opposition within her. 7 Just as a well keeps its water cold (*or, fresh*), so she keeps her wickedness, violence and destruction fresh within her. Illness and wounds are ever present before me. 187 8 Accept rebuke, O Jerusalem, lest I 188 be alienated from you, lest I make you a desolation: --- an uninhabited land.}

¹⁷⁵ Hebrew unclear.

¹⁷⁶ Cf.: ANET: pp. 482b; 483a.

¹⁷⁷ Why did Jeremiah call to the people of Benjamin? Did he mistakenly think Jerusalem was in Benjaminites territory? JB: "'Save yourself, men of Benjamin from the heart of Jerusalem.'

¹⁷⁸ The Hebrew word translated as "Sound" and the word "Tekoa" are a play on words. Tekoa is 12 miles south of Jerusalem or 5 miles south of Bethlehem. It was the home of the prophet Amos.

¹⁷⁹ Signal fires are referred to in the Lachish ostraca.

¹⁸⁰ The name means: "The house of the vineyard." It is modern Ramet Rahel, 2 miles south of Jerusalem.

¹⁸¹ LXX: "Strengthen yourselves, you children of Benjamin to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and sound the alarm with the trumpet in Thecue, and set up a signal over Bethacharina, for evil threatens from the north, and great destruction is coming."

¹⁸² Hebrew unclear. A slight emendation: "Have I compared you to a pleasant pasture, daughter- Zion." LXX: "Zion, delightful and lovely; her end is near --- She to whom the Shepherds come and bring flocks with them."

¹⁸³ NRSV: "I have likened daughter Zion to the loveliest pasture." A footnote adds: (Or: "I will destroy daughter Zion; the loveliest pasture.") MFT: "as though they owned the ground." CEV: "They let their flocks eat all the grass."

¹⁸⁴ LXX: "Let us attack her by night and destroy her foundations."

¹⁸⁵ LXX; "Array a large force against Jerusalem, O false city. There is only oppression in you."

¹⁸⁶ Emended: "She is the city of falseness" or "the city of incense." JB: "She is the city of falsehood, with nothing but oppression within her."

¹⁸⁷ LXX: "As a cistern cools water, so her wickedness cools her, ungodliness and misery will be heard just as it had been heard continually in the past." TAN: "The lawlessness and rapine are heard constantly in her. Before me constantly are sickness and wounds."

¹⁸⁸ Literally: "my soul."

2. The People's Total Corruption 6:9 – 15

9 This is what the Almighty Lord says: {"Glean ¹⁸⁹ the remnant of Israel thoroughly; be like a vintager (*or, a person gathering grapes*) and pass your hand over its branches.}

10 {To whom will I speak and give a warning that they might hear? Look! Their ears are shut ¹⁹⁰ They can not listen. Look! To them the word of the Lord is an object of scorn! Look! They are not pleased by it. 11 I however am filled with the wrath of the Lord; ¹⁹¹ I am weary of holding it in!}

{Pour it out ¹⁹² on the children (*or, infants*) in the street and on the gathered young men alike. Both husband and wife will be taken, the old people as well as those who are very old. ¹⁹³ 12 Their houses will be filled with grief, more than the others, their fields and their wives together; for I will stretch out my hand against the inhabitants of the land.} says the Lord.

13 {Everyone from the most insignificant to the most important --- everyone is greedy for unjust gain; ---- prophet, priest --- they are all alike --- all deceitful. 14 They have healed the wound of my people only superficially, saying: 'Peace, Peace' ¹⁹⁴ There is no peace! 15 Were they ashamed when they committed abhorrent deeds? No! They were not ashamed in any way. They did not even know how to blush. Therefore they will be included among those who will fall at the time when I punish ¹⁹⁵ them. They will be overthrown, declares the Lord."}

3. Rejection of the Ancient Paths 6:16 – 21

16 This is what the Lord declares: {"Stand along the roads and look. Ask about the ancient paths ¹⁹⁶ where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. However: they said, 'We will not walk in it.' 17 I set watchmen (*or, prophets*) over you saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.' ¹⁹⁷ 18 Therefore: listen, O nations, and know ¹⁹⁸ O congregation what will happen to them. ¹⁹⁹ 19 Listen, O earth! Look! I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their schemes (*or, rebellions*), ²⁰⁰ because they have not obeyed my words, and as for my rule (*or, law*) they have rejected it. 20 (What need is there for frankincense aroma to come ²⁰¹ to me from Sheba, ²⁰² or sweet calamus ²⁰³ from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not

¹⁸⁹ So: versions. Hebrew: "They will glean."

¹⁹⁰ Literally: "circumcised."

¹⁹¹ LXX: "του θυμου μου."

¹⁹² LXX: "εκχεω."

¹⁹³ Literally: "with fullness of days."

¹⁹⁴ TAN: "All is well." The Hebrew word "Shalom" means much more than the absence of war. It includes the concept of ideal conditions of material and spiritual prosperity.

¹⁹⁵ LXX: "επισκοπης αυτων."

¹⁹⁶ TAN: "Stand by the roads consider, inquire about the ancient paths." I.e. the lessons learned from the past.

¹⁹⁷ The prophets were appointed as sentinels of faith to give the warning of impending disaster. The people would not accept the prophets cause and instead longed for the pleasures of sin for a season.

¹⁹⁸ LXX: "και οι μοιμαινοντες τα πιδμνια αυτων."

¹⁹⁹ Hebrew unclear.

²⁰⁰ LXX: "απο στροφης αυτων."

²⁰¹ Literally: "she comes." LXX: "φερετε."

²⁰² Modern Yemen.

acceptable, nor are your sacrifices pleasing to me.) ²¹ Therefore: this is what the Lord declares: ‘Look! I will lay a stumbling block before these people and they will stumble against it. They and their children, neighbors and friends will all perish.’}

4. Terror Aroused by the Foe from the North 6:22 – 26

²² This is what the Lord says: {Look! A nation is coming from the area to the north, a great nation, ²⁰⁴ roused from most remote parts of the earth. ²³ They grasp a bow and spear (*or, javelin*); they are cruel and show no mercy. Their sound is like that of the roaring sea; they ride horses fully equipped to do battle against you, O daughter of Zion.”}

²⁴ {“We have heard the report about them! Our hands are limp! Anguish has taken hold of us! Agony is upon us, like a woman who is giving birth! ²⁵ Do not go into the field, nor walk along the road; for the enemy has a sword and terrorizes on all sides.”}

²⁶ {“O my people, ²⁰⁵ wear sackcloth and wallow in dust (*or, ashes*): mourn as if you had lost your only child; for destruction will come upon us.”} ²⁰⁶

5. The Prophet as Assayer 6:27 – 30

²⁷ {“I have made you an assayer (*or, tester*) ²⁰⁷ among my people, that you might know and assay their ways. ²⁸ They are all stubborn, rebellious, and friends of slanderers. They are bronze and iron, all of them act corruptly. ²⁰⁸ ²⁹ The bellows blow fiercely. The lead is consumed in the fire; ²⁰⁹ the slag can not disappear, for the dross is not separated. ²¹⁰ ³⁰ They are called refuse silver, for the Lord has rejected them.”} ²¹¹

<CHAPTER 7>

IV. The Vanity of the Cultus 7:1 – 8:3

A. The Temple Sermon 7:1 - 15

¹ The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah from the Lord; ² “Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and there proclaim this message: say: Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah who enter these gates to worship the Lord. ²¹² ³ This is what the Almighty Lord, the God of Israel says: Amend (*or, reform*) your ways and your actions, and I will let you reside in this place (*or, let me reside with you in this place.*) ⁴ Do not

²⁰³ Literally: “a good calamus.” Calamus is a fragrant reed. LXX translates it as “cinnamon” as do several other more recent translators.

²⁰⁴ “Great nation” is omitted in the LXX except for Codex A which includes it.

²⁰⁵ TAN: “My poor people.”

²⁰⁶ The Hebrew is unintelligible. The word translated as “destroyer” in the LXX is: “τα λαιπωρια.” NAB: “For among my people there are wicked men, who lay snares like a fowler’s net and set deadly traps to catch men.”

²⁰⁷ The Hebrew word: “nwhb” is a hapax legomenon. Thus the meaning is uncertain. Some scholars feel it means “fortified city.” NIV: “I have made you a tester of metals and my people, the ore, that you may observe and test their ways.” Generally the Hebrew word is assumed to mean: “tester” or “refiner.”

²⁰⁸ LXX: ²⁷ “I have caused you to be tested among tested nations, and you will know me when I have tested their way.” ²⁸ “They are all disobedient, walking perversely: they are brass and iron; they are all corrupted.”

²⁰⁹ Hebrew uncertain.

²¹⁰ LXX: ²⁹ “The bellows have failed from the fire, the lead has failed: the silversmith works at his trade in vain; their wickedness has not been melted away.”

²¹¹ LXX: “Call them reprobate silver, because the Lord has rejected them.” JB: “Silver reject, men will call them, and indeed Yahweh has rejected.”

²¹² Verses 1 & 2 are omitted in the LXX.

trust ²¹³ in these deceptive ²¹⁴ words; ‘[*These dwellings are*] the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.’ ²¹⁵

5 (“If you truly amend your ways and your actions; if you truly carry out justice one with another; 6 if you do not exploit the aliens, the orphans ²¹⁶ and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place; and if you do not go after alien gods which are, to you, a source of harm, 7 then I will let you reside ²¹⁷ in this place, in the land I gave in time past to your ancestors for ever.) ²¹⁸

8 “Be aware! You trust in deceptive (*or, delusive*) words which are to no avail. 9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, perjury yourselves, offer sacrifices to Ba’al, and turn to other gods you do not know, 10 and stand before me in this house which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are safe (*or, delivered*),’ only to continue doing all these abhorrent deeds.” 11 Has this house ²¹⁹ which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Be aware! I myself have witnessed it, says the Lord.

12 “Go to my place that was in Shiloh, ²²⁰ where I established my dwelling in the past and see what I did due to the wickedness of the people of Israel. ²²¹ 13 However, now, because you have done all these abhorrent deeds, says the Lord, even though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer. 14 The result is that I will do to this house which is called by my name, and which you trust, and the place which I gave you and your ancestors as I did to Shiloh, 15 I will also deal with you by casting you from my sight just as I cast out your ancestors: all the offspring ²²² of Ephraim.”

B. The Intercession for the People 7:16 – 20

16 “As for you, do not intercede for these people or lift up a plea or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not listen to you. 17 Don’t you see what they are doing in the important cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 18 The children ²²³ gather sticks, the fathers kindle fires and the women knead dough to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven; ²²⁴ and the pour out libations to other gods to spite me to

²¹³ LXX: “Do not trust yourself.”

²¹⁴ JB: “delusive.” LXX: “το παραπαν ουκ αφελησουσιν υμας.” TAN: “illusions.”

²¹⁵ TOTC: For Jeremiah the venerating of the temple was little short of bland superstition, since for him the presence of the building was no guarantee that God would remain in the midst of an idolatrous and rebellious people. To the Judeans this was sacrosanct, being a house of the living God and therefore impregnable to all attack. People who want to legitimately claim covenant benefits need a thorough going reformation. Social injustice must immediately be remedied.

²¹⁶ Literally: “fatherless.”

²¹⁷ Hebrew uncertain. Vulgate: “dwell with you.”

²¹⁸ Some scholars feel verses 5 – 7 are a later interpolation.

²¹⁹ LXX: “ο οικος μου.”

²²⁰ Shiloh was located 18 miles north of Jerusalem and during the time of Eli was an important religious center with a sanctuary. The Ark of God was here during that time. Cf. I Samuel 3, 4. Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines.

²²¹ The shrine at Shiloh had been destroyed many years prior to the events of Jeremiah’s time.

²²² Literally: “seed.”

²²³ Literally: “sons.”

²²⁴ The Queen of Heaven was probably the Assyro-Babylonian goddess Ishtar, also known as Venus. Her worship is described in 44:17 – 25. Star cakes were baked as gifts to her. They are also described as cakes bearing her image. Worship of the Queen of Heaven continued after the people of Judah fled to Egypt in 587 CE. Papias refers to the Queen of Heaven being found in Hermopolis, Egypt as one of the deities that was worshiped.

become angry. ²²⁵ 19 Isn't it I whom the people spite? says the Lord. Isn't it themselves that they spite, to their own confusion? ²²⁶ 20 Assuredly this is what the Lord God says: Beware! My fury and my wrath will be poured out on this place! People and creatures, trees of the field and the fruit of the ground --- all will burn and not be quenched."

C. Moral Obedience Required, not Sacrifice 7:21 – 28

²¹ "This is what the Almighty Lord, the God of Israel says: Gather up ²²⁷ all your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, and eat the meat, ²² for in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt I did not speak to your ancestors, or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³ However, I gave them this command: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you will be my people, and follow my way which I will command so that all may be well with you.' ²⁴ They, however, did not obey or listen to me, for they did as they pleased, following their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil desires, ²²⁸ thus going backward and not forward. ²⁵ From the day that your ancestors left the land of Egypt to this day I have persistently sent my servants, the prophets, to them ²²⁹ day after day. ²⁶ Yet they did not listen to me, nor consider me, but became stubborn and did that which was worse than their fathers.

²⁷ ["You will declare all these words ²³⁰ but they will not listen to you. You will call to them, but they will not be attentive.] ²⁸ This is a nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God and did not attempt discipline and therefore truth ²³¹ has perished. It does not cross their lips."

D. Sinful Rites in the Valley of Hinnom 7:29 – 8:3

²⁹ {"Cut your hair ²³² and throw it away; raise a dirge (*or, lamentation*) on the bare heights; ²³³ for the Lord has been spurned and has cast off this generation of his wrath."} ²³⁴

³⁰ "The sons of Judah have done evil (*or, what displeases me*) in my sight, says the Lord; they have placed their abominations (*or, idols*) within the house which is called by my name, thus polluting (*or, defiling*) it. ³¹ They built their shrines to Tophet ²³⁵ in the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom. ²³⁶ They went there to burn their sons and daughters in the fire which I did not command, nor did anything like that ever enter into my thoughts. ³²

²²⁵ Cf.: ANET: pp. 95d; 250a.

²²⁶ Literally: "their faces." MFT: "Spite me? says the Eternal. They are spiting themselves, bringing shame on themselves!"

²²⁷ So: LXX.

²²⁸ JB: "They followed the dictates of their own evil hearts."

²²⁹ Hebrew literally: "you."

²³⁰ LXX: "τον λογον τουτον." Some scholars feel this verse is a later insertion by an editor.

²³¹ Literally: "faithfulness."

²³² Literally: "crown." LXX: "ο την κομην την αγιαν της νοζιρατοτητος σου." Possibly the reference is to the Nazarite vow in Numbers 6:4 – 8. The cutting of hair was also a sign of extreme mourning. To cut the hair was always considered as such a sign.

²³³ LXX: "on the tracks." "επι χειλεων."

²³⁴ LXX: "την ποιουσαν ταυτα." NEB: "O Jerusalem, cast off your hair, the symbol of your dedication, and throw it away, raise up a lament in the high bare places." JB: "for Yahweh has rejected, has abandoned a brood that rejects."

²³⁵ Originally the word "Tophet" meant "fireplace." Over time it came to be the name for a "place of shame."

²³⁶ In the NT it is called "Γεεννα" which gave the name to Hell in the NT. It could also be called "Ben Hinnom" which was evidently the name of early owners of the valley.

Assuredly, the time is coming, says the Lord, when it will no longer be called Tophet or the valley of the Sons of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter²³⁷ for this will become a burial place because there is no place left for burials elsewhere.³³ The carcasses of the people will be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one will be there to frighten them off.³⁴ I will be silent in the cities of Judah and there will be no mirth heard in the streets of Jerusalem for the voices of gladness will be silenced; even those of the bride and bride-groom, for the land will become desolate.”

<CHAPTER 8>

¹ “At that time, says the Lord, the bones of the kings of Judah and the bones of its princes, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets and the bones of the inhabitants will be brought out of the tombs. ² They will be strewn on the ground, exposed to the sun, and the moon and all the host of heaven which they had loved and served, which they had followed, and which they had sought and worshiped --- will not be gathered or buried. They will be as dry as the surface of the ground.²³⁸ ³ Death will be preferred to life by the remnant that remains of this evil family in all the places where I have scattered them, says the Lord of Hosts.”²³⁹

V. *Miscellaneous Materials 8:4 – 10:25*²⁴⁰

A. *Unnaturalness of Israel's Backsliding 8:4 – 7*

⁴ {“You will say to them: This is what the Lord says: When people fall don't they get up again?²⁴¹ If they mistakenly take the wrong way don't they retrace their steps and return to the path?²⁴² ⁵ Why then have these people²⁴³ turned away in a persistent rebellion? They hold fast to deceit; they refuse to return.²⁴⁴ ⁶ I have noticed and also heard, but they have not dealt honestly. No one regrets (*or, repents of*) his wickedness by saying, “What have I done?” Everyone conducts his own manner of living (*or, Everyone sets his own rules for living*),²⁴⁵ like a horse that gallops into battle. ⁷ Even the stork in the heavens knows its times and the turtledove, swallow and crane²⁴⁶ follow the time of their migration (*or, know when it is time to migrate*); but my people do not pay attention to the ordinance²⁴⁷ of the Lord”}

²³⁷ LXX: “των ανηρημενων.”

²³⁸ Possibly the enemy would dig up the bodies and look for valuables that might be found on the corpses. Some scholars feel this took place when the siege ramps were being constructed at the time of the invasion and destruction of Jerusalem.

²³⁹ The fate of the survivors would surely be even more miserable. CEV: “Some of you people of Judah will be left alive but I will force you to go to foreign countries, and you will wish you were dead. I the Lord God, all powerful have spoken.”

²⁴⁰ Some scholars feel this passage was originally in Baruch's scroll to be read on a fast day, though there is no manuscript evidence of this theory.

²⁴¹ LXX: “Don't you rise after a fall?”

²⁴² The prophet recognizes the arrogance of the people in their apostasy and speaks against it.

²⁴³ MT: “Jerusalem.”

²⁴⁴ LXX: “Shameless rebellion and strengthened themselves in their willfulness and refused to return.”

²⁴⁵ NEB: “each one breaks away (*or, is wayward*) in career, as a war-horse plunges in battle.” MFT: “Everyone plunges ahead like a cavalry charge!” CB “Each runs his own wayward course.”

²⁴⁶ The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain. LXX: “sparrows.” TEV: “thrushes.” NEB: “wryneck” (*or, woodpecker*).

²⁴⁷ The Hebrew word “mishpat” is usually translated as “law” or “judgment.”

B. False Claims to Wisdom 8:8 – 13

8 {“How can you say: ‘We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us?’²⁴⁸ Be attentive! The falsifying pens of the scribes have made it a lie.²⁴⁹ 9 The wise men will be put to shame. They will be dismayed and taken, for they have rejected the word of the Lord, as well as the wisdom that is within themselves. 10 Therefore I will give their wisdom to others and their fields will be given to conquerors,²⁵⁰ because everyone in the land is greedy for conquest, from the poorest to the most powerful, from the prophet to the priest, every one deals falsely. 11 They have healed the wound of my people superficially, saying: “Peace! Peace” when there is no peace.²⁵¹ 12 Were they ashamed when they committed their abominations? No! They were not ashamed in the least. They did not know how to blush. Therefore they will fall among those who have perished,²⁵² and I will punish them for they will be overthrown, says the Lord.

13 {“When I gather them, says the Lord, there will be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them will have disappeared from their possession..”}²⁵³

C. Despair Over Foreign Invasion 8:14 – 17

14 {“Why do we sit still? Assemble! Let us go into the fortified cities and perish there, for the Lord our God has doomed us, for we are to die, and he has contaminated our drinking water,²⁵⁴ because we have sinned against the Lord. 15 We looked for peace, but nothing good resulted, for a time of healing, but the result has been terror.²⁵⁵

16 {“The snorting of their horses is heard coming from Dan,²⁵⁶ at the sound of the neighing of their stallions²⁵⁷ all of the land quakes. They come; devouring the land and everything within it, even the city and all who dwell in it. 17 Look! I am sending venomous serpents among you, adders that cannot be charmed, and they will bite you, says the Lord.”}²⁵⁸

D. Sympathy with Stricken People 8:18 – 9:1²⁵⁹

18 {“My grief has overtaken me for it is beyond healing. My heart is failing within me.²⁶⁰ 19 Listen! The cry of the daughter of my people across the length and breadth of

²⁴⁸ TAN: “And we possess the instruction of the Lord.”

²⁴⁹ The Hebrew word translated as “lie” is uncertain in meaning. In the OT it is generally translated as “vanity.” There were not simply copyists but there were also those who interpreted. These were the forerunners of the scribes in the post-exilic times.

²⁵⁰ LXX: “new inheritors.” TAN: “dispossessions.” Literally: “possessing ones.” The LXX omits virtually all of verses 10 – 12.

²⁵¹ JB: “They dress my people’s wounds\ without concern: Peace! Peace! They say; but there is no peace.”

²⁵² NEB: “fallen with a great crash.”

²⁵³ The last portion of this sentence in Hebrew is uncertain. Scholars feel verse 13 continues the thoughts of verse 9.

²⁵⁴ LXX: “water of gall.” The Hebrew word “rosh” means “extremely bitter.” God is blamed by the people for their misfortune. TAN: “He has made us drink the bitter draft.” MFT: “has drugged us with poison for sinning against him.”

²⁵⁵ LXX: “We assembled for peace, but there was no prosperity; for a time of healing, but there was anxiety.”

²⁵⁶ Dan was the northernmost city.

²⁵⁷ LXX: “sound of their riding.”

²⁵⁸ Verse 17 points out the bitterness and the inescapableness of the punishment.

²⁵⁹ Scholars are divided as to the reference. This is a reference of the invasion: or – some other calamity.

²⁶⁰ The Hebrew of this verse is uncertain. CB: “My pain is incurable, my heart is sick within me.” LXX: “Mortally with pain of your distressed heads.”

the land: ‘Is the Lord not found in you? Is the ruler not with Israe;?’ (Why have you made me angry by worshiping, using the carved images which are alien idols?²⁶¹ 20 The harvest is past, the summer has come to an end and we are not saved. 21 The wound of the daughter of my people also causes my heart to be wounded.²⁶² I mourn continually, and dismay (*or, horror*) has overtaken me.²⁶³

22 {“Is there no balm in Gilead?²⁶⁴ Is there no physician there? Why has the health of the daughter of my people not been improved?”}

<CHAPTER 9>

1 [H. 8:23] {“Oh that my head were water and my eyes a fountain of tears that I might wail day and night for those of my people who have been killed.”²⁶⁵}

F. Lamentation Over the People’s Teaching 9:2 – 9

2 [H. 1] {“Oh that I had a wayfarer’s inn (*or, khan*)²⁶⁶ in the desert that I might leave my people and go away from them? They are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men.

3 [H. 2] {“They twist their tongues to speak lies. Falsehood, not truth, has become strong within their land; for they move from one evil to another and they do not know me, declares the Lord.²⁶⁷ 4 [H. 3] (“Beware of your neighbor! Do not trust your own brother. Brothers will attempt to take advantage of you²⁶⁸ and your neighbors will slander you.²⁶⁹ 5 [H. 4] Even neighbors cheat one another and nobody speaks the truth. They have trained their tongues to speak lies. They commit iniquity and are too weary to repent.²⁷⁰ 6 [H. 5] They persist in oppressing and being deceitful and thus they refuse to commit themselves to the Lord.²⁷¹

7 [H. 6] {“Assuredly this is what the Almighty Lord declares: I will refine them and test them, for what other alternative is there? These are sinful people.²⁷² 8 [H. 7] Their

²⁶¹ LXX: “strange varieties.” NAB: “with their foreign nonentities.” JB: “nothings from foreign countries.”

²⁶² NEB: “I am wounded at the sight of my people’s wound. I go like a mourner, overcome with horror.”

²⁶³ LXX: “For the breath of the daughter of my people I have been saddened; in me, perplexing pangs have seized me as of a woman giving birth.”

²⁶⁴ The resin of the Styra tree was used as a source of the balm in Gilead, Trans-Jordan. It was exported, being a famous medicine.

²⁶⁵ ANET: p. 147b.

²⁶⁶ LXX: “σταθμον εσγατον.” LXX: “Who would give me a most distant lodge in the wilderness that I might leave my people and depart from them?” This could provide a base for mercenaries which would be preferable to being with barbarous people.

²⁶⁷ Literally: “And not for truth they have grown strong.” TOTC: “Like a bow they bent their tongues. Falsehood is their way. They have prevailed in the land but not in the interests of truth. They go from one evil to another.” Cf.: ANET: p. 418c.

²⁶⁸ Literally: “Every brother is a supplanter.” The Hebrew root word is also the root word for the name Jacob. Cf.: Genesis 27:36. This becomes a play on words. MFT: “For a brother will cheat like a Jacob.”

²⁶⁹ LXX: “and every friend will walk craftily.”

²⁷⁰ Hebrew uncertain. Literally: “They weary themselves with committing iniquity.”

²⁷¹ Verses 5 & 6 in the MT are in need of emendation as has been done in this translation with the help of the LXX.

²⁷² Hebrew uncertain. JB: “I will now test them in a crucible but how am I to deal with their wickedness?” CB: “Behold I will smelt them, and test them, for what else can I do, in the face of the wickedness of the

tongue is like a deadly arrow for it speaks deceitfully with its mouth. Each speech is in a friendly manner toward one's neighbor even while mentally planning an ambush. 9 [H. 8] Shouldn't I punish them for these things, declares the Lord. Shouldn't I avenge myself, on a nation such as this?"}

F. *Wail for the Destruction of Judah 9:10 – 23* ²⁷³

10 [H. 9] ”{Begin weeping ²⁷⁴ and wailing for the mountains and another dirge (*or, lamentation*) for the pastures of the wilderness, because they are destroyed to such an extent that no one passes through them, and there are no sounds of lowing cattle to be heard, nor are there any birds of the air or the beasts of the field. 11 [H. 10] {“I will turn Jerusalem into a heap of ruins which will be the lair for jackals; ²⁷⁵ and I will make the cities of Judah destitute of inhabitants.”}

12 [H. 11] [Who ²⁷⁶ is the person who is able to understand this? To whom has the mouth of the Lord spoken, so that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and spoiled like the wilderness, ²⁷⁷ so that no one can travel through it?

13 [H. 12] The Lord declares: “Because they have abandoned my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, or lived in obedience to me, 14 [H. 13] but have stubbornly followed their own desire and have gone after Ba'al²⁷⁸ as their father had taught them. 15 [H. 14] Assuredly this is what the Almighty Lord, the God of Israel says: Note! I will feed this nation with wormwood, ²⁷⁹ and give them contaminated ²⁸⁰ water to drink. 16 [H. 15] I will scatter them among the various nations that are unknown both to them and to their ancestors; and I will harass them with warfare, ²⁸¹ until they have been exterminated.”]

17 [H. 16] {“The word of the Almighty Lord says: Listen and call for the women mourners ²⁸² to come; send for the skilful women to come. 18 [H. 17] Let them quickly ²⁸³ raise their voices in lamentation for us that our eyes might flow with tears and our pupils ²⁸⁴ flooded with our wailing. 19 [H. 18] The sound of wailing will be heard coming from Zion. ‘We are ruined! We are completely disgraced because we have deserted the land and we have abandoned our dwellings (*or, our dwellings have been demolished*).

20 [h. 19] {“Oh, women, hear the word of the Lord, and listen carefully to his word. Let his words teach your daughters a lamentation and each neighbor a dirge. ²⁸⁵ 21 [H. 20]

daughter of my people.” CEV: “I will purify the heart of my people just as gold is purified in a furnace. I have no other choice.”

²⁷³ This section may be a reference to the Chaldean invasion of Judah in 602 BCE. Cf.: II Kings 24:1 – 2.

²⁷⁴ So: LXX & Syriac. Hebrew: “I will take up.” LXX: “λαβετε.”

²⁷⁵ LXX: “a dwelling place for dragons.”

²⁷⁶ Some scholars feel this is an interpolation intended to explain the desolation of Jerusalem.

²⁷⁷ CEV: “like an uncrossable desert.”

²⁷⁸ In ancient Canaanite mythology the god El and his consort had a son Ba'al, a fertility god who became the true cosmic deity. In many Ugaritic texts Ba'al was regarded as the actual head of the Canaanite pantheon. This lewd orgiastic cult was attractive to many generations of Israelites.

²⁷⁹ Wormwood is a plant with a bitter taste, being of the genus *Artemisia*. It is always used metaphorically for bitterness and sorrow.

²⁸⁰ Literally: “poisonous.” CEV footnote: “bitter disappointment.”

²⁸¹ Literally: “with the sword.”

²⁸² Literally: “skilled in mourning for the dead.” Professional mourners who are employed to sing dirges to stimulate grief.

²⁸³ LXX: “και φθεγγασθωσαν.”

²⁸⁴ Literally: “eye lids.”

²⁸⁵ Some scholars feel verse 20 should follow verse 18.

Death has invaded through our windows, entering our palaces, ²⁸⁶ killing the children in the streets and the young men in the market squares.

²² [H. 21] {“Speak, ²⁸⁷ saying, this is what the Lord says: The dead bodies of men will fall ²⁸⁸ like manure on the open field or like rows of neatly cut grain mowed by the reaper, with no one to harvest it.”} ²⁸⁹

G. The Only True Ground for Boasting 9:23 – 24 [H. 22 – 23] ²⁹⁰

²³ [H. 22] ”The Lord declares: Do not let the wise man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches, ²⁴ [H. 23] The only one in whom one should glory must be based on understanding and knowing that I am the Lord who practices loving kindness, ²⁹¹ justice and righteousness on the earth for I delight in these things says the Lord.” ²⁹²

H. Punishment of the Uncircumcised 9:25 – 26 [H. 24 – 25]

²⁵ [H. 24] “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will punish all those who are circumcised ²⁹³ and yet uncircumcised. ²⁹⁴ ²⁶ [H. 25] Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab and all those who reside in the desert, who cut the corners of their hair; ²⁹⁵ for these nations ²⁹⁶ are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

<CHAPTER 10>

j. Contrast between Idols and the Lord 10:1 – 16

¹ “Oh house of Israel, hear the word which the Lord speaks to you! ² This is what the Lord says. {Do not learn to go the way of the nations ²⁹⁷ and do not be alarmed at the heavenly portents just because the nations are shocked by them, ³ for the customs of the people ²⁹⁸ are false. ²⁹⁹ A tree from the forest is cut down and worked with an adz ³⁰⁰ by the hands of a craftsman. ³⁰¹ ⁴ It is embellished with silver and gold. ³⁰² They fasten it with a hammer and nails so that it cannot move. ⁵ Their idols are like scarecrows in a

²⁸⁶ LXX: “Εἰς τὴν γῆν ἠρώων.”

²⁸⁷ LXX: “ὁ θανάτω.” A number of words in this verse are omitted in the text of the LXX but are found in the Hebrew text.

²⁸⁸ LXX: “καὶ ἐσθονταί.”

²⁸⁹ LXX: “The carcasses of the men will be for an example on the face of the field.”

²⁹⁰ Some scholars feel verses 23-26 are to be included at the end of chapter 10. There is no manuscript evidence, only the internal evidence.

²⁹¹ Hebrew: “hesed.”

²⁹² What a contrast this is to the understandings of Ba’al.

²⁹³ Hebrew uncertain. I.e.: The minds are blocked to God’s commands. Cf.: Leviticus 19:27 which forbids Israelites cutting their hair short. Those who worshiped idols cut their hair short in honor of the god in pagan practices.

²⁹⁴ LXX: “σαρκί.” “for the Gentiles are uncircumcised flesh.”

²⁹⁵ NRSV: “All those with shaven temples who live in the desert.” JB: “Crop-Heads.” Certain Arab tribes trimmed the hair from their temples in honor of their god according to Herodotus.

²⁹⁶ The nations referred to in this verse were perhaps a part of an anti-Babylonian alliance under the leadership of Egypt.

²⁹⁷ LXX: “Did you not learn according to the ways of the heathen?”

²⁹⁸ So emended. “the object that the nations fear.”

²⁹⁹ Literally: “vanity.”

³⁰⁰ JB: “worked with the blade by a carver’s hand.”

³⁰¹ LXX: “the work of the carpenter, or a molten image.”

³⁰² Some scholars feel v. 9 should be inserted here as is done in the LXX.

cucumber patch; ³⁰³ being unable to speak, they have to be carried, for they are unable to walk. Do not fear them, for they are unable to do evil, neither are they able to do good.}

6 [{"There is none like you ³⁰⁴ O Lord; you are great, and your name is powerful. 7 Who would not revere you, O king of the nations? This is what you deserve for among all the wise people of the nations and all the royalty. ³⁰⁵ There is none like you. 8 They are both dull (*or, stupid*) ³⁰⁶ and foolish. They are taught by idols that are only wood. ³⁰⁷ 9 Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, ³⁰⁸ and gold from Uphaz. ³⁰⁹ They are the work of craftsmen and of the hands of goldsmiths. Their clothing is violet (*or, blue*) and purple. They are the result of the work of skilled artisans. 10 The ³¹⁰ Lord is truly God! He is the living God and the eternal king. Through his wrath the earth quakes and the nations are unable to endure his indignation (*or, rage*).}

11 [{"This is what you are to say to them: ³¹¹ "These gods did not make heaven and earth and will perish from the earth and under heaven.]" ³¹²

12 {"It is the Lord ³¹³ who made the earth by his might. He established the world by his wisdom and by his understanding he stretched out heaven. 13 When he speaks ³¹⁴ there is a tumult of water in the heavens, ³¹⁵ and he makes the mists rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, ³¹⁶ and releases the wind from his storehouses. 14 Every person is unintelligent and has little knowledge. Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idols; for his images are false ³¹⁷ and there is no breath in them. ³¹⁸ 15 They are worthless, ³¹⁹ a work of mockery, and when the time of their punishment comes they will perish. 16 The portion [*God*] granted to Jacob is unlike them for God is the one who formed all things ³²⁰ and Israel is God's very own tribe, the tribe of God's inheritance. The Lord of Hosts is his name."}

³⁰³ LXX: "will set them up and they will not be moved." TEV: "field of melons."

³⁰⁴ Verses 6 – 8 are omitted in the LXX. Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

³⁰⁵ Literally: "kingdoms."

³⁰⁶ JB: "brutish and stupid."

³⁰⁷ Hebrew uncertain. TAN: "their doctrine is but delusion." TEV: "What can they learn from wooden idols. (*or as in a footnote*) What their idols teach is worthless."

³⁰⁸ Scholars have felt this is a reference to Spain but recent scholarship suggests Sardinia.

³⁰⁹ The location is uncertain. JB & NAB have "Ophir." Some scholars feel the word in Hebrew is a metallurgical term for refined gold. It is similar to the Hebrew word for "pure gold."

³¹⁰ Omitted in the LXX

³¹¹ Some scholars feel this verse is a gloss.

³¹² The Aramaic reference hints that this might have been a popular anti-polytheistic saying. This verse is not in Hebrew but in Aramaic. Some scholars feel this is an interpolation.

³¹³ Verses 12 – 16 are reproduced in 51:15 – 19. The LXX inserts the word "the Lord." Hebrew has "he."

³¹⁴ Literally: "at the sound of his making."

³¹⁵ A portion of this verse is omitted in the LXX.

³¹⁶ NEB: "He opens rifts for the rain."

³¹⁷ TAN: "a deceit."

³¹⁸ JB: "At this all men stand stupefied, uncomprehending, every goldsmith blushes for the idol he has made, since his images are nothing but delusion."

³¹⁹ CEV: "Idols are merely a joke and when the time is right they will be destroyed."

³²⁰ A part of this verse is omitted in the LXX.

K. The Coming of Destruction and Exile 10:17 – 22 ³²¹

¹⁷ {“Gather up your bundles of wares ³²² from the ground, O you who live under siege. ³²³ ¹⁸ [The Lord says, Behold I am flinging out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and I will bring severe disaster on them ³²⁴ that they will surely feel.] ³²⁵

¹⁹ {“Woe to me because of my hurt! My wound ³²⁶ is serious! But: I said, Truly this is a sickness, and I must (*or, can*) bear it. ³²⁷ ²⁰ My tabernacle (*or, tent*) is destroyed, and all my cords are broken; my children have been gone from me and they no longer live. There is no one to again erect my tent and set up my curtains. ³²⁸ ²¹ The shepherds (*or, leaders*) are stupid and do not inquire of the Lord; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered. ²² Listen! A rumor! Look! It comes! A great commotion ³²⁹ has risen from the north country to bring about the desolation of Judah, making it to be like the lair of jackals.”}

L. Prayer for Self-correction and Foreign Retribution 10:23 – 25

²³ {“I know, O Lord, that the way of individuals is not given to choose for themselves, that it is not within the person who walks, to determine the direction of his own steps. ³³⁰ ²⁴ Correct me, O Lord, but justly, not in your wrath, lest you destroy me. ³³¹ ²⁵ Pour out your wrath on the nations that did not heed you, and on the clans (*or, peoples*) that have not called on your name any more for they have devoured Judah, they have devoured and consumed and destroyed his habitation.”} ³³²

<CHAPTER 11>

VI. Events in Jerusalem’s Life 11:1 – 12:6 ³³³

A. Jeremiah and the Covenant 11:1 – 14

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² “Hear the terms of the covenant, and recite it to the citizens of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: ³³⁴ ³ You

³²¹ Cf.: ANET p. 246d

³²² LXX: “He has gathered your substance from without that lodged in chosen vessels.”

³²³ LXX: “Συνηγαγεν εξωθεν.....εν εκλεκτοις.”

³²⁴ LXX: “εν θλιψει.”

³²⁵ Hebrew unclear. Literally: “that they will find.” CEV: “The Lord said, These troubles will lead to your capture, and he will throw you from this land like a rock from a sling.” Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

³²⁶ LXX: “plague.” Literally: “breathing.”

³²⁷ JB: “I despair for this wound of mine! My injury is incurable. I told myself this was an affliction that could be borne.”

³²⁸ LXX: “Your tabernacle is in a ruinous state. It has perished, and all your curtains have been torn apart. My children, my cattle are no more. There is no more place for my tabernacle nor is there a place for my curtains.”

³²⁹ LXX: “earthquake.”

³³⁰ TAN: “cannot direct his own steps.”

³³¹ Literally: “demolish me.”

³³² This verse is virtually the same as Psalm 79:6 – 7. Some scholars feel this verse is a later interpolation.

³³³ Some scholars feel this passage is an account of Jeremiah’s advocating the Deuteronomic reform. Other scholars ask why it was necessary for Jeremiah to urge these reforms when the rulers were endorsing these reforms. Jeremiah however seems to be introducing a new and different covenant. Scholars are divided as to when this message was delivered. For some it is dated at the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s defeat of the Egyptians in 605 BCE at Carchemish. Other scholars date this after the discovery of the scrolls of the law b Hilkiyah in the days of Joash in 621 BCE. The latter seems preferable.

³³⁴ Cf.: Deuteronomy 29:1, 9.

will tell them: ³³⁵ This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says; Those who do not obey the words of this covenant ³³⁶ ⁴ which I commanded your ancestors to follow when I freed them from the land that seemed to be a blazing furnace (*or, the place of severe suffering*), ³³⁷ the land of Egypt, listen to (*or, obey*) my message and do all that I command you. Then you will be my people and I will be your God. ³³⁸ ⁵ I will continue to carry out ³³⁹ the oath which I made to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it still does.” Then I answered: “That is what I will do (*or, Amen, Lord*).” ³⁴⁰

⁶ The Lord said to me, “Proclaim this entire message to the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Hear the words of this covenant and perform what is expected in this covenant. ³⁴¹ ⁷ I solemnly ³⁴² warned your ancestors repeatedly when I brought them ³⁴³ up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, until today, saying: Obey what I say!; ⁸ Yet they did not obey or attentively listen, but everyone followed the promptings of their own stubborn and evil hearts. Because of this I brought on them all the punishment of this covenant which I commanded but they refused to obey.” ³⁴⁴

⁹ The Lord continued to speak to me: “There is a conspiracy that exists among the citizens of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³⁴⁵ ¹⁰ They have returned to the crimes of their ancestors ³⁴⁶ who refused to hear my words. ³⁴⁷ They have followed alien gods and served them. The house of Israel and the house of Jacob have broken the covenant which I made with their ancestors.”

¹¹ “Assuredly this is what the Lord declares! Be attentive! I am bringing disaster on them which they are incapable to escape. Then they will cry to me for help, but I will not listen to them. ¹² Then the towns of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem will go to invoke the gods to whom they burn sacrifices, ³⁴⁸ but they cannot rescue themselves in time of disaster. ¹³ [Judah, your gods have become as numerous ³⁴⁹ as your cities; and you have as many altars to Ba’al as you have streets in Jerusalem; altars at which the worship brings shame.]

¹⁴ “Because of this do not pray for the people or lift up a cry for help on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me because of their desertion.”

³³⁵ LXX: “και λαλησεις.”

³³⁶ Cf.: Deuteronomy 27:26.

³³⁷ NEB: “from the smelting furnace.”

³³⁸ Cf.: Deuteronomy 4:20.

³³⁹ LXX; “confirm.”

³⁴⁰ Cf.: Deuteronomy 7:7; 8:18; 9:5; 27:15 – 20. God had kept the promises but the people had neglected them.

³⁴¹ “Jeremiah apparently felt that the responsibilities of the covenant relationship must be proclaimed far and wide if the terrible fate of captivity is to be averted. “TOTC

³⁴² Verses 7 & 8 are omitted in the in the LXX, the exception being the final clause.

³⁴³ Literally: “rising early and warning.”

³⁴⁴ JB: “everyone followed the dictates of his own evil heart.”

³⁴⁵ LXX: “conspiracy.” The revolt is against the commands of God. NEB: “A conspiracy has been found.”

³⁴⁶ Literally: “their former fathers.”

³⁴⁷ LXX: “και ιδου αυτοι.”

³⁴⁸ Literally: “burn incense.”

³⁴⁹ Literally: “the numbers of.”

B. Doom Not Averted by Sacrifices 11:15 – 17

15 “What right has my beloved ³⁵⁰ to be in my house, ³⁵¹ where she has committed vile deeds? Can vows and sacrifices of flesh avert your doom? Can you still rejoice? 16 A green olive tree is beautiful with its choice fruit; but with the roar of a great storm he will set fire to it, and its branches will be broken. (*or, emended: burned*). ³⁵² 17 [The Lord of hosts who planted you, has decreed that disaster will come to you because of the crimes which the house of Israel and the house of Judah have brought on themselves, for they have provoked my anger by sacrificing incense to Ba'al.”] ³⁵³

C. Plot Against Jeremiah’s Life 11:18 - 12:6

18 The Lord revealed ³⁵⁴ to me: {“Then you let me witness ³⁵⁵ your evil deeds. 19 But I like a docile lamb being led to the slaughter did not realize it was against me that they had devised their plot, saying, ‘Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, ³⁵⁶ let us cut him off from the land of the living. No one will remember his name any more.’ 20 O Lord of Hosts, O righteous judge who examines the thoughts and minds, let me see your retribution on them, for I have committed my cause to you.

21 “Assuredly the Lord says concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek to slay you, and say: ‘Do not prophesy any more in the name of the Lord, or you will die by our hand (*or, we will kill you*).’ 22 This is the declaration of the Lord of Hosts, I will punish them ³⁵⁷ and the young men will die by the sword; their sons and daughters will die because of famine. 23 Not even a remnant of [*those who have plotted against you*] will remain, for I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth. The year of their doom (*or, punishment*) has come (*or, the year of their reckoning has come*)!”

³⁵⁰ LXX: “η ηγαπημενη.”

³⁵¹ The remainder of this verse is uncertain. LXX: “Why has my beloved committed abominations in my house? Will prayers and holy offerings (as flesh) take away wickedness from you or will you escape by these means?” A possible translation might be: “What business has my cherished one in my house when she has perpetuated vile schemes? Can vows and sacrificed flesh remove your wickedness? Will you rejoice when disaster comes?” TOTC. JB: “She is playing the hypocrite.” NEB: “can the flesh of fat offerings on the altar ward off the disaster that threatens you?” TAN: “Who executes so many vile deeds? The sacred flesh will pass away from you for you exalt while performing your evil deeds.” An emendation would read: “Who does such vile deeds? Can our treachery be canceled by sacrifices that you exalt while committing your evil deeds.” The Hebrew verse needs the help of the LXX to reconstruct its meaning.

³⁵² LXX: “The Lord called your name fair olive tree, of a good color, having a good shade in appearance, and the noise of its being lopped, fire was lit against it; great is the affliction coming on you, her branches will be good for nothing.” A possible emendation of verses 15 & 16 might be “What right has my beloved in my house? She has done vile deeds! Can fatlings and holy flesh avert from your doom? A spreading olive tree, beautiful in form was your name called. Fire was kindled against it; its branches were covered.”

³⁵³ Some scholars feel this verse is a later insertion into the text.

³⁵⁴ LXX: “γνωρισου μοι.” “informed me.”

³⁵⁵ LXX: “ειδον.”

³⁵⁶ Hebrew: “blahmo.” Literally: “bread.” LXX: “let us put wood into his bread, and let us utterly destroy him from off the land of the living and let his name no longer be remembered.” LXX:

“εσβαλωμεν.” Vulgate: “mittamus.”

³⁵⁷ LXX: “I will visit them.”

<CHAPTER 12>

1 {“You, O Lord, are righteous³⁵⁸ when I complain to you, for I would plead my case before you (*or, present my charges; debate with you*).³⁵⁹ Why do those who do wickedness prosper? Why do scoundrels thrive? 2 You plant them, and they take root. They grow and yield fruit. You are referred to by their lips³⁶⁰ but you are far from their thoughts.³⁶¹ 3 Yet you, O Lord, know me: you see me; you test my thoughts concerning you.³⁶² Guard³⁶³ them until they become like sheep readied for the day of slaughter.

4 [“How long will the land languish and the grass of the field wither? For the wickedness of those who reside in it? The animals and birds will perish because the people said, ‘He will not concern himself with our future.’] ³⁶⁴ 5 [*The Lord said:*] ³⁶⁵ “If you became exhausted in a footrace with people, how will you be able to race with horses? And: if you fall headlong into a land of peace, how will you survive in the thickets of the Jordan?³⁶⁶ 6 Even your family members and the houses of your ancestors, even they have dealt scandalously with you. They will call out after you. Do not believe them when they speak to you in a casual manner.”

VII. Israel and Her Neighbors 12:7 – 17

A. The Lord's Lamentations. Israel's Desolation 12:7 – 13³⁶⁷

7 {“I have abandoned the temple (*or, the house of Israel*); I have rejected my chosen nation, I have given the beloved of my soul³⁶⁸ into the hand of her enemies. 8 My chosen people turned against me³⁶⁹ like a lion in the forest. They have raised their voices against me. Therefore I reject (*or, hate*) her. 9 My own people act toward me like a speckled bird of prey.³⁷⁰ Are the birds of prey³⁷¹ hovering around her?³⁷² Go and gather

³⁵⁸ TAN: “You will win, O Lord, if I make claim against you.” Literally: “be in the right.” JB: “Righteousness is on your side, Yahweh.”

³⁵⁹ NAB: “even so I must discuss the case with you.”

³⁶⁰ Literally: “Near in their mouth.”

³⁶¹ Literally: “kidneys.”

³⁶² LXX: “you have tested my heart, purifying me.” Although people use the divine name frequently they are actually hypocrites who are divorced spiritually from God.

³⁶³ Literally: “sanctify them.”

³⁶⁴ LXX: “God will not set our ways.” Some scholars feel this is a late insertion. Some scholars would insert 12:13 here, feeling this would be a better read.

³⁶⁵ God replies to the plea of Jeremiah in verses 1 - 3.

³⁶⁶ Literally: “the pride (i.e. the land) along the Jordan overgrown with thicket and the haunt of lions.”

Verse 5 LXX: “Your feet run, and they cause you to faint: how will you prepare to ride [or, fight] on horses and you have been confident in the land in the land of your peace? How will you do in the roaring Jordan?”

³⁶⁷ This is a lamentation by God, not by his prophet. The lamentation may be because of the events in II Kings 24:2.

³⁶⁸ LXX: “my beloved soul.” TAN: “I have given over my dearly beloved into the hands of her enemies.” JB: “I have delivered what I dearly loved into the hand of enemies.”

³⁶⁹ TAN: “My own people have acted against me.”

³⁷⁰ Hebrew obscure! The LXX translates “speckled bird of prey” as “a hyena’s cave” or “a cave round about her.” Israel is attacked by other nations.

³⁷¹ LXX: “μη σπηλαιον.”

³⁷² TAN: “Let the birds of prey surround her.” TEV: “My chosen people are like a bird attacked from all sides by hawks.” NEB: “Is this land of mine, a hyena’s lair with birds of prey all around it?”

all the wild beasts that they might join in feasting. ³⁷³ 10 Many foreign rulers ³⁷⁴ have destroyed my vineyard. They have trampled down my fields, they have made my delightful land a desolate wilderness. 11 They have made it a wasteland. ³⁷⁵ It pours out its grief in desolation. The entire land is made desolate but no person thinks (*or, cares*) about it. } ³⁷⁶

12 “Destroyers have come into all of the high desert (*or, caravan trails*), for the sword of the Lord has devoured the land from one end to the other. No one can live in peace.

13 {“They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns; they have worked hard, becoming very tired, but they do not profit from their labors. ³⁷⁷ They will be ashamed of themselves because of the fierce anger ³⁷⁸ of the Lord.”}

B. Exile and Restoration of the Fate of Israel’s Neighbors 12:14 – 17

14 ”The Lord says this concerning all of Israel’s evil neighbors who have encroached on the land (*or, heritage*) which I have given my people, Israel as an inheritance, and I will uproot the house of Judah from their midst. 15 After I have uprooted I will again have compassion (*or, take them back*), and I will bring each of them to their inheritance (*or, property*). ³⁷⁹ 16 It will happen that if they will diligently accept the religion (*or, ways of*) of my people, to make necessary oaths in my name, then as the Lord lives just as they assumed you were gone, and therefore swore to Ba’al; then they will prosper and be incorporated into the midst of my people. 17 But if any nation will not listen ³⁸⁰ I will uproot it totally and destroy it! I, the Lord have spoken!”

<CHAPTER 13>

H. Parable and Warning 13:1 – 27 ³⁸¹

A. Parable of the Waistcloths 13:1 – 4

1 ”This is what the Lord has said to me: ‘Go and buy a linen waistcloth (*or, loincloth*), ³⁸² and wear it. Do not dip it into water.’ 2 So I bought a waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) in accord with the word of the Lord and put it on. 3 The word of the Lord came to me a second time. 4 ‘Take the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) which you purchased and are

³⁷³ NASV: “Is the hyena greedy for my heritage at my command? Are the birds of prey all around her? Go, assemble all the wild animals; bring them to devour her.” MFT: “Do I want my heritage a carcass torn by hyenas that the vultures gather round her? Go and gather all the wild beasts, bring them to devour her.”

³⁷⁴ Literally: “shepherds.” The reference seems to be to kings of foreign nations.

³⁷⁵ Literally: “One has made it a wasteland.”

³⁷⁶ Literally: “lays it to heart.”

³⁷⁷ LXX: “Their portions will not profit them; be ashamed of your boasting, because of reproach before the Lord.” NEB: “Men sow wheat and reap thistles. They sift but get no grain. They are disappointed in their harvest because of the anger of the Lord.”

³⁷⁸ The LXX might be translated as “by your harvests.” Literally the LXX reads:

“απο καυχησεως υμων, απο ονειδισμου εναντι Κυριου.”

³⁷⁹ LXX: “I will return and have mercy on them and cause all to live on their own inheritance.”

³⁸⁰ LXX: “επιστρεψοσι”

³⁸¹ These five warnings are not related to one another. They are warnings that the writer selected which place together the duties in 597 BCE. Cf.: II Kings 24:6, 12.

³⁸² This is an undergarment which served as a thigh length underskirt which would cling closely to the wearer. Priests were instructed only to wear linen inner and outer garments. NIV: “belt.”

wearing and travel to the Euphrates³⁸³ and hide it in the crack (*or, cleft*) of a rock.’⁵ So I went and I hid it near the Euphrates just as the Lord had instructed me. ⁶ After many days the Lord said to me, ‘Travel to the Euphrates and take the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) from the place which I had commanded you to hide it.’ ⁷ Therefore I again went to the Euphrates and unearthed the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) from the place where I had hidden it. Surprisingly the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) was decayed (*or, mildewed*) and of no value.

⁸”Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁹ ‘This is what the Lord declares: [*This is an illustration of*] what will happen. The pride of Judah and the overwhelming pride of Jerusalem will be ruined. ¹⁰ Those evil people who do not believe my words³⁸⁴ who stubbornly follow their own feelings (*or, desires*) and have gone after other gods, to serve and worship them. They will be like the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) which is worthless. ¹¹ Just as the waistcloth (*or, loincloth*) clings to the body of a person so I brought the entire house of Israel and the entire house of Judah close to me,’ says the Lord, ‘that they might be my people who would be renowned (*or, be known*) and would praise and give glory to me, but they would not listen.’”³⁸⁵

B. Parable of the Jug 13:12 – 14

¹² “You will speak this word to them: ³⁸⁶ This is what the Lord, the God of Israel declares: ‘Every jar³⁸⁷ will be filled with wine.’ They will say to you, ‘Don’t you think we know that?’³⁸⁸ ¹³ Then you will reply, ‘That is what the Lord says! Look: I will fill the jars of the inhabitants of this land with drunkenness. This includes the kings³⁸⁹ who sit on the throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³⁹⁰ ¹⁴ I will smash them against one another: fathers and children, declares the Lord. ³⁹¹ I will have no pity; I will not spare anyone nor will I show any compassion for this would prevent me from destroying them.’”³⁹²

C. Warning Against Pride 13:15 – 17

¹⁵ {“Hear and listen attentively! Do not be haughty (*or, proud*) for the Lord has spoken. ¹⁶ Give honor to the Lord your God before he brings disaster and before your feet stumble on the mountains in the twilight. Beware while you seek light and it turns to darkness and deep gloom. ³⁹³ ¹⁷ However, if you will not listen, my soul (*or, inmost self*)

³⁸³ LXX: “α εις φαραν.” Hebrew: “htrp” This would be a journey of about 500 miles. Some scholars feel the word should mean the Wadi Fuiah, north east of Anathoth. Which would be land occupied by the tribe of Benjamin. Cf.: Joshua 18:23.

³⁸⁴ LXX adds: “for the same are the evil people, even the great pride of those who do not pay attention to my name.” TAN: “who refuse to heed my bidding.”

³⁸⁵ TEV: “Just as shorts fit tightly around the waist, as I intended all the people of Israel and Judah hold tightly to me, I did expect that they would be my people and would bring praise and honor to my name, but they would not obey me.”

³⁸⁶ LXX: “προς τον λαον τουτον.”

³⁸⁷ Hebrew: “nebet.” This kind of jar was used to store oil, grain or wine. Such a jar could hold about 10 gallons and measure about 25 inches high and sixteen inches in diameter.

³⁸⁸ LXX adds: “It is finished, (*or, accomplished*).” This might have been a popular saying among the people.

³⁸⁹ LXX adds: “the sons of David.”

³⁹⁰ LXX adds: “filled with strong drink.”

³⁹¹ LXX: “I will scatter them: a man and his brother, a father and his sons together, I will not have compassion, says the Lord.”

³⁹² JB: “Mercilessly, relentlessly, pitilessly, I will destroy them.”

³⁹³ LXX: “και εκει σκια θανατου.”

will weep secretly for you because of your arrogance (*or, pride*). Tears will flow freely because the Lord's flock has been taken captive."

*D. Lamentation Over the King and the Queen Mother 13:18 – 19*³⁹⁴

18 {"Speak to the king and the Queen Mother: Take a humble seat³⁹⁵ for your crown has been removed from your head.³⁹⁶ 19 The cities of the Negeb³⁹⁷ are under siege and no one is able get through for all of Judah is being taken into exile."³⁹⁸

*E. The Shame of Jerusalem 13:20 – 27*³⁹⁹

20 {"Look upward⁴⁰⁰ and see those who have come from the north! Where is the flock that was entrusted to you, that beautiful flock?⁴⁰¹ 21 What will you say when they appoint someone to govern you?⁴⁰² What of those whom you yourselves have taught? Will this not cause you to have pain like that of a woman who is giving birth?⁴⁰³ 22 If you say to yourselves, 'Why have these things befallen us?' it is because of the greatness of your evil deeds that your skirts are lifted up (*or, your limbs are exposed*) and you will endure violence.⁴⁰⁴ 23 Can an Ethiopian change his skin? Can a leopard change his spots? Then even though you can do good you are accustomed to do evil.⁴⁰⁵ 24 I will scatter you⁴⁰⁶ like chaff⁴⁰⁷ driven by the desert winds. 25 This is your lot, the portion that has been measured out as yours,⁴⁰⁸ says the Lord, because you have forgotten me and relied on lies. 26 I myself will strip off your skirts over (*or, as high as*) your face and your shame will be seen.⁴⁰⁹ 27 I have seen your adulteries, your abominations, heard your lustful neighings,⁴¹⁰ your lewdness and vile prostitution⁴¹¹ on the hills in the fields.

"Woe to you, O Jerusalem! How long will it be before you are made clean?"⁴¹²

³⁹⁴ The king and queen mother are no doubt Jehoiachin and Nehushta. II Kings 24:8. The king was 18 years of age, thus giving the queen mother an important role in the regime.

³⁹⁵ LXX: "και τοις δυναστεουσιν." "for your glory is removed from your head."

³⁹⁶ Hebrew obscure.

³⁹⁷ The Negeb is the southern portion of Judah, generally south of Beersheba. In the first invasion by Babylon, 509 – 508 BCE some of these cities were attacked.

³⁹⁸ The prophet declares that most of Judah has been annexed by alien nations.

³⁹⁹ The Hebrew text in this warning presents problems.

⁴⁰⁰ LXX adds: "to Jerusalem."

⁴⁰¹ LXX: "the sheep of your glory." TAN: "the flock you took pride in."

⁴⁰² The reference is to the Chaldeans.

⁴⁰³ Verse 21 could read: "What will you say when he (i.e. God) appoints your superiors, those friends whom you yourselves have made your masters?" The people could not imagine God permitting the Babylonians to rule over Israel.

⁴⁰⁴ Literally: "your heels be made to suffer violence" which would be a euphemism in Hebrew. JB: "and you have been manhandled." A footnote in the JB has: "men were led naked into captivity; women with their skirts above their knees."

⁴⁰⁵ Literally: "who are learned in evil." LXX: "If the Ethiopian will change his skin, or the leopardess her spots, then you will be able to do good, having learned evil."

⁴⁰⁶ Literally: "them."

⁴⁰⁷ LXX: "straw."

⁴⁰⁸ LXX: "του απειθειν υμας."

⁴⁰⁹ TEV: "will strip off your clothes and expose you to shame." NEB: "I myself have stripped off your skirts and laid bare your shame."

⁴¹⁰ JB: "your shrieks of pleasure."

⁴¹¹ LXX: "the looseness of your fornication." TAN: "your unbridled depravity, your vile acts."

⁴¹² LXX: "Woe to you Jerusalem for you have not been purified so that you can follow me. How long will it be?" TEV: "He has seen you do the things he hates. He has seen you go after pagan gods on the hills, in

<CHAPTER 14>

IX. A Drought and Other Catastrophies 14:1 – 15:4⁴¹³

A. Description of the Drought 14:1 – 6

¹ This is the Word of the Lord which came ⁴¹⁴ to Jerusalem concerning the drought: ² {“Judah mourns and her gates ⁴¹⁵ languish; her people lament ⁴¹⁶ on the ground. The outcry of Jerusalem rises up. ³ Her nobles send their servants ⁴¹⁷ for water. They come to the cisterns but find no water and they return with empty containers. They are ashamed (*or, disappointed*) and humiliated (*or, dumfounded*) and cover their heads. ⁴¹⁸ ⁴ Because of the ground on the bare heights being so arid ⁴¹⁹ since it has not seen rain the plowmen (*or, farmers*) are aghast and cover their heads. ⁵ Even the doe ⁴²⁰ in the field forsakes her newborn fawn because there is no grass. ⁶ The wild asses ⁴²¹ stand on the barren heights, snuffing for air like jackals. ⁴²² Their eyes are glazed for lack of pasture.”}

B. Confession of Sin 14:7 – 9

⁷ ”Though our iniquities testify against us, O Lord, act for your names sake (*or, for the sake of God’s reputation*), for our rebellions are many. We have sinned against you.” ⁴²³ ⁸ {“O you hope of Israel, our savior (*or, deliverer*) in times of trouble; why are you like a stranger in our land, like a tourist ⁴²⁴ who only stops for a single night? ⁹ Why are you like a person who is confused (*or, asleep*), like a warrior who cannot accomplish a victory? Surely, O Lord, you are in our midst and we are called by your name. ⁴²⁵ Do not forsake us!”}

C. The Lord’s Reply 14:10 – 12

¹⁰ This is how the Lord replied to the people: {“They have loved to stray (*or, be estranged*); they have not restrained their actions. ⁴²⁶ Therefore the Lord does not accept them (*or, is disgusted with them*). Now he will recall their guilt and punish them.”} ¹¹ The

the fields, like a man lusting after his neighbor’s wife or like a stallion after a mare. People of Israel you are doomed! When will you be pure?”

⁴¹³ The famine reference here was either one long severe famine or several smaller famines in succession and resulted in devastating consequences. Everyone was affected, thus there was potentially complete destruction.

⁴¹⁴ LXX: “και εγενετο.”

⁴¹⁵ The gate of a community was the usual place to assemble. TAN: “settlements.” JB: “the towns are disconsolate.” LXX: “emptied.” MFT: “Judah is woebegone, the citizens are cowering. They sit in black on the ground.”

⁴¹⁶ Literally: “black.”

⁴¹⁷ Literally: “little ones.”

⁴¹⁸ This phrase is omitted by the LXX. To cover one’s head was a sign of mourning.

⁴¹⁹ Hebrew uncertain. “NRSV: “the ground is cracked.” Possibly it could be translated as “shattered.”

⁴²⁰ The Hebrew word perhaps means a “red deer doe.”

⁴²¹ These were considered to be the most hardy of all wild animals.

⁴²² CB: “crocodiles” reading “nynt” for “nt.”

⁴²³ NEB: “Though our sins testify against us, yet act, O Lord, for thy own name’s sake.”

⁴²⁴ LXX: “και ως αυτοξθον.”

⁴²⁵ TAN: “your name is attached to us.”

⁴²⁶ Literally: “their feet.”

Lord said to me: “Do not intercede for the benefit of these people. ¹² Even though they fast, I will not listen to their cries, and even though they offer burnt offerings and cereal (*or, meat*) offerings, I will not accept them, but I will destroy them with war, famine and disease.” ⁴²⁷

D. Judgment on the False Prophets 14:13 – 16

¹³ Then I said, “Ah Lord God, observe these people. Say to them, You will not become involved in war, ⁴²⁸ nor will you experience famine but I will grant you the assurance of peace in this place. ⁴²⁹ ¹⁴ The Lord responded, “The prophets are prophesying lies in my name! I did not send them, nor did I command them. I have not communicated with them. They are prophesying to you a false vision, worthless divinations and delusions conceived in their own minds. ⁴³⁰ ¹⁵ Therefore this is what I the Lord say to the prophets who prophesy in my name ⁴³¹ although I did not send them, yet they say; ‘War and famine will not befall this land.’ By war and famine those prophets will be condemned. ⁴³² ¹⁶ The people to whom they prophesy will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and war, with no one to bury them: ⁴³³ they themselves, their wives, their sons and their daughters. I will pour out their wickedness on them.”

E. Jeremiah’s Lament Over the People’s Sorrow 14:17 – 18

¹⁷ {“You will say this word to them: Let my eyes flow with tears night and day, and let them not cease in their weeping, for the virgin daughter ⁴³⁴ of my people has been severely wounded and badly hurt, having sustained a grievous blow. ⁴³⁵ ¹⁸ I go out into the country and those who have been pierced by a sword! If I enter the city I see ⁴³⁶ they are sick with famine (*or, the sickness of famine*). ⁴³⁷ Both prophet and priest, conduct their labors within the land without any understanding or familiarity with their responsibilities.” ⁴³⁸

F. Renewed Lament of the People 14:19 - 22

¹⁹ {“Have you totally rejected Judah? Have you spurned Zion? Why have you smitten us so that there is no cure for us? We have looked for peace, for a time of healing,

⁴²⁷ These means of destroying are found seven times in the book of Jeremiah.

⁴²⁸ Literally: “see the sword.”

⁴²⁹ Literally: “peace of truth” or “lasting peace.” TAN: “unfailing security in this place.”

⁴³⁰ NEB: “augury and their own deluding fancies.” MFT: “hollow superstition and deception of their own minds.” NIV: “They are prophesying to you false visions, divination, idolatries and delusions of their own minds.”

⁴³¹ LXX: “ψευδη.”

⁴³² Literally: “be finished.” The word of the true prophets of God was opposite that of the prophesies made by the false prophets.

⁴³³ To be unburied was one of the most terrible fates to overtake a person.

⁴³⁴ TAN: “my helpless people have suffered a grievous injury which is very painful.” Cf.: 4:11.ff.

⁴³⁵ NASB: “with a sorely infected wound.”

⁴³⁶ NEB: “I see the ravages of famine.”

⁴³⁷ Literally: “The sickness of famine.” MFT: “The famine is raging.”

⁴³⁸ Εβραεω υνχλεαρ. Τηισ τρανσλατιον υσεσ αν εμενδατιον.

but we have received terror. ²⁰ We acknowledge our weakness, O Lord, and the iniquity of our ancestors, for we have sinned against you. ²¹ Do not abhor ⁴³⁹ us, for the sake of your name! Do not dishonor ⁴⁴⁰ your glorious throne; ⁴⁴¹ remember us and do not break your covenant with us. ²² Are there any among the false gods of the nations that can bring rain? Or, can the skies themselves give showers? Are you not he, Our Lord, our God? We set our hope ⁴⁴² on you, for you do (*or, make*) all things.”}

<CHAPTER 15>

G. The Lord’s Final Reply 15:1 – 4

¹ Then the Lord said to me: “Even if Moses ⁴⁴³ and Samuel ⁴⁴⁴ were to intercede for me, I ⁴⁴⁵ would not win over the people. Dismiss them from my presence, and go to them. ² When they ask you, ‘Where should we go?’ you will say, ‘This is what the Lord says: {[*You will go to*] those who are destined for pestilence and will receive pestilence. You will go to those who are being destroyed through war, ⁴⁴⁶ and you will receive the sword. You will go to those who are experiencing famine, and you will die because of famine. You will go to live with those who are captives and you yourselves will be captives.} ³ “I will designate all kinds of punishment (*or, doom*) to befall you says the Lord: deadly warfare, being dragged away, having the birds of prey eat you as carrion, and wild animals devour your remains after you are destroyed. ⁴⁴⁷ ⁴ I will make you an object of horror (*or, repugnant*) ⁴⁴⁸ because of what Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king for Judah did in Jerusalem [*when he ruled as king.*]” ⁴⁴⁹

X Lamentation of Jeremiah 15:5 – 21

A. Lamentation over Destruction in the Land 15:5 – 9

[**Jeremiah speaks for God.**] ⁵ {“Who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem, or who will console ⁴⁵⁰ you? Who will pause to provide aid and inquire concerning your welfare? ⁶ You have rejected me, says the Lord. You kept on rejecting me ⁴⁵¹ so I have stretched out my hand to destroy (*or, crush*) you, and destroyed you, --- I am unable to control my wrath. ⁴⁵² ⁷ I have winnowed you with a winnowing fork (*or, I have thrown you to the*

⁴³⁹ LXX: “κερασον.”

⁴⁴⁰ LXX: “απολεσης.”

⁴⁴¹ I.e. the temple.

⁴⁴² Literally: “wait for.”

⁴⁴³ LXX & Vulgate: “και Ααρων.” Cf.: Exodus 32:11 – 14; 31:34; Numbers 14:13 – 25.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf.: I Samuel 7:5 - 11; 12:14; Psalm 91:6. LXX:

⁴⁴⁵ Literally: “my soul.” The Hebrew in this verse is uncertain.

⁴⁴⁶ Literally: ‘by the sword.’

⁴⁴⁷ CEV: “I will punish you in four different ways. You will be killed in war, and your bodies dragged of by dogs, your flesh will be eaten by birds, and your bones will be chewed by the wild animals.”

⁴⁴⁸ LXX: “I will deliver them up for distress to all the kingdoms of the earth.”

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. II Kings 21:1 - 15; 23:26; 24:3. Manasseh ruled 687 – 642 BCE.

⁴⁵⁰ LXX: “fear for.”

⁴⁵¹ Literally: “keep going backward.” CB: “You have gone ever backward.”

⁴⁵² Literally: “repenting.” LXX: “I will no longer spare them.”

wind like straw) in the towns ⁴⁵³ of the land. I have bereaved you, I have destroyed my people. They do not turn away from (*or, repent of*) their evil ways. ⁴⁵⁴ ⁸ I have made them widows in greater numbers than the sands of the sea; I have brought a destroyer among the mothers of young sons acting as a destroyer at noonday. ⁴⁵⁵ ⁹ The woman who lost her seven children has become frail (*or, is forlorn*); ⁴⁵⁶ she has passed out; she expired just as the sun was setting, while it was still daylight. She had been ashamed and disgraced (*or, humiliated*). I will give the remnant of the people over to warfare and to the endurance of wicked acts by their enemies, declares the Lord.”}

B. Lamentation Over Himself and the Lord’s Reply 15:10 – 21

[**Jeremiah’s Personal Lament**] ¹⁰ “My mother, woe is me that you bore me. There is conflict and strife everywhere in the land. I have not lent [*any money*] nor have I borrowed [*any money*]. Yey --- everyone curses me. ⁴⁵⁷ ¹¹ Let it be so, O Lord, ⁴⁵⁸ if I have not beseeched you for their benefit, ⁴⁵⁹ if I have not interceded with you on behalf of the enemy in the north in this time of trouble and distress. ⁴⁶⁰ ¹² Can one break iron and bronze from the north?⁴⁶¹ ¹³ [“I will give the treasures from all your territory as plunder (*or, spoils*), without price, for all your sins. ¹⁴ I will make you servants of your enemies in a land about which you know nothing, for my anger will be like a fire that has been lit and which will burn forever.”]⁴⁶²

¹⁵ {[*Then I spoke to the Lord:*] “O Lord, you know! Remember me and help me to revenge my persecutors. Because of your patients, do not destroy me. Know that I bear this reproach for your sake. ¹⁶ You spoke and I listened carefully ⁴⁶³ to your words. These filled me with joy and delight. ¹⁷ I was not one to be in the company of revelers ⁴⁶⁴ nor did I rejoice! I sat alone (*or, was lonely*) because your hand was on me, for you had filled me with gloom (*or, anger*). ¹⁸ Why is my pain ⁴⁶⁵ constant, my wound incurable? ⁴⁶⁶ Will you be like a deceitful (*or, treacherous*) brook toward me? ⁴⁶⁷ Like waters that fail?”} ⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁵³ Literally: “gates.”

⁴⁵⁴ LXX: “δια της κακιας αυτων.”

⁴⁵⁵ Hebrew obscure! TEV: “There are more widows in your land than grains of sand by the sea, I killed your young men in their prime and made their mothers suffer. I suddenly struck them with anguish and terror.” NEB: “I brought upon them hordes of raiders to plunder at high noon.”

⁴⁵⁶ Literally: “emptied.” Possibly because of being bereft of her children.

⁴⁵⁷ The LXX adds: “η ισχυς μου.” “sapping my strength.”

⁴⁵⁸ So: LXX & Old Latin. Hebrew: “the Lord said.”

⁴⁵⁹ Hebrew obscure. LXX: “κατευθυνοντη αυτων.”

⁴⁶⁰ LXX: “Be it O, Lord, in their prosperity; surely I stood before you in the time of their calamities and in the land of their affliction, for their good against the enemy.”

⁴⁶¹ Hebrew obscure. The Hebrew is so obscure that some translators omit the verse in their translation. LXX: “Will iron be known? Whereas your strength is a bronze covering.” The iron from the north was of the finest quality in the 7th century BCE.

⁴⁶² Some scholars omit verses 12 – 14 since they consider them to be dittography of 17:3 – 4.

⁴⁶³ Literally: “devoured them.” LXX:

“υπο των αθετωντων τους λογους σου σεντελεσον αυτους και εστα.” “Know that for your sake I bear reproach from those who despise your word. Consume them and your word will be the joy and delight of my heart.”

⁴⁶⁴ LXX: “αλλα ευλαβουμην.”

⁴⁶⁵ LXX: “οι λυποντες με κατασχυουσι μου.”

[**The Lord's Response**] ¹⁹ {This is what the Lord says: "If you return I will restore you, and you will stand before me. If you speak a message that is of [*spiritual*] value, ⁴⁶⁹ and not speak what is nonsense, you will be my representative. ²⁰ I will make you to be an impregnable wall ⁴⁷⁰ of bronze, as a protection against these people. They will fight against you but they will not be victors over you for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you, says the Lord. ²¹ I will rescue you from the power of the wicked and redeem you from the grasp of those who are ruthless.} I, the Lord have spoken."

<CHAPTER 16>

XI. Threats and Promises 16:1 – 21

A. Jeremiah's Life a Warning 16:1 – 13

¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² "You are not to marry a wife, ⁴⁷¹ and you will not have sons and daughters in this place. ³ The Lord declares this concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and about the women who are their mothers and the men who are their fathers in this land. ⁴⁷² ⁴ They will die of deadly diseases. ⁴⁷³ They will be unlamented, and unburied. They will be as manure ⁴⁷⁴ (*or, dung*) spread on the surface of the ground. They will perish through warfare and famine. ¹² Their corpses will be as carrion (*or, food*) for the birds of the air and and for the beasts of the earth. ⁴⁷⁵

⁵ "This is what the Lord declares: {Do not enter the house where there is a mourning feast (*or, where there is wailing*) ⁴⁷⁶ or bemoan them; for I have withdrawn my blessing, love, and pity from these people. ⁶ As for all those who are in leadership and those who are ordinary laborers in this land: ⁴⁷⁷ ⁷ no one will be buried and no one will lament nor shave his head to show grief, or gash himself, ⁴⁷⁸ to demonstrate grief. ⁷ Do not show sympathy by giving a portion of bread to those who are in mourning for the

⁴⁶⁶ MFT: "why does my wound fester?" LXX: "ποθεν ιαθησομαι."

⁴⁶⁷ The reference is to a brook that dries up when it is needed.

⁴⁶⁸ Water that is purported to provide healing but does not fulfill its promise. Jeremiah refuses to believe that God is like an unreliable stream that cannot be counted on.

⁴⁶⁹ JB: "noble, not despicable thoughts." LXX: "if you will proclaim the precious and distinguish it from the worthless, you will be like my mouth." Jeremiah believes that God will remove any dross and apostasy from his people.

⁴⁷⁰ MFT: "a rampart of a fort to resist this people."

⁴⁷¹ LXX adds: "λεγει Κυριος ο Θεος Ισραηλ." It was important for a Hebrew to have children to carry on the family name and the inheritance. Celibacy was rare. For Jeremiah to be told by God to be celibate would be a powerful object lesson.

⁴⁷² MFT: "For this is the Eternal's sentence upon the sons and daughters born in this place."

⁴⁷³ TAN: "die gruesome deaths." NEB: "deadly ulcers."

⁴⁷⁴ LXX: "as an example on the face of the earth." BV: "they shall be as fertilizer on the top soil."

⁴⁷⁵ Cf.: ANET p. 405c.

⁴⁷⁶ Literally: "the shrill sound."

⁴⁷⁷ This portion of the sentence is omitted in the LXX.

⁴⁷⁸ The prophet seems to refer to a pagan practice which is prohibited in Leviticus 19:28; Deuteronomy 14:1. Cf.: ANET p. 80a.

dead,⁴⁷⁹ nor is anyone to give a drink to console⁴⁸⁰ the chief mourner or to their parents.⁴⁸¹ 8 You will not go into the house of feasting to sit with those who are feasting and celebrating.”

9 The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel says: “Be attentive! I will banish⁴⁸² the sound of mirth, and the voice of gladness from this place. This will happen before your eyes and during your lifetime. The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride will no longer be heard.} 10 When you announce all these things to the people (*or, this nation*) they will ask you, ‘Why has the Lord pronounced these terrible evils against us? What is our iniquity? What crime have we committed against the Lord our God?’ 11 Then you will say to them, ‘Because your ancestors have deserted me, says the Lord, and have gone after other⁴⁸³ gods and have served and worshiped them and have abandoned me and have not kept my instructions (*or, law*), 12 (and because you have done even worse than your ancestors, for every one of your ancestors has been stubborn (*or, willful*) and refused to listen to me.) 13 For this reason I will expel you from this land into land of which you and your ancestors have had no knowledge, and you will serve other gods both day and night, for I will show you no favor.”⁴⁸⁴

*B. Promise of Return from the Diaspora 16:14 – 15*⁴⁸⁵

14 [“Because of this the days are coming, says the Lord, when it will no longer be said, ‘As the Lord lives, who brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt’ 15 but ‘As the Lord lives who brought the people⁴⁸⁶ of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where God had driven them.’ I will bring them back to their own land which I had given to their ancestors.”]⁴⁸⁷

C. Retribution for Israel’s Iniquity 16:16 – 18

16 {“I am sending for many fisher men, says the Lord, and they will catch them; and afterward I will send for many hunters and they will hunt them from every mountain and every hill and out of every crevice in the rock. 17 I am carefully watching all their actions; they are not hidden from me, nor is their iniquity concealed from my knowledge⁴⁸⁸ 18 I will⁴⁸⁹ repay them for their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my

⁴⁷⁹ Friends usually provided bread after the funeral had been concluded. Cf.: II Samuel 3:35; Ezekiel 24:12; Hosea 9:4.

⁴⁸⁰ Literally: “the cup of consolation.” A consoling cup in Jerusalem was a special wine drunk by the chief mourner.

⁴⁸¹ Verses 5 – 7 summarize the showing of sympathy in that day, revealing information about the customs of the day.

⁴⁸² Literally: “cause to cease.”

⁴⁸³ LXX: “strange.”

⁴⁸⁴ The people, Jeremiah declares, are unable to grasp the significance of this misfortune. The covenant supplied their spiritual guidelines, but this was disregarded in favor of idolatry.

⁴⁸⁵ These verses are virtually a duplication of 23:7, 8.

⁴⁸⁶ Literally: “sons.” LXX: “τον οικου.”

⁴⁸⁷ These verses are thought by some scholars to be a scribal interpolation.

⁴⁸⁸ Literally: “eyes.”

⁴⁸⁹ Literally: “And first I will...” This verse is omitted in the LXX.

land with the carcasses (*or, corpses*)⁴⁹⁰ of their detestable idols, and have filled the land I gave them as a heritage with their abominations.”

D. Conversation of the Nations and God 16:19 – 21

19 {“O Lord my strength and my fortress, my refuge in the day of trouble: the nations will come to you from the ends of the earth and say ‘Our fathers have possessed nothing but lies: ⁴⁹¹ worthless idols in which there is no profit.’ ⁴⁹² 21 Assuredly, I will teach them once and for all, causing them to understand my power and might, and they will know that my name is ‘The Lord.’”} ⁴⁹³

<CHAPTER 17>

XII. Miscellaneous Materials 17:1 - 27

A. Judah’s Hardened Sin 17:1 – 4 ⁴⁹⁴

1 “The sin of Judah is inscribed with a stylus of iron: with a point of diamond ⁴⁹⁵ and engraved in the tablet of their heart, [and on the horns of the altar, ⁴⁹⁶ 2 which their children remember. ⁴⁹⁷ Their altars and their Asherim (*or, sacred poles*) ⁴⁹⁸ were beside every green tree and on the high hills, 3 on the mountains and in the open country.] ⁴⁹⁹ Your wealth and all your treasures will become plunder (*or, spoils*) as the price of (*or, in payment for*) your sins ⁵⁰⁰ throughout the entire country. ⁵⁰¹ 4 You will become enslaved by your enemies, going to countries you do not know, and you must be taken from your heritage (*or, inheritance*) which I had given you. ⁵⁰² I will make you serve your enemies

⁴⁹⁰ NEB: “by defiling with the dead bodies of their idols in the land.”

⁴⁹¹ Some scholars have moved verse 19 to follow verse 20, feeling it makes for a better order. TAN: “bitter delusions.” NEB: “only a sham, an idol, vain and useless.” JB: “Our fathers got hold of unmitigated and useless lies and without profit.”

⁴⁹² LXX: “How vain were the idols which our fathers procured to themselves and there is no help in them.”

⁴⁹³ Some scholars feel verse 21 should follow verse 18.

⁴⁹⁴ In the LXX verses 1 – 4 are omitted. This chapter is comprised of a variety of material: a Psalm, Proverbs and general admonitions.

⁴⁹⁵ This is no doubt a stylus with a hard point to cut into a hard surface. TAN: “Adamant.” The Hebrew word is “samir” which is possibly related to an Akkadian word “asmur” which means “emery.”

⁴⁹⁶ Hebrew uncertain. In worship, as directed by the Torah, blood is to be sprinkled on the horns of the altar. Emended it could read: “Surely the horns of their altars are a memorial against them.”

⁴⁹⁷ Hebrew uncertain. Literally: “as their sons remember.” NEB: “to bear witness against them.”

⁴⁹⁸ The Asherim were wooden symbols of female deities.

⁴⁹⁹ The words of verses 3 – 4 that are in brackets are virtually a duplicate of 15:13 – 14. Some scholars feel this is either a later insertion or it should be placed in a different location within Jeremiah.

⁵⁰⁰ So: versions. Literally: “your high places for sin.”

⁵⁰¹ Hebrew uncertain. TAN: “Because of the sin of your shrines throughout our borders I will make your rampart a heap in the field and your treasures as spoil.” NEB: “and your treasure a payment.”

⁵⁰² Hebrew uncertain.

in a land which is unknown to you, for the fire of my anger is furious and will burn forever.”⁵⁰³

B. A Psalm of Contrasts 17:5 – 8

⁵ This is what the Lord says: ⁵⁰⁴ {“Cursed is the person who trusts (*or, relies on*) humanity and makes mere flesh his own source of strength, who alienates himself from the Lord. ⁵⁰⁵ ⁶ He is like a shrub ⁵⁰⁶ in the desert that will not sense the coming of good. He will reside in the parched places of the wilderness, and in places that are uninhabited. ⁵⁰⁷ Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, trusting solely in the Lord. ⁵⁰⁸ ⁸ He is like a tree planted by water, and sends out its roots along the stream and has no fear when heat comes for its leaves remain green and is not anxious in the drought years, for it does not cease in bearing fruit.”⁵⁰⁹

C. A Wisdom Saying 17:9 – 10⁵¹⁰

⁹ {“The heart is devious beyond all other things. ⁵¹¹ It is desperately corrupt. ⁵¹² Who can understand it? ¹⁰ The Lord examines the mind and the heart to repay to every person according to his ways, according to the fruits of his actions.”}

D. The Transitoriness of Ill-gotten Wealth 17:11

¹¹ [{“Like the partridge ⁵¹³ that gathers her brood which she did not lay ⁵¹⁴ so is he who amasses wealth unjustly, but by mid-life that wealth will be required of him and will desert him. In the end he will be a fool”}]⁵¹⁵

⁵⁰³ The prophet states that apostasy is very deeply ingrained in the national character of the people. True repentance is needed but the people are so corrupt that they stand in the way of contrition and forgiveness. Thus they need to suffer the consequences.

⁵⁰⁴ The authorship of this Psalm is disputed by scholars. Some feel Jeremiah wrote this Psalm. Others feel it is based on an ancient Egyptian poem composed by Amenemope in the Wisdom of Amenemope. There are some similarities, in part based on the subject matter.

⁵⁰⁵ LXX: “will lean his arm of flesh on him while his heart departs from the Lord.”

⁵⁰⁶ The exact meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain. LXX has “wild tamarisk” which is a sort of miniature juniper. MFT: “He is like some desert shrub that never thrives.”

⁵⁰⁷ Literally: “salt land.” NAB: “He is like a barren bush in the desert that enjoys no change of season, but abides in a lava waste, a salt and empty earth.”

⁵⁰⁸ LXX: “and whose hope the Lord will be.”

⁵⁰⁹ Cf.: ANET p. 442b.

⁵¹⁰ These sayings are proverb like.

⁵¹¹ LXX: “deep beyond all things.”

⁵¹² LXX: “καὶ ἀνθρώπος.” NEB footnote: “too deceitful for any man.” TAN: “perverse – who can fathom it?” Cf.: Proverbs 27:19.

⁵¹³ It was popularly believed that a partridge would hatch eggs for other birds. The Hebrew word could also mean some variety of Sand Grouse. LXX: “ἐφώνησε.” The LXX also includes “when she utters her call” concerning the partridge.

⁵¹⁴ LXX: “συνήγαγον.”

⁵¹⁵ Some scholars feel this verse is a later interpolation. Retribution is grounded in divine justice.

E. The Greatness of the Temple 17:12

12 [“A glorious throne is located on high from the beginning in the place of our sanctuary.”

F. Prayer for Healing 17:13

13 {“O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be put to shame; those who turn away from your name will be written in the earth (*or, dust*)⁵¹⁶ for they have forsaken the Lord and their fountain of living water will be humbled.”}]⁵¹⁷

*G. Jeremiah’s Lament and Prayer 17:14 – 17*⁵¹⁸

14 {“Heal me O Lord, and I will truly be healed. Save me and I will be saved; for you are my praise. 15 The people taunt me, saying: ‘Where is the Lord? Let the prophecy take place!’⁵¹⁹ 16 I have not urged you to send evil, nor have I desired the day of disaster. You know this! That which proceeds from my lips is before you (*or, was heard by you*). 17 Do not be a terror to me for you are my refuge in the evil day. 18 Let those who persecute me be put to shame, but let me not be put to shame: let them be dismayed, but let me not be dismayed. Bring the day of evil. Destroy them with double destruction.”}⁵²⁰

H. Sabbath Observances 17:19 – 27

19 This is what the Lord declares: “Go and stand at the Benjamin Gate⁵²¹ by which the people of Judah enter and by which they leave. Go to all the gates of Jerusalem, 20 and say: Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. 21 This is what the Lord says: Guard yourselves for your own sake. Do not carry burdens (*or, merchandise*) on the Sabbath Day or bring any burdens (*or, merchandise*) through the gates of Jerusalem. 22 Do not carry burdens (*or, merchandise*) out of your house on the Sabbath and do not do any work but keep the Sabbath Day.⁵²² Do no work but keep the Sabbath day holy as I had already commanded your ancestors. 23 (In spite of this your ancestors would not pay attention but became so stubborn⁵²³ that they would not hear these instructions.”)

⁵¹⁶ This is a euphuism for death.

⁵¹⁷ Hebrew unclear. TAN: “Shall be doomed men for they have forsaken the Lord, the fount of living water.” Some scholars feel verses 11 – 13 should be inserted following verse 8 though there is no manuscript evidence.

⁵¹⁸ NAB describes this as a prayer for vengeance.

⁵¹⁹ TAN: “Where is the prediction of the Lord? Let it come to pass!”

⁵²⁰ Verses 14 – 18 are an elegant poem as a plea by Jeremiah for vindication.

⁵²¹ Literally: “sons of the people” which is also the meaning of the word “Benjamin.” TAN: “the people’s gate.” The Versions use the word “Benjamin.” LXX: “In the gates of the children of our people (*or, Benjamin*), by which the kings of Judah enter and by which they leave.”

⁵²² The Sabbath was to be a day of rest not a day of commerce.

⁵²³ Literally: “stiffened their necks.” LXX: “ὕπερ τοὺς πατέρας αὐτῶν.”

²⁴ “If you listen to me, says the Lord, and if you bring no burdens (*or, merchandise*) through the gates of the city on the Sabbath Day, but follow the Sabbath Day, keeping it holy and do not work during the Sabbath, ²⁵ kings ⁵²⁴ will enter these gates and they will be seated on the throne of David. They will ride in chariots or on horseback, they and their princes, the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and their cities will be inhabited forever. ²⁸ People will come from the cities of Judah and the region surrounding Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, the Shephelah, ⁵²⁵ the hill country and the Negeb, ⁵²⁶ bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, cereal offerings, frankincense ⁵²⁷ and thank offerings to the house of the Lord. ²⁷ But: if you do not listen to the commands concerning the keeping the Sabbath Day holy which includes not carrying a burden (*or, merchandise*) and entering by the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath Day, I will set fire to its gates and the fire will consume the fortress of Jerusalem and that fire will not be quenched.”

<CHAPTER 18>

XIII. Parable and Plot 18:1 – 23

A. Parable of the Potter 18:1 – 12 ⁵²⁸

¹ The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² “Rise and go down to the potter’s house and there I will impart my word to you.” ³ I went down to the potter’s house and he was working at his wheel. ⁵²⁹ ⁴ Occasionally the potter was dissatisfied with the form and he reworked the clay to form it into another pot ⁵³⁰ which met the potter’s approval. ⁵³¹

⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁶ “O House of Israel, Am I not able to do with you as the potter has done?” says the Lord. “Just as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so you are [*the clay*] in my hand, O House of Israel. ⁷ [At any time I can make a decree concerning a nation or kingdom that I will uproot, break down and destroy, ⁵³² ⁸ and if that nation, about which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will, [*like the potter*] alter my intention concerning the harsh action that I intended to take against it. ⁵³³ ⁹ If at any time I declare, concerning a nation or kingdom, that I will build and plant it.] ⁵³⁴ But: if it

⁵²⁴ So: Versions. Literally: “kings and princes (*or, officers*).”

⁵²⁵ This region is between the Philistine plain and the Judean highlands.

⁵²⁶ This region is south of Beersheba.

⁵²⁷ The incense is comprised of gum taken from trees that grow mainly in southern Arabia.

⁵²⁸ The parable of the potter presents the concept that God is almighty and able to destroy, or assist, depending on the actions of the people. It is not a parable to present God as an arbitrary judge.

⁵²⁹ Literally: “wheels.” LXX: “on the stones.” The wheel was possibly comprised of two stone disks the heavier one being below and the lighter one above for shaping of the clay.

⁵³⁰ The Hebrew manuscripts vary slightly in their description.

⁵³¹ The figure of the potter stresses the sovereignty of God on Israel.

⁵³² LXX: “I will pronounce a decree (*or, an end*) on all the nations, to cut them off and to destroy them.”

⁵³³ Verse 8 is awkward in Hebrew. It is in a shorter form in the LXX. A possible translation might be: “But if that nation should repent of its iniquity because I have threatened it, I would modify the punishment that I had planned to inflict on it.” Cf.: ANET p. 422c.

⁵³⁴ Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation or that it should be located at the end of verse 12.

does what displeases me, and it does not listen to my voice, I will reconsider ⁵³⁵ all the good which was my intention to bestow on that nation.

¹¹ "Say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: 'This is what the Lord declares: I have been preparing evil against you and developing a plot against you. ⁵³⁶ Return ⁵³⁷ every one from your evil way, and alter your conduct and all your actions.'

¹² ["However, ⁵³⁸ they will reply, 'That is in vain: we will follow our own plans and everyone will act in accordance with their own will.'"'] ⁵³⁹

B. Unnaturalness of Israel's Sin 18;13 – 17

¹³ {"Assuredly this is what the Lord says: Inquire among the nations to see if anything like this has happened in the past. The maiden (*or, virgin*) ⁵⁴⁰ Israel has done a very horrible thing. ¹⁴ Does the snow ⁵⁴¹ of Lebanon leave the crags of Sirion? Do the mountain torrents fail? ⁵⁴² ¹⁵ Yet my people have forgotten me, they burn incense to worthless gods. ⁵⁴³ They have stumbled ⁵⁴⁴ in their ways along the ancient roads, and have gone into the impossible pathways (*or, byways*) ⁵⁴⁵ ¹⁶ making their land a horrible place, a place to be hissed at forever. ⁵⁴⁶ Everyone who passes by is appalled by it and shakes his head. ¹⁷ Like the Siroco (*or, East wind*) I will scatter them before their enemy. I will show ⁵⁴⁷ them my back not my face in the day of their calamity (*or, destruction*)."} ⁵⁴⁸

⁵³⁵ Literally: "repent." NASB: "think better."

⁵³⁶ NEB: "I am perfecting my designs against your evil." NASB: "Behold, I am fashioning calamity against you and devising a plot against you." TAN: "devising disaster."

⁵³⁷ Literally: "make good."

⁵³⁸ LXX: "καὶ εἰπῶν."

⁵³⁹ Literally: "everyone will act according to the stubbornness of his own evil heart." LXX: "we will each perform the lusts in our hearts." Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation. Time has run out for Judah. The national sin was so ingrained that repentance seemed out of the question.

⁵⁴⁰ The virgin Israel had tainted herself with orgiastic rites. Israel had been taught and should have determined to keep herself untainted, just as an unmarried woman was to keep herself chaste for her future husband.

⁵⁴¹ Hebrew uncertain. The Hebrew word "Sirion" could be a Phoenician name for Mount Hermon. Hebrew: "sur." A related word "missur" would mean "pebbles." Sirion can be the name of one of the mountains in Lebanon or it can mean "a field." Some scholars would translate: "Do pebbles ever leave the field?" NIV: "Do the snows of Lebanon ever vanish from its rocky slopes? Do its cool waters from the distant sources ever cease to flow?" LXX: "Will the fertilizing streams fail to flow from a snow fall in Lebanon?" TAN: "Does one forsake Lebanon snow from the mountainous rocks? Does one abandon cool water flowing from afar?"

⁵⁴² This translation is based on an emendation of the sentence.

⁵⁴³ TAN: "to delusions."

⁵⁴⁴ So: LXX, Syriac and Vulgate. Literally: "they made them stumble." LXX: "καὶ ἀσθενησοῦσιν."

⁵⁴⁵ JB: "They have lost their footing in their ways on the roads of former times, to walk the tortuous paths."

⁵⁴⁶ This action, to hiss at, was performed at the sight of a 'horrible place' or ruin, to ward off a like fate which would befall the observer.

⁵⁴⁷ Literally: "look themselves in the back and not in the face."

⁵⁴⁸ The sin of the people is completely irrational in character. Such irrational and apostate behavior from a covenant people can only result in punishment.

C. A Plot Against Jeremiah 18:18 – 23

1. The Desire of the Nation 18:18

¹⁸ “Then they said, Come, let us devise a plot against Jeremiah for the law will not fail to come from the priest, or the council, the wise men, nor will the word of the prophet fail. ⁵⁴⁹ Come, let us slander him ⁵⁵⁰ and bring a conspiracy against him such as an accusation of treason.” ⁵⁵¹

2. The Desire of Jeremiah 18:19 - 23

¹⁹ {“Give heed to me, O God, and be attentive to my plea. ⁵⁵² ²⁰ Should good be repaid with evil? ⁵⁵³ Yet--- they have dug a pit for my body (*or, my soul*). Remember how I stood before you to speak good for them, to turn away your wrath from them. ⁵⁵⁴ ²¹ Therefore turn away your children to famine, deliver them to the destruction of war, let their wives become childless widows. ⁵⁵⁵ May their men die by pestilence and their youths die in war. ²² Let shrieks be heard from their houses when you suddenly bring robbers (*or, raiders*) against them; (for they have dug a trap (*or, pit*) ⁵⁵⁶ for me) and laid snares for my feet. ²³ Yet you, O Lord know all their plotting to slay me. Do not forgive (*or, atone for*) or pardon their iniquity ⁵⁵⁷ nor blot out their sin from your memory. ⁵⁵⁸ Let them be overthrown ⁵⁵⁹ before you. Deal with them in the time of your anger!”}

<CHAPTER 19>

XIV. Symbolic Action and Imprisonment 19:1 – 20:18

A. Symbolic Actions 19:1 - 15

1. This is what the Lord said: “Go, bring a potter’s earthenware flask (*or, jug*) ⁵⁶⁰ and take some of the elders of the people. (and some of the elders of the priests); ⁵⁶¹ ² and

⁵⁴⁹ The people in Jeremiah’s day appear to be satisfied with their way of life.

⁵⁵⁰ Literally: “smite him with the tongue.”

⁵⁵¹ LXX: “Let us listen to all his words (*or, let us trap him*) and secure the basis for a charge against him.”

⁵⁵² The Hebrew is obscure.

⁵⁵³ Hebrew uncertain. TAN: “Is evil a payment for good?” NEB: “Is good to be repaid with evil?”

⁵⁵⁴ LXX: “For evil is rewarded for good. They have spoken words against my soul, and I have hidden the punishment they meant for me, remembering that I stood before your face to speak good to them; to turn away your wrath from them.”

⁵⁵⁵ NAB: “Let their wives be made childless and widows. Let their men die of pestilence, their young men be slain by the sword in battle.”

⁵⁵⁶ A pit trap would be intended for large animals.

⁵⁵⁷ JB: “Do not forgive their word. Do not efface their sin in your sight.”

⁵⁵⁸ Literally: “sight.”

⁵⁵⁹ Literally: “made to stumble.” LXX: “ἡ ἀσθευεῖα αὐτῶν.” MFT: “trip them till they crash before thee, and deal with them in thy day of anger!” NEB: “Do not blot out their wrongdoing or annul their sins; when they are brought stumbling into thy presence, deal with them on the day of thy anger.”

⁵⁶⁰ The Hebrew word “baqbuq” is a decanter (*or, flask*). The name originating from the gurgling sound when water is poured out. Archaeologists have found these flasks, ranging in size from 4 to 10 inches in height. LXX: “πεπλασμενον.” The earthenware flask (*or, jug*) symbolizes the final form of Judah’s stubbornness. Its shattering before the country’s leaders was an indication of coming doom.

go to the Valley of Ben-hinnom, to the entry of the Potsherd Gate, and proclaim there⁵⁶² the message that I will give you. ³ You will say: Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: The Lord, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel, declares: I am bringing a disaster on this place that will resound in the ears of all who hear it. ⁴ Because these people have forsaken me, and have become estranged from this place by burning incense in it to other gods which neither they nor their ancestors and even the kings of Judah have known, and because they have filled this place with the blood of those who are innocent, ⁵ and have built the high places for the worship of Ba'al to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings (*or, whole offerings*) to Ba'al, which I never commanded but have decried --- it never came into my thoughts! ⁵⁶³ ⁵ Assuredly the days are coming, declares the Lord, when this place will no longer be called "Tophet" ⁵⁶⁴ or "the Valley of Ben-hinnom" but "the Valley of Slaughter." ⁷ I will frustrate (*or, shatter*) the plains of Judah and Jerusalem, and will cause the people to die because of war at the hands of their enemies and by the hand of those who seek to survive. I will give their carcasses as carrion to the birds of prey and all the beasts of the earth. ⁸ I will make this place an object of horror, ⁵⁶⁵ and a place to be hissed at; ⁵⁶⁶ for everyone who passes by will be horrified, ⁵⁶⁷ and will hiss because of the disasters ⁵⁶⁸ that have befallen it. ⁹ I will make the survivors eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters, and everyone will eat the flesh of his neighbor during the siege and the distress afflicted on them by their enemies (*or, they will eat each other's flesh during the siege and due to the distress they had to endure*).

¹⁰ "At this time you will shatter the earthenware flask (*or, jug*) ⁵⁶⁹ in the presence of all who have accompanied you, ¹¹ and you will declare: This is what the Lord of Hosts says: I will shatter this nation and their city just as one can shatter a potter's earthenware flask (*or, jug*) which then is unrepairable. Bodies will be brought to Tophet because there will be no other place to dispose of them. ⁵⁷⁰ ¹² I will do this here, says the Lord, and this will happen to its individuals, making this city to be like Tophet. ¹³ The houses of Jerusalem and the royal palace --- those roof tops on which incense was burned to the host of heaven, ⁵⁷¹ and libations poured out to other gods --- will be polluted [*with*

⁵⁶¹ LXX: "και απο οων ιερειον."

⁵⁶² Hebrew uncertain. LXX: "των τεκνων αυτων." This is the only reference in the Old Testament to this gate. Possibly this was not the official name for the gate and it was the gate nearest to the Valley of Hinnom which became the garbage dump for Jerusalem. This would also have been the location for the worship of Moloch which involved the burning of children as a sacrifice to the god.

⁵⁶³ So: Hebrew and LXX. LXX Codex A adds "nor did I speak it."

⁵⁶⁴ Tophet was a name for the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom (BenHinnom). Originally it meant a hearth or a fireplace. The Masoretes gave it the meaning "shameful thing." This valley was located at the lower tract of the Wadi er-Rahabi near where it joins the Kidron brook. Gradually this area became the place where refuse was burned, thus prompting a visual concept of the fires of hell.

⁵⁶⁵ LXX: "desolation."

⁵⁶⁶ Cf.: Jeremiah 18:16. Footnote 546

⁵⁶⁷ LXX: "scowl."

⁵⁶⁸ Literally: "blows."

⁵⁶⁹ There is a play on words here.

⁵⁷⁰ Cf.: ANET 328c.

⁵⁷¹ Rooftops were a natural place of worship of the astral deities as noted in the cuneiform texts found at Ras Shamra indicate. Rooftops were regularly used for worship sites for these deities. MFT: "the starry host and libations poured out in honor of foreign gods."

corpses] ⁵⁷² and thus it will be a place of Tophet. ¹⁴ When Jeremiah returned from Tophet where the Lord had sent him to prophesy, and had stood in the court of the Lord's house, he said to the people: ¹⁵ This is what the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel says: "I am determined to bring this disaster that I have decreed on your city and on you personally because you have consistently and deliberately ⁵⁷³ rejected my words."

<CHAPTER 20>

B. Imprisonment of Jeremiah 20:1 – 5

¹ Now Pashhur ⁵⁷⁴ the priest, ⁵⁷⁵ the son of Immer, ⁵⁷⁶ was the chief officer (*or, chief priest*) ⁵⁷⁷ in the temple heard Jeremiah prophesying. ² Then Pashhur had Jeremiah the prophet flogged ⁵⁷⁸ and put him in stocks ⁵⁷⁹ that were at the Upper Benjamin Gate ⁵⁸⁰ of the House of the Lord. ³ The following morning, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him: "The Lord does not call your name Pashhur (*or, Magor Missabib*) ⁵⁸¹ but Terror ⁵⁸² on every side. ⁴ This is what the Lord says: I certainly will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. They will die at the hands of their enemies through war while you watch, and I will give all ⁵⁸³ of Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon who will exile the people, taking them to Babylon, and will bring about their death. ⁵⁸⁴ ⁵ Furthermore I will give the entire city including its wealth, and all its prize belongings and all the treasures of the king of Judah into the hands of the enemy who will seize these as plunder ⁵⁸⁵ and carry this all to Babylon. ⁶ You, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house will be taken into captivity, for you will go to Babylon and you will be buried there: you and all your friends to whom you have prophesied falsely."

⁵⁷² LXX: "των απαθαρασων (αυτων)."

⁵⁷³ LXX: "τας κωμας αυτης."

⁵⁷⁴ The name means "free."

⁵⁷⁵ LXX: "ο ψευδοπροφητες." "the false prophet."

⁵⁷⁶ Cf.: Ezra 2:37. 59; 10:20. The name means "eloquent."

⁵⁷⁷ Pashhur was possibly head of the temple police. Literally: "chief governor" or "chief officer."

⁵⁷⁸ This flogging perhaps consisted of 40 lashes less one as it was in Paul's day. II Corinthians 11:24.

⁵⁷⁹ Hebrew unclear. LXX: "the dungeon." TAN: "a cell." TEV: "in chains."

⁵⁸⁰ LXX: "πολη οικου αποτατμενου." To be imprisoned by the temple overseer, while doing the work of giving a message as a prophet would be most humiliating. LXX: "which was by the gate of the upper house that was set apart by the House of the Lord."

⁵⁸¹ This is a transliteration of the Hebrew words.

⁵⁸² LXX: "exile." Cf. Lamentations 2:22. Jeremiah was true to his calling --- no matter what happened.

⁵⁸³ LXX: "you."

⁵⁸⁴ LXX: "cut them to ruins." The message in verses 4 – 6 is directed to Pashhur. This is the first mention of Babylon as the possible land of exile. It can be assumed that this took place after 605 BCE when King Nebuchadnezzar had defeated Egypt. This made the Chaldean / Babylonian empire the dominant force in Israel/Judah and Jerusalem.

⁵⁸⁵ MFT: "They will rifle and seize them and bear them off to Babylon."

C. Jeremiah's Bitterest Complaint 20:7 – 13 ⁵⁸⁶

7 {“Oh Lord, you have deceived (*or, enticed*) ⁵⁸⁷ me, and I was deceived (*or, enticed*). You are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. ⁵⁸⁸ I have become a continual laughingstock; for I am being mocked by everyone. ⁵⁸⁹ 8 Whenever I speak I cry out. ⁵⁹⁰ I shout ‘Violence and destruction!’ for the word of the Lord has continually resulted in being a reproach and derision for me. ⁵⁹¹ 9 [*I am unable to stop praying for*] if I say, ‘I will not mention him, nor will I ever speak his name, in my heart, there is the constant feeling of a raging fire, shut up within my bones, causing me to be weary of holding it within me. I am unable to do so. 10 I hear many who whisper, ‘Terror on every side. Denounce him! Deport him!’ for this is being said by those who are watching that I fall or stumble. ‘Perhaps he will become deceived (*or, become enticed*). Then we can overcome him and wreak vengeance against him.’ ⁵⁹² 11 But the Lord is with me, like a mighty warrior. Therefore my persecutors ⁵⁹³ will stumble. They will not overcome me. They will be completely shattered. Their continual dishonor will never be forgotten. 12 O Lord of Hosts, who tests the righteous, who sees the heart and the mind, ⁵⁹⁴ let me see retributive justice befall them for I have presented my cause ⁵⁹⁵ before you.

13 {“Sing to the Lord: praise the Lord! He has rescued the life of the needy from the hand of evildoers. ⁵⁹⁶

14 {“Cursed be the day on which I was born: the day when my mother gave birth to me. Let it not be blessed. ⁵⁹⁷ 15 Cursed be the man who brought the news of my birth to my father: ‘A son ⁵⁹⁸ is born to you,’ making him very glad. ⁵⁹⁹ 16 Let that man be like the cities which the Lord overthrew without relenting! ⁶⁰⁰ Let him hear a shriek in the morning and an alarm (*or, trumpet blast*) at noon ⁶⁰¹ 17 because he did not cause me not to

⁵⁸⁶ Some scholars place verses 14 – 18 here. Verses 12 & 13 seem to be omitted by those who move these verses.

⁵⁸⁷ The Hebrew word is a very strong word. It would be used to seduce a virgin as in Exodus 22:16 or the lying spirit that deceives Ahab in I Kings 22:20 – 22.

⁵⁸⁸ There are three divisions in Jeremiah's struggle: 1. Jeremiah struggles with God because of God's overpowering mastery. 2. Jeremiah is certain that God is with him. 3. Jeremiah curses the day of his birth. NEB: “O Lord, thou hast duped me, and I have been thy dupe; thou hast outwitted me and hast prevailed.”

⁵⁸⁹ LXX: “I am continually mocked every day.”

⁵⁹⁰ LXX: “πικρῶ λόγῳ μου γελασσομαι.”

⁵⁹¹ LXX: “For I will laugh with my bitter speech, I will call upon rebellion and misery; for the word of the Lord has become a reproach to me and a mockery all my days.”

⁵⁹² LXX: “Conspire all you, and let us conspire together against him, even all his friends, watch for his intentions! Possibly he will become deceived, and we will prevail against him and thereby we will be avenged.”

⁵⁹³ LXX: “ἐδιώξαν καὶ νοῆσαι οὐκ ἠδύπαυτο.”

⁵⁹⁴ Literally: “kidneys.” The kidneys were deemed to be the source of emotions.

⁵⁹⁵ LXX: “defenses.”

⁵⁹⁶ Some scholars question the genuineness of verse 13. It has a different mood from the context, being much more like a psalm.

⁵⁹⁷ Even the prophet can experience profound depression. One sees Jeremiah being separated from his people because of his prophecies.

⁵⁹⁸ Literally: “a male child.”

⁵⁹⁹ It was usual to reward the messenger who brought news of the birth of a son. Interestingly Jeremiah would not pronounce a curse on his father and mother for that would disregard the Ten Commandments.

⁶⁰⁰ LXX: “Let that man rejoice like the cities which the Lord overthrew in wrath and did not repent.” The cities would be Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 19.

⁶⁰¹ MFT: “The shriek at dawn and the battle cry at noon.”

come from the womb and my mother might carry me in her womb to my grave and her womb would remain enlarged forever. ⁶⁰² 18 Why did I come forth from the womb to see misery (*or, toil*) and spend my days in shame?”} ⁶⁰³

<CHAPTER 21>

XV. Oracles concerning Kings of Judah 21:1 – 23 – 8 ⁶⁰⁴

A. Reply to a Deputation from Zedekiah 21:1- 10

¹ This is the word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when King Zedekiah ⁶⁰⁵ sent Pashhur the son of Malchiah and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah to him with a request, saying: ² “Consult the Lord for us, for Nebuchadnezzar, ⁶⁰⁶ king of Babylonia is engaging in war against us. Perhaps the Lord will deal as he has done with us in the past in accordance with all his wonderful deeds, and make [*Nebuchadnezzar*] withdraw from us.” ⁶⁰⁷

³ Then Jeremiah replied: ⁴ ”Tell the following to Zedekiah ⁶⁰⁸ The Lord, God of Israel declares: I will assuredly cause your own weapons to be used against you for as you fight the king of Babylon ⁶⁰⁹ and the Chaldeans ⁶¹⁰ your enemy will invade the city and pile up your weapons in the center of the city, for they are besieging outside the walls and unitedly they will capture the city. ⁵ I myself will fight against you with all my power, anger and rage. ⁶¹¹ ⁶ I will kill the inhabitants of the city, people and animals, for they will all die because of an incurable disease. ⁶¹² ⁷ Afterward, says the Lord, I will give over Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his officials and the people of the city who survive the disease, battle, and famine will be taken by their victorious enemy, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He will seek to put you to death as captives, showing no compassion nor mercy. ⁶¹³

⁸ “You will say to these people: This is what the Lord says: Be assured I will set before you an opportunity for you to choose which will result in life or death. ⁹ Anyone who remains in the city will die as the result of war, starvation or disease. Those who survive the attacks of the Chaldeans and surrender to the attackers will not be killed and will survive. ¹⁰ I have determined that this is the way it is to be: not to spare the city but to

⁶⁰² NAB: “That my mother would have been my grave, her womb confining me forever.”

⁶⁰³ In spite of all his bitterness Jeremiah never considers suicide.

⁶⁰⁴ The sections of this passage are not always in chronological order. The events perhaps took place between 589 and 588 BCE.

⁶⁰⁵ Zedekiah reigned 597 – 587 BCE.

⁶⁰⁶ Literally: “Nebuchadrezzar.” Nebuchadrezzar is a variant found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

⁶⁰⁷ Under King Hezekiah Judah and Jerusalem were invaded by Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Isaiah 36 – 37. JB: “work all his wonders on our behalf.” NEB: “Perhaps he will perform a miracle as he has done in past times, so that Nebuchadnezzar may raise the siege?”

⁶⁰⁸ LXX adds: “the king of Judah.”

⁶⁰⁹ “The king of Babylon” is omitted in the LXX.

⁶¹⁰ Originally the Chaldeans were a semi-nomadic tribe that occupied northern Arabia and southern Persia. In the 10th century BCE they were named ‘Kande’ and had self rule from 805 – 782. Later they became a part of the Babylonian empire.

⁶¹¹ MFT: “I myself will fight you with might and main, in anger, fury and fierce wrath.”

⁶¹² LXX: “καὶ ἀποθανούτο.”

⁶¹³ JB: “Those determined to kill them mercilessly, relentlessly. He will put them to death.” LXX:

“καὶ κἀψουσεν σατούς.” MFT: “till they are killed without quarter, without pity, not one spared.”

Jerusalem was captured on the 2nd day of Adar. March 16, 597 BCE.

destroy it, says the Lord: It is to be ceded to the king of Babylon who will burn it, for I the Lord have spoken!”

B. The House of the King of Judah 21:11 - 12

¹¹ “Declare to the house ⁶¹⁴ of the king of Judah: Hear the word of the Lord. ¹² O house of David, this is what the Lord has to say! Carry out justice each day! Protect (*or, rescue*) all persons who are being cheated from the one who cheats! If you fail to do this my anger will flare up like a fire that is unquenchable because of your evil doings!” ⁶¹⁵

C. Oracle Against Jerusalem 21:13 – 14 ⁶¹⁶

¹³ {“I am assuredly against you who reside in the valley and among the rocks of the plateau declares the Lord. You say: Who will be able to attack us and drive us from our lair? ⁶¹⁷ Who will enter our habitation?” ⁶¹⁸ ¹⁴ I will punish you as your actions deserve --- it is the Lord who speaks! I will set fire in your forest (*or, the royal palace*) ⁶¹⁹ and I will punish you, destroying everything, because of your evil deeds.”}

<CHAPTER 22>

D. The Royal Palace and City 22:1 – 9 ⁶²⁰

¹ This is what the Lord says: “Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and speak this word there. ⁶²¹ ² Say: Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you and your courtiers ⁶²² and subjects who enter these gates. ³ This is the word of the Lord! Do what is just and what is righteous. Rescue those who are in the hands of those who defraud and have been robbed. Do not deal wrongly with aliens ⁶²³ or deal violently with orphans and widows. Do not shed the blood of innocent persons in this place. ⁶²⁴ ⁴ If you will be determined to obey this word ⁶²⁵ kings like David (*or, of David’s Dynasty*) will enter this place, riding chariots and on horses --- they, their courtiers and the people. ⁶²⁶ ⁵ However, if you do not heed ⁶²⁷ these words I

⁶¹⁴ LXX: “οἶκος.

⁶¹⁵ Some scholars feel verses 11 & 12 should be inserted into the text at 22:6 rather than appearing here.

⁶¹⁶ This brief oracle may only have been recorded in part in the Jeremiah text.

⁶¹⁷ The LXX text is questionable. The plateau is in Trans-Jordan The LXX implies that it is located in Tyre, thus making it questionable. TAN: “I will deal with you, O inhabitants of the Valley and the rocks of the plain declares the Lord. You say, ‘Who can get into our lairs?’”

⁶¹⁸ A possible translation of a difficult text is; “You, Jerusalem, are sitting on high. You say who will be able to attack us and cause us to be destroyed?”

⁶¹⁹ The reference is to the columns in this important building that reminded one of a forest. A room in the royal palace was called “the forest hall.” A possible translation would be “I will set fire to the palace.”:

⁶²⁰ Some scholars place 22:1 – 5 after 21:14.

⁶²¹ God is the initiator of the covenant relationship.

⁶²² LXX: “καὶ οἱ οἰκοὶ σου.”

⁶²³ AB: “temporary residents.”

⁶²⁴ LXX: “Execute judgment and justice and rescue the spoiled out of the hand of him who has wronged him. Do not oppress the aliens, the orphans or the widows. Do not sin. Do not shed innocent blood in this place.”

⁶²⁵ JB: “If you are scrupulous in obeying this command.” NEB: “If you obey ... only.”

⁶²⁶ MFT: “If you carry out this loyally, then kings of David’s dynasty riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officers and people will pass these palace gates.”

myself swear, says the Lord, that this house will become desolate. ⁶²⁸ 6 This is what the Lord declares concerning this house and the king of Judah:

{“Though the royal palace is as beautiful to me as Gilead ⁶²⁹ or as the summit of the Lebanon mountains, ⁶³⁰ just the same I will make you a desolate place. ⁶³¹ 7 I will appoint destroyers to come among you to destroy you. Their weapons will hew you down as one would hew down a cedar and will fling you into the fire.} ⁶³²

8 [“*After that*] many nations will pass by the city, and every one will ask his neighbor, ‘Why has the Lord dealt this way with this great city?’ 9 They will reply, ‘Because they abandoned the covenant that had been made with the Lord their God, and worshiped other gods and served them’”

E. Oracle Against Shallum 22:10 – 12 ⁶³³

10 {“Do not weep for the dead nor brood over those who have gone away. Instead weep bitterly for the one ⁶³⁴ who is being taken and will never return to see his native land.} 11 (This is what the Lord says concerning Shallum ⁶³⁵ the son of Josiah, king of Judah who succeeded Josiah his father, and who went away from this place, never to return again. 12 He will die in the place to which he was taken as a captive and he will never see this land again.”) ⁶³⁶

F. Oracle Against Jehoiakim 22:13 – 19 ⁶³⁷

13 {“Doom to the person (*or, Shame on you,*) who establishes his house by unrighteousness and his upper room by fraud: who makes his neighbor serve him for no pay ⁶³⁸ and does not provide wages, 14 who says, ‘I will build myself a great palace (*or, mansion*) with spacious upper rooms and fitted out with windows and line the walls with

⁶²⁷ LXX: “ποιησητε.”

⁶²⁸ TEV: “fall into ruins.” Some scholars insert 21:11 - 12 here.

⁶²⁹ Gilead was the source for healing balm and was noted for usually having good crops.

⁶³⁰ Gilead and Lebanon possessed trees and were noted as a source of timber.

⁶³¹ MFT: “Though you were a flourishing Gilead of growth to me, a thick-sown crest of Lebanon, I will reduce you to a desert like a town untenanted.”

⁶³² LXX: “I will bring a destroying man with an ax against you and your choice cedars will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

⁶³³ Shallum is another name for King Jehoahaz who reigned in 609 - 608 BCE. He was the fourth son of King Josiah of Judah.

⁶³⁴ The reference is to King Josiah’s son Jehoahaz who was taken into captivity.

⁶³⁵ The name was possibly adopted on his accession to the throne. He took over the throne after Josiah was killed at Megiddo in 609 BCE. He reigned for three months before being deposed by Pharaoh Neco and taken to Riblah on the Oranates where the Pharaoh had set up military headquarters.

⁶³⁶ Verses 11 & 12 are explanatory and were perhaps a later interpolation into the text.

⁶³⁷ Jehoiakim reigned 609 – 598. He was an older brother of Shallum. He had to bring tribute to Neco (the Egyptian Pharaoh). He was an oppressive, covetous king who imposed heavy taxes, preventing the return to proper rites of worship.

⁶³⁸ The Complutensian Polyglot (ca. 1522) says “his neighbor works with him.”

paneling made of cedar and paint it with vermilion.⁶³⁹ 15 Do you think you are a better king because you compete through the use of cedar?⁶⁴⁰ Aren't you aware that your father ate and drank?⁶⁴¹ He [*with other kings*] did not get deposed. He dealt justly and righteously and his reign went well.⁶⁴² 16 He defended the cause of the poor and needy! This shows that he really knew (*or, understood*) me. 17 Your interests, however, are in dishonest profits, shedding innocent blood⁶⁴³ and extortion."⁶⁴⁴

18 Assuredly the Lord says concerning Jehoiakim the son of Joash, king of Judah,⁶⁴⁵ {"They will not lament for him, but will say, 'Ah my brother; Ah my sister.' They will not mourn for him saying, 'Ah Lord' or 'Ah his majesty.' 19 It will be a burial fit for an donkey that is dragged roughly and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.}"⁶⁴⁶

20 {"Climb up to Lebanon (*in Syria*)⁶⁴⁷ and shriek and raise your voice in Bashan.⁶⁴⁸ Cry from Abarim⁶⁴⁹ for all your lovers (*or, aliens*) are destroyed. 21 I spoke to you when you were prosperous⁶⁵⁰ but you responded: 'I will not listen.' This has been your way every since your youth. 22 The wind will carry away all your leaders⁶⁵¹ and your allies will be taken as prisoners of war. Then you will be disgraced and put to shame because of the evil you have done. 23 O you residents of Lebanon who make your nests among the cedars, how much grief will come to you:⁶⁵² pain like a woman in labor!}

24 "As I live says the Lord, though Coniah,⁶⁵³ the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah even if you were the signet ring of royalty were on my right hand, I would tear you off 25

⁶³⁹ LXX: "You will build for yourself a well-proportioned house with airy chambers, fitted with windows and wainscoted with cedar and painted with vermilion." All this enlargement of the palace was done by Jehoiakim with forced and unpaid labor.

⁶⁴⁰ Jehoiakim felt himself to be a great king because he had more cedar in his buildings than any other ruler.

⁶⁴¹ This speaks of contentment with a simple life.

⁶⁴² NEB: "He did what was right and just so all went well with him." CB: "Would you play the king by vying with others in cedar? Did not your father, as he ate and drank, do justice and righteousness?"

⁶⁴³ LXX: "εις φονον του ποιειν."

⁶⁴⁴ NEB: "cruel acts of tyranny."

⁶⁴⁵ LXX adds: "Ουαι επι τον ανορα τουτον." II Kings 24 says that Jehoiakim died. The wording 'slept with his fathers' assured being buried in the ancestral tombs. LXX Codex B states in II Chronicles 36:8 that Jehoiakim was buried in the garden of Uzza with his fathers. The same garden is mentioned as the burial place of Manasseh and Amon in the Hebrew text of II Kings 21:18, 26. Scholars assume that this garden was located on the grounds of the palace in Jerusalem.

⁶⁴⁶ It is possible that Jehoiakin was given a proper burial but then his grave was desecrated and he was disinterred. A donkey would not be buried but dragged outside the city to the refuse heap. TEV: "With the funeral honors of a donkey he will be dragged away and thrown outside Jerusalem's gate."

⁶⁴⁷ The reference in 20 – 30 seems to be to Jeconiah.

⁶⁴⁸ JB: "Let your voice be heard." Bashan was in the upper portion of Trans-Jordan.

⁶⁴⁹ Abarim is a mountain range which also includes Mount Nebo where Moses died. LXX Codes A: "to the country beyond the sea." LXX: "to the extremity of the sea." Vulgate: "ad transeuntes."

⁶⁵⁰ LXX unclear: "εν τη παραπτωσει σου." The LXX might mean "concerning your fall."

⁶⁵¹ Literally: "shepherds."

⁶⁵² So: LXX. Hebrew: "will be pitied."

⁶⁵³ Coniah is an abbreviation of the name Jehoiachin. He also was called Jeconiah and reigned from 609 – 598 BCE. He became king following his father's death in 598 BCE. He ruled for three months and then was deported to Babylon and held as a royal hostage. He is mentioned on a tablet from 570 BCE. The

and deliver you into the hand of those who seek your life, whom you dread, in fact, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. ²⁶ I will throw you and your mother into another country which is not the land of your birth and it is there that you will die. ²⁷ though you will long to return to the land of your birth you will never return. ⁶⁵⁴

²⁸ {“Is this Coniah a wretched broken pot? ⁶⁵⁵ A crock no one wants? Why are he and his children hurled into a land which they do not know? ⁶⁵⁶ ²⁹ O land, land, land --- hear the word of the Lord! ³⁰ Thus says the Lord: Record this man as childless; ⁶⁵⁷ as a man who will not be acceptable (*or, prosperous*) in his days, for none of his offspring will succeed in being seated on the throne of David, and ruling in Israel again. ⁶⁵⁸

<CHAPTER 23>

j. Restoration and Ideal Rule 23:1 – 8 ⁶⁵⁹

¹ “Woe to the shepherds (*or, religious leaders*) ⁶⁶⁰ who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, says the Lord. ² Assuredly this is what the Lord, the God of Israel is saying regarding the shepherds (*or, religious leaders*) who care for my people: You should have carefully tended ⁶⁶¹ to my flock but in fact you have driven them away so they now are scattered and I myself have banished them, says the Lord. Then I will personally gather the remnant of my flock ⁶⁶² out of all the countries to which I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they will establish large families. ⁶⁶³ ⁴ I will place shepherds (*or, religious leaders*) over them who will care for them and they will no longer be fearful or dismayed not will an be in misery ⁶⁶⁴ says the Lord.

⁵ “Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up Israel a righteous scion (*or, branch*) ⁶⁶⁵ and he will reign as king and deal wisely and will carry out justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ During his reign Judah will be saved and Israel

tablet was located near the Ishtar Gate of Babylon, recording when Nebuchadnezzar II released him from prison and kept him in the royal palace.

⁶⁵⁴ TAN: “You will long to see this country again, but you will never return.”

⁶⁵⁵ JB: “a shoddy broken pot.”

⁶⁵⁶ CB: “Is this man Coniah a contemptible, common utensil? Is he an article that no one cares for? Why then, have he and his race been hurled and cast off to a land that they know not?”

⁶⁵⁷ LXX: “cried out” as a common crier. TAN: “without succession.”

⁶⁵⁸ Cf.: ANET 308.

⁶⁵⁹ It is generally assumed by scholars that verses 1 – 8 are a castigation of King Zedekiah, king of Judah 597 – 573 BCE.

⁶⁶⁰ LXX: “O shepherds.” These shepherds were false religious leaders. TEV: “rulers.”

⁶⁶¹ In Hebrew there is a play on words using the Hebrew word ‘payad.’ The play on words is based in Hebrew on the words translated a “tended” and “gathered” in verse 3.

⁶⁶² LXX: “I will gather the remnant of my people in every land.”

⁶⁶³ LXX: “You have driven them out and you have not visited them! I will assuredly take vengeance on you in accordance with your evil practices.”

⁶⁶⁴ Vulgate: “et nullus quaeretur eb numero.”

⁶⁶⁵ Literally: “shoot.” LXX: “απατολην.” Hebrew: “semah.” Cf.: Isaiah 11:1.

⁶⁶⁶ will be a secure land in which to live. The name by which he will be called is ‘The Lord our Righteousness (*or, Vindicator*).’⁶⁶⁷

⁷ “The days are certainly coming, says the Lord, when people will no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt:’⁸ but ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the other countries where he had banished them! They will dwell in their own land!’”⁶⁶⁸

XVI. Oracle Concerning the Prophets 23:9 – 40

A. General Wickedness in the Law 23:9 – 12

⁹ {“My heart is broken within me concerning the prophets.⁶⁶⁹ My bones are shaky and I am like a drunken man, like a man who is overcome with wine, because of the Lord and because of his holy word.⁶⁷⁰ ¹⁰ The land is filled with adulteries. Because of this curse the pastures of the land have become arid. The [*false*] prophet’s course is evil and their desire is to find wickedness.⁶⁷¹ ¹¹ Both prophet and priest are ungodly in my house. I have even discovered their wickedness in my house, says the Lord! ¹² Assuredly the way will be like a slippery path in the darkness to them, and they will be banished to destruction and failure; for I will bring disaster on them in the year of their punishment, declares the Lord.”

B. Evil-doing of the Jerusalem Prophets 23:13 – 15

¹³ {“Among the prophets of Samaria I saw a repulsive thing: prophecies were made in the name of Ba’al and led all my people, Israel, astray. ¹⁴ But among the prophets of Jerusalem I saw a horrible thing: they commit adultery and live lies, thus strengthening the hands of evildoers,⁶⁷² so that as a result no one turns away from his wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me, and its inhabitants are like Gomorrah.} ¹⁵ ”Because of this the Lord of Hosts declares concerning the people: {I will feed them with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink for the prophets of Jerusalem have proclaimed ungodliness which has spread through the entire land.”}

⁶⁶⁶ The LXX adds: “and Jerusalem.”

⁶⁶⁷ Hebrew: “qdc” “righteousness.” The word can also mean “salvation” or “deliverer.” LXX: “Ἰωσεδεκ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις.” This ‘shoot’ will emerge in the form of a Messianic personage whose special work is to impart righteousness to humanity, not of works but of grace. The oracle in verses 5 & 6 is repeated in 33:15 – 16. Some scholars question the authenticity of the oracle. Cf. ICC & KAT for arguments. The supporting of this oracle as genuine supports the position of Jeremiah’s thoughts, thereby reading beyond the immediate ‘sitz im leben.’”

⁶⁶⁸ Verses 7 & 8 are also found in 15:14 – 15. This is omitted in the LXX.

⁶⁶⁹ These three words are omitted by the LXX.

⁶⁷⁰ LXX: “because of the excellence of his glory.”

⁶⁷¹ LXX: “Because of the prophets the land mourns, the pastures of the wilderness are dried up, their course has become evil and so also their strength.”

⁶⁷² TAN: “They encourage evil doers.”

C. The Characteristics of the False Prophets 23:16 – 22

16 The Lord of Hosts declares: “Do not listen to the words the [*false*] prophets are prophesying to you, filling you with delusions ⁶⁷³ and proclaiming their own thoughts, not a message from the Lord. 17 They continually say to those who despise the word of the Lord, ‘Every thing is all right’ and everyone stubbornly follows the dictates of his own mind and says, ‘No evil will befall me.’

18 {“Who among these so-called prophets has stood in the council of the Lord to perceive and listen to God’s word for any one who has experienced this must obey. ⁶⁷⁴ 19 I will strike them down as does a violent storm says the Lord: wrath has gone forth like a hurricane and it will come down on the wicked. ⁶⁷⁵ 20 I will not calm down until I have finished and have accomplished the intentions I have in mind. In the days ahead you will understand clearly. ⁶⁷⁶ 21 I did not send prophets, yet they rushed in. I never spoke to them, yet they continued to prophesy. 22 If they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed ⁶⁷⁷ my words to my people and they would have turned ⁶⁷⁸ from their evil ways and from their activities.”}

D. The False Prophets Living Dreams 23:23 – 33

23 “Am I only a God who is near at hand? says the Lord. Am I a God who is far distant? 24 Can a person hide himself in a secret place so that I cannot see (*or, find*) him? says the Lord. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? says the Lord. 25 I have heard what the prophets who prophesy lies in my name have said. ‘I have dreamt, I have dreamt!’ 26 How long will lies be in the mind of the prophets who prophesy falsely and who prophesy their own illusions; ⁶⁷⁹ 27 who think about making people forget my name because of their dreams ⁶⁸⁰ which they pass along in conversation to one another just as had been done by their ancestors who had forgotten my name because of their worship of Ba’al.” 28 Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who prophesies using lies report my words correctly (*or, faithfully*). How can straw possibly be compared with wheat? ⁶⁸¹ says the Lord. 29 Isn’t my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer that shatters a rock into bits?” ⁶⁸²

⁶⁷³ LXX: “visions.”

⁶⁷⁴ A very slight emendation of the MT vowel points yields: “must announce.” Jeremiah declares that 1. The false prophets are personally immoral. 2. The false prophets encourage their followers to be immoral.

⁶⁷⁵ LXX: “There is an earthquake from the Lord and anger proceeds to a convulsion which will take place, concerning violence on the ungodly. “ LXX Codex A has “the hands of the evil doers.”

⁶⁷⁶ Verses 19 & 20 duplicate 30:23 – 24 with minor variations. The significance of this passage: 16 - 20 is that because of self-delusion the accusations are not understood but will become painfully apparent.

⁶⁷⁷ LXX: “και ει ηκουσαν.”

⁶⁷⁸ LXX: “αφ απεστρεφον αυτους.”

⁶⁷⁹ Hebrew unclear. This verse has textual difficulties. A possible translation might be: “How long will this continue in the minds of the prophets who are proclaiming lies: these prophets of self deception.”

⁶⁸⁰ LXX: “Who devise that men may forget my law by their delusion which they have told, everyone to his neighbor, as their fathers forgot my name in [*the worship*] of Baal.”

⁶⁸¹ A possible translation might be: “Of what good is straw in comparison with wheat?”

⁶⁸² LXX: “an axe cutting the rock.”

³⁰ "Assuredly I will deal with those prophets who steal my words from one another, says the Lord. ³¹ Be attentive! I am against those prophets who enjoy saying, 'says the Lord,' declares the Lord. ⁶⁸³ ³² I am against those who prophesy lying dreams and tell them, leading people astray by their lies and their rebellious ways, says the Lord. I will not forget them! This is the word of the Lord."

E. Discourse on the Burden of the Lord 23:33 – 40

³³ The Lord said, "When one of these people: a prophet or a priest asks you 'What is the burden (*or, oracle*) of the Lord?' ⁶⁸⁴ You will speak out, saying: You are the burden ⁶⁸⁵ and I will hurl you aside, says the Lord. ³⁴ As for the prophet or priest among the people who say, 'The burden of the Lord' I will punish that person as well as his own household. ³⁵ Tell everyone and his neighbor and brother, 'What has the Lord answered' or 'What has the Lord said?' ³⁶ You must never mention ⁶⁸⁶ this terminology (*of the divine oracle*) again. Everyone will take his own idea ⁶⁸⁷ as the word of the Lord and thereby distort the words of the true and living God, the Lord who is our God. ⁶⁸⁸ ³⁷ You will speak thus to the people: "What has the Lord answered you?" or "What has the Lord said?" ³⁸ If you say, 'The burden of the Lord' the Lord declares: 'Because you have said these words, 'The burden of the Lord' when I sent a message to you saying, 'You will not say The burden of the Lord.' ³⁹ Therefore I will surely lift you up and cast you away from my presence, ⁶⁸⁹ along with the city which I gave you and your ancestors. ⁴⁰ I will bring everlasting reproach and perpetual shame upon you that will not be forgotten." ⁶⁹⁰

<CHAPTER 24>

XVII. Vision of Good and Bad Foes 24:1 – 10 ⁶⁹¹

¹After this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon had taken Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim king of Judah together with the officers of Judah, the skilled workers ⁶⁹² and smiths ⁶⁹³

⁶⁸³ LXX: "Behold I am against the prophets who have put forth the prophesies of their words which are the results of their slumber."

⁶⁸⁴ The Hebrew word, "massa" is derived from a root word "to lift up." It is the root that is used in Hebrew for the word for "message." It can mean "burden" as we think of that word. The thought here is "You are difficult to bear."

⁶⁸⁵ Literally: "What is a burden?" LXX: "You are the burden." MT: "What burden?"

⁶⁸⁶ LXX: "ονομαζετε."

⁶⁸⁷ Literally: "word."

⁶⁸⁸ Hebrew uncertain.

⁶⁸⁹ Some scholars prefer translating the Hebrew words as "I will utterly forget you" or "completely forget you."

⁶⁹⁰ The word play in verses 33 -40 suggests that the Judeans will be tossed freely from the land for a period of unforgettable calamity.

⁶⁹¹ If the date is historically correct it was after the deportation of Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah) in 598 BCE. Cf. II Kings 24:10 – 17. Verses 1 – 3 are omitted in the LXX. It was a time of remarkable architectural achievement in Babylon, portions of which have been restored within the Pergamum Museum in Berlin.

⁶⁹² These skilled workers were used in the architectural achievements under Nebuchadnezzar. This was a great period of construction in Babylon, dating from 612 – 539 BCE.

⁶⁹³ The LXX adds: "and rich men."

had been taken to Babylon. The Lord showed me this vision: Two baskets of figs had been placed before the temple of the Lord. ² One basket had excellent figs, the variety that ripens early, and the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they were inedible. ³ The Lord said to me: “What do you see, Jeremiah?” I replied, “Figs. The good figs are very good and the bad figs are so bad that they cannot be eaten.” ⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁵ “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel declares: Just as with good figs, so I will select those who are good, exiling them from Judah. These I will send to the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶⁹⁴ ⁶ I will keep them under my watchful eye and provide them with good, and I will restore them to this land. I will build them up (*or, strengthen them*) and not tear them down (*or, weaken them*). ⁷ I will give them understanding ⁶⁹⁵ to realize that I am the Lord: and they will be my people and I will be their God, for they will return to me wholeheartedly.”

⁸ This is what the Lord says: “Just as the bad figs are so bad that they are unable to be eaten, so too I will abandon Zedekiah king of Judah, his priests, the remnant of those who remain in Jerusalem and through the entire land, and those who have gone to the land of Egypt. ⁹ I will make them abhorrent ⁶⁹⁶ to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be looked upon as a disgrace, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places to which I have dispersed them. ⁶⁹⁷ ¹⁰ I will send war, famine and disease on them until they will be utterly destroyed ⁶⁹⁸ from the land which I gave them as their ancestral land.” ⁶⁹⁹

<CHAPTER 25>

XVIII. Summary Warning to Judah 23:1 – 14 ⁷⁰⁰

A. Judah’s Continual Disobedience 25:1 – 7

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah ⁷⁰¹ concerning all the people of Judah, ⁷⁰² in the fourth year of Jehoiakim ⁷⁰³ son of Josiah, king of Judah. (This was the first year of

⁶⁹⁴ LXX: “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: As these good figs, so will I acknowledge the Jews that have been carried away captive, whom I have set forth out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for good.”

⁶⁹⁵ Literally: “the heart.”

⁶⁹⁶ So: LXX. Hebrew: “horror for evil.”

⁶⁹⁷ TAN foot note: “A standard by which men curse.” Cf.: Genesis 12² and Zechariah 8:13 “A possible translation might be: “I will cause them to be dispersed into the kingdoms of the earth, and they will be for a reproach and a proverb, an object of hatred and a curse in every place where I have driven them.”

⁶⁹⁸ NEB: “until they have disappeared from the land.” JB: “until they have vanished from the soil I gave to them and to their ancestors.”

⁶⁹⁹ This is a graphic picture of the importance of fellowship with God and the blessing of God’s divine grace. Whatever the situation, those who seek God wholeheartedly will find him.

⁷⁰⁰ The LXX omits verses 1b; 9, 11 & 12. Many scholars assume that the additional MT verses were added after the end of the exile.

⁷⁰¹ The MT has a different name: “Jehoiachin” who ruled in 598 BCE.

⁷⁰² Egypt had been routed at the Battle of Carchemish and Babylon incorporated Judah into its empire as a tributary. Cf.: II Kings 24:1.

⁷⁰³ The date is deemed to be July or August 605 BCE. The Babylonians counted the accession year as April 604 - 603 BCE

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) ⁷⁰⁴ 2 which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ³ “From the thirtieth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, who reigned for twenty-three years until this day⁷⁰⁵ the word of the Lord came to me, and I have spoken to you persistently but you have not listened. ⁷⁰⁶ 4 (The Lord has sent all his servants who were prophets to you and yet you have not listened or shown the least inclination of interest in what they had to say. ⁵ They said, ‘Everyone – turn back from your evil way of living and your wicked deeds so that you will be able to live on the land which the Lord has given your ancestors in the past and forever.’ ⁶ [Do not pursue (*or, seek out*) other gods to serve and worship them. Do not upset me (*or, anger me*) with [*the idols*] you have fashioned with your own hands. If this becomes your way of life you will not receive any punishment.] ⁷⁰⁷ 7 Yet you have not listened to me, the Lord declares, but you deliberately provoke me, moving me to anger because of what your hands have made.”⁷⁰⁸]

B. Immanent Destruction 25:8 – 14

⁸ “Therefore the Lord of Hosts declares: Because you have not obeyed ⁷⁰⁹ my words ⁹ I will send for all the tribes of the North ⁷¹⁰ and for my servant ⁷¹¹ Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and I will direct them to warfare against this land and its inhabitants, and against all the surrounding nations. I will exterminate (*or, obliterate*) ⁷¹² them, making them a thing of horror and an everlasting ruin. ⁷¹³ ¹⁰ Moreover, I will banish all joyfulness and gladness. There will not be any joyousness on the part of bridegrooms and brides, no noise from the grinding of millstones, nor will lamps be lit. ¹¹ This entire land will become a desolate ruin; ⁷¹⁴ and [these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. ⁷¹⁵ ¹² After seventy years have passed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation along with the land of the Chaldeans, for their evils, says the Lord. ⁷¹⁶ ¹³ I will bring a desolation upon the land as a fulfillment of the desolation about

⁷⁰⁴ Some scholars feel this is a gloss.

⁷⁰⁵ Josiah ruled from 690 – 604 BCE. In the past scholars questioned the chronology but new understanding of the method in which people in the Middle East computed time in the 7th C. BCE this became clarified.

⁷⁰⁶ LXX: “In the thirteenth year Josiah, son of Amos, king of Judah even until this day for twenty-three years I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking.” NEB: “The Lord has taken pains to send out his servants, the prophets, but you have not listened or shown any inclination to listen.”

⁷⁰⁷ Some scholars feel this is a gloss.

⁷⁰⁸ Some scholars consider this to be a gloss.

⁷⁰⁹ LXX: “ἐπιστευσάτε τοις.”

⁷¹⁰ LXX: “all the families from the north.” The reference may be to all the kings and nations that are under God’s command.

⁷¹¹ “My servant” is omitted in the LXX.

⁷¹² MFT: “I am sending for a race from the north and bringing it down upon the land, upon its inhabitants and upon the surrounding nations.”

⁷¹³ The Hebrew word means “desolation.” The Versions have “reproach.”

⁷¹⁴ NAB: “a scandal and a horror.”

⁷¹⁵ Some scholars feel verses 11b – 14 are a later interpolation. The reference to seventy years is the return from captivity which began in 538 BCE.

⁷¹⁶ The LXX contains portions of the early verses of chapter 25. Beginning with a portion of verse 14 to the end of the chapter in the LXX it is found as chapter 32.

which I have spoken. This is all recorded in the book ⁷¹⁷ comprising the writings of Jeremiah against the nations. ¹⁴ Many nations and great kings will become enslaved; and I will requite them according to their conduct and actions.”]

XIX. The Cup of the Lord's Wrath 25:14 – 36 [LXX: 32:25 – 36]

A. Nations that Must Drink the Cup 25:15 – 24 [LXX: 32:15 – 29]

¹⁵ The Lord, the God of Israel said the following: “Take from my hand ⁷¹⁸ the wine of my wrath ⁷¹⁹ and make all the nations to whom I send it drink it. ⁷²⁰ ¹⁶ They will drink ⁷²¹ and stagger, and go mad because that is the sword that I am sending among them.

¹⁷ “ I took the cup from the Lord's hand ⁷²² and made all the nations to whom the Lord sent me drink it. ¹⁸ [The drink was given to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, the kings and princes, to make them a desolation and a wasteland, an object at which to hiss, ⁷²³ and to curse, as it presently is.] ⁷²⁴ ¹⁹ {Pharaoh King of Egypt and his courtiers, his officials and all his priests, ⁷²⁵ ²⁰ and all the aliens among them; ⁷²⁶ the kings of the land of Uz, ⁷²⁷ and the land of the kings of the land of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and what still remains of Ashdon\ d); ⁷²⁸ ²¹ Edom; Moab and the descendants of Ammon; ²² all the kings of Tyre and Sidon and all the kings of the coastlands across the sea. ⁷²⁹ ²³ Dedan; Tema; ⁷³⁰ Buz; ⁷³¹ and all those who trimmed their hair; ⁷³² ²⁴ [all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the mixed tribes that live on the edge of the desert; ²⁵ all the kings of Zimri; ⁷³³ all the kings of Elam; all the kings of Media; ²⁶ and all the kings of the north; far and near; one after another; and all the kingdoms of the world which are on the face of the earth; ⁷³⁴ and following all of them: the kings of Babylon will drink.] ⁷³⁵

⁷¹⁷ It is at this point that verse 14 appears in chapter 32 along with the remainder of the chapter.

⁷¹⁸ LXX “του οινου του ακρατου.”

⁷¹⁹ NEB: “fiery wine.”

⁷²⁰ Jeremiah is not just a prophet to Judah and Jerusalem but is a prophet to the nations. Chapters 46 – 51 are a rather extensive collection of oracles against the nations.

⁷²¹ LXX: “και εξεμουνται.”

⁷²² Some scholars feel verses 17 – 26 are a later interpolation.

⁷²³ Cf.:18:16 Footnote 546.

⁷²⁴ Some scholars feel this verse is a gloss.

⁷²⁵ The list of nations is very similar to the list of prophecies against foreign nations in 40 – 51.

⁷²⁶ Literally: “all the mixed people.” NEB: “and all the rabble of fellows.”

⁷²⁷ This is the land where Job lived (Job 1:1), east of Palestine, probably in Edomite territory. Other scholars feel it might have been along the coastal plain near Haran, east of Damascus.

⁷²⁸ Heroditus reported that Ashdod was destroyed by Pharaoh Psamtik I of Egypt (663 – 609 BCE) after a siege of twenty-nine years.

⁷²⁹ Those were additional Phoenician commercial settlements along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

⁷³⁰ These were in northwestern Arabia. Dedan was a place of merchants whose ancestor is noted in Genesis 25:3. Some scholars feel Tema was located in the area of Syria.

⁷³¹ Buz was a wandering tribe whose ancestry is found in Genesis 27:21.

⁷³² Literally: “trimmed the corners of their hair.” JB: “The crop heads.” MFT: “The crop-haired clans.”

⁷³³ The location is uncertain. This is omitted by the LXX.

⁷³⁴ The Hebrew is uncertain.

⁷³⁵ In the MT the word is “Sheshach” which is the cipher for Babylon. Some scholars feel verses 24 – 26 are a gloss.

27 “Then you will say to them: The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel says: Drink, become drunk and vomit, fall, never to rise again, because of the sword which I am sending you.

28 “If they refuse to accept the cup from your hand and drink, you will then say to them, This is the declaration of the Lord of Hosts: You must drink! 29 Be aware that I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name. Do you think, that being the case, that you will go unpunished? You will not go unpunished for I am summoning that there will be war against all the inhabitants of the earth. This is the word of the Lord.”⁷³⁶

*B. The Coming of the Lord in Judgment 25:30 – 38 [LXX: 32:30 – 38]*⁷³⁷

30 “You will therefore prophesy⁷³⁸ against them all using these words: Say to them: {The Lord will roar from on high; from his holy dwelling. He will speak mightily against his fold. He will raise a shout like that of those who are treading grapes. He will shout against all of the inhabitants of the earth. 31 The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for the Lord has an indictment and is arraigning the nations: he is entering into judgment with all living beings: the wicked will be destroyed through war, declares the Lord.

32 {“This is what the Lord of Hosts says: Take note! Disaster will spread⁷³⁹ from nation to nation and a great storm is striking! It will come from the farthest point of the earth }

33 “Those slaughtered by the Lord on that day⁷⁴⁰ will extend from one end of the earth to the other. People will not be mourned or gathered to be buried but will be like dung on the face of the earth!⁷⁴¹ 34 {Wail (*or, keen*), you shepherds and yell. Throw dust on your garments, you overseers of the flock, for the days of your slaughter and desperation have come.⁷⁴² You will fall like choice rams. 35 Refuge will remain for the shepherds (*or, the spiritual leaders*), for the leaders of the flock.⁷⁴³ 36 Listen to the outcry of the shepherds and the wailing of the lords of the flock: for the Lord is ravaging their pasture. 37 The peaceful meadows are devastated because of the fierce wrath of the Lord. 38 Like a lion he has abandoned his people (*or, and his people leave their homes*)for the land has become a wasteland because of the sword of the Lord and because of his fierce anger.”}

⁷³⁶ Divine wrath will be inescapable for all these nations. None can refuse to drink the cup that results in suffering.

⁷³⁷ The imagery in the poetic portion of the remaining verses of this chapter changes to that of a ravaging lion.

⁷³⁸ Verse 30a is almost a direct quote from Amos 1:2.

⁷³⁹ NAB: “Lo, calamity stalks from nation to nation.”

⁷⁴⁰ LXX: “εν ημερα κοριου.”

⁷⁴¹ MFT: “unwailed, ungathered, unburied.”

⁷⁴² Hebrew unclear. CEV: “But now it is your turn to be butchered like sheep. You’ll shatter like fine pottery dropping on the floor. So roll on the ground, crying and mourning.”

⁷⁴³ LXX: “The flight will perish from the shepherds, and safety from the rams of the flock.” NEB: “the flockmasters.”

XX. Conflict with Rebellious Leaders 26:1 – 29:32 [LXX: 33:1 – 36:32]

A. The Temple Sermon and Jeremiah's Arrest 26:1 – 24 [LXX: 33:1 – 24]

1. Preaching of the Sermon 26:1 – 6 [LXX" 33:1 – 6]

¹ In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim ⁷⁴⁵ the son of Josiah, king of Judah, the word of the Lord came to me. ² "The Lord's word is: Stand in the court of the Lord's House and speak to all [*the men*] of the towns of Judah who are coming to worship in the Uouse of the Lord. Speak to them all the words I have commanded you! Do not omit a word (*or, syllable*). ³ It is possible that they will listen and that each one might turn from his evil ways. Then I would have a reason to be silent and not carry out the evil which I have intended to do to them because of their actions! ⁷⁴⁶

⁴ "You will tell them: ⁷⁴⁷ This is what the Lord declares: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my ways (*or, law*) which I have given you, ⁵ and if you do not listen to the words of my servants, the prophets whom I have sent to you with urgency, ⁷⁴⁸ (though you have not listened), ⁶ I will make this place [*the temple*] like Shiloh ⁷⁴⁹ and I will make this city to be a curse for the nations of the earth."

2. Arrest and Trial of Jeremiah 26:7 – 19 [LXX: 33:7 – 19]

⁷ The priests and prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speak these words of the Lord. ⁸ When Jeremiah had finished speaking as the Lord has commanded him to do the people and the priests and the [*false*] prophets seized him, shouting "You should be killed for this! ⁹ "How dare you prophesy in the name of the Lord and say, "This house will be like Shiloh and this city will be desolate --- without inhabitants." The people who were gathered in Jerusalem crowded around in the House of the Lord.

¹⁰ When the officers of Judah heard of this they came from the royal palace to the House of the Lord and took their seat at the entry of the New Gate ⁷⁵⁰ of the House of ⁷⁵¹ the Lord.¹² Then the priests and the prophets told the officials and all the people, "This man deserves the death penalty because he has spoken profanely against this city, as you yourselves also have heard."

⁷⁴⁴ It is assumed by scholars that chapters 26:1 – 29:32 are based on Baruch's memoirs. The LXX in chapter 33 is quite different from the Hebrew of chapter 26.

⁷⁴⁵ Cf.: II Kings 23:31 – 37. Jehoiakim ascended to the throne in September/October 609 BCE.

⁷⁴⁶ Jeremiah's message was an attack on temple worship and was an attempt to rescue his fellow countrymen from self-destruction and turn them in penitence and in faith to their ancestral God.

⁷⁴⁷ TEV changes the passage to 'first person.'

⁷⁴⁸ Literally: "rising early and sending again and again."

⁷⁴⁹ Cf. 7:12, footnote 220. The Philistines captured the Ark of God after it had been taken from Shiloh. It was never returned to Shiloh but was later taken to Jerusalem. It was at that point that Shiloh no longer was an important center for worship.

⁷⁵⁰ The exact location of 'the New Gate' is uncertain. It is mentioned in 36:10 and Micah 3:13. Some scholars feel there is a reference to this gate in II Kings 15:35 though this is not a clear reference.

⁷⁵¹ Many MSS and ancient versions omit the words "the House of."

12 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officers and to all the people, saying: “The Lord sent me to prophesy against this house and this city through all these words you have heard me speak. 13 Now then: amend your ways and your actions and obey the voice of the Lord your God. The Lord will be remorseful of the evil which he had pronounced against this city. 14 As for myself, I am in your hands. Do with me as you see fit. 15 Only know for certain that if you put me to death you will be guilty of shedding innocent blood. This guilt will rest on yourselves and on this city along with all its inhabitants, for the Lord has truly sent me to you to speak these words in your hearing.”

16 Then the officers and the people spoke to the priests and the people, saying, “The man does not deserve the death sentence for he has spoken to us in the name of our God.” 17 Certain of the elders of the land stood and spoke to those who had assembled, saying, 18 “When Micah ⁷⁵² of Moresheth, prophet in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, said to all the people of Judah: ‘This is the word of the Lord. {Zion will be a plowed field; Jerusalem will become a pile of ruins. The temple mount will be an overgrown thicket.}’ ⁷⁵³ 19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him to death? ⁷⁵⁴ Didn’t he revere and implore the favor of the Lord, and didn’t the Lord relent (*or, revoke*) the evil which he had promised ⁷⁵⁵ would come upon them. In doing this we are about to bring a great evil on ourselves.”

3. Arrest and Execution of Uriah 26:20 – 24 {LXX: 33:20 – 24}

20 (There was another man who prophesied in the name of the Lord, Uriah, the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. ⁷⁵⁶ He prophesied against the city and against the Lord saying virtually the same thing as Jeremiah. 21 When King Jehoiakim along with his warriors and officers heard his words the king’s warriors wanted to put him to death but when Uriah learned of this he was fearful and fled, escaping to Egypt. 22 Then King Jehoiakim sent an official to Egypt Elnathan the son of Achbor ⁷⁵⁷ and others who accompanied him, 23 They took Uriah out of Egypt and brought him back to King Jehoiakim, who killed him with a sword and threw his corpse into a grave for the common people. ⁷⁵⁸

24 Because of the support of Ahikam the son of Shaphan ⁷⁵⁹ who was with Jeremiah, he was not given over to the people to be killed. ⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵² Micah is being quoted almost a century after his death.

⁷⁵³ Micah 3:12. It is possible that some of the elders heard these words of Micah first hand as children, or from their parents.

⁷⁵⁴ Nowhere else in Hebrew Scripture is there a reference to this concerning Micah.

⁷⁵⁵ LXX: “Did Hezekiah and all Judah in any way slay him? Was it not that they found the Lord (*or, did they not fear him*) and they made supplication before the Lord. The Lord canceled the evils which he had pronounced against you.” NEB: “Did King Hezekiah and all Judah put him to death? Did not the king show reverence for the Lord and seek to placate him?”

⁷⁵⁶ This is identified as Kuriet el-Enab 9 miles west of Jerusalem along the road to Jaffa.

⁷⁵⁷ This was a rather common name in the 7th century. If he is identical with the Achbor in II Kings 24:6 he would be Jehoiakim’s father-in-law.

⁷⁵⁸ LXX: “a grave for the children of his people.” Literally: “sons of the people.” CB: “the public burying ground.”

⁷⁵⁹ Shaphan was the royal scribe. He became the governor of Judah after Zedekiah’s death.

<CHAPTER 27>

*B. The Yoke of Babylon 27:1 – 28:17 [LXX: 34:1 – 35:17]*⁷⁶¹

1. Message to the Foreign Kings 27:1 – 11 [LXX: 34:1 – 11]

¹ [In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah ⁷⁶² the son of Josiah, king of Judah, the word came to Jeremiah from the Lord.] ⁷⁶³ ² "The Lord said to me, Make yourself leather straps and yoke bars ⁷⁶⁴ and put them on your neck. ³ Send [*a message*] to the king of Elam, ⁷⁶⁵ the king of Moab, the king of the descendants of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon by their ambassadors who have come to Jerusalem to see Zedekiah king of Judah. ⁴ Give them this warning message for their masters: The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel wants to inform your master as follows: ⁵ It is I who by my great might and my outstretched arm have made the earth, including all the people and animals that inhabit the earth and I provide for the needs and power of these as I deem suitable. ⁶ Now I have given all these lands ⁷⁶⁶ into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, my servant ⁷⁶⁷ and I have even given him the beasts of the fields. ⁷ [All of nature will serve him as well as his son and grandson who will also have ownership. Then many nations and great kings will make him their slave.] ⁷⁶⁸ ⁸ If any nations or kingdoms will not submit to the Lord's rule (*or, expectation*) concerning Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I (*the Lord*) will punish that nation with warfare, famine and disease, says the Lord. This will continue until I have consumed (*or, destroyed*) it by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. ⁹ Be warned! Do not listen to prophets ⁷⁶⁹ or augurs, dreamers, soothsayers or sorcerers who are saying to you, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.' ¹⁰ It is he which they are prophesying with the result that you will be banished from your land, and I will drive you out, and you will die. ¹¹ But any nation which will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will allow to remain on its own land to till it and to reside there."

⁷⁶⁰ LXX: "Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam, son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah to prevent his being delivered into the hands of the people to be killed."

⁷⁶¹ These chapters perhaps are based on Baruch's memories. The LXX version is quite different. The messages in these chapters were perhaps uttered in 594 BCE.

⁷⁶² Some MSS have "Jehoiakim." Zedekiah began his reign in 598 BCE

⁷⁶³ Some scholars feel this is a later interpolation.

⁷⁶⁴ Hebrew: "tjwm" is the word for "yoke-bar" The Hebrew word for 'yoke' is "[Leather straps went under the neck of the animal and were tied to the wooden 'yoke bar' which was at the top of the neck. Apparently only one yoke was made so no yokes were sent to these countries. A descriptive message would suffice. The LXX says "one yoke."

⁷⁶⁵ LXX: "Idumea." The kings of small nations frequently rebelled against the Mesopotamian over-lords, usually being in league with Egypt.

⁷⁶⁶ LXX: "the earth." The power has been given to Nebuchadnezzar and therefore resistance to him would be futile.

⁷⁶⁷ LXX: "δουλεῦειν αὐτῷ." LB: "who is my deputy."

⁷⁶⁸ Some scholars feel verse 7 is a later interpolation. This verse is missing in the LXX. This did not work out in history as clearly as Jeremiah states it. Nebuchadnezzar's son Evil Merodach reigned from 568 – 560 BCE. Merodach's sister's husband had him murdered and reigned in his stead.

⁷⁶⁹ I.e. prophets who were on the royal staff of the nations mentioned in verse 3.

2. Message to Zedekiah 27:12 – 15 [LXX: 34:12 – 15]

12 "I spoke the identical message to Zedekiah, king of Judah. Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and you will live. 13 (On the other hand, why should you and your people will to die in war, famine or disease, as the Lord has spoken concerning any nation which will not serve the king of Babylon. 14 Do not listen to the prophets ⁷⁷⁰ who are telling you, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon' for it is a lie which they are prophesying to you.) 15 I have not sent them, says the Lord, but they are prophesying falsely in my name, with the result that I will drive you out [of this land] and you will perish, --- you and the prophets who are prophesying to you." ⁷⁷¹

3. Message to the Priests and People 27:16 – 22 [LXX: 34:16 – 22]

16 ("Then I spoke to the priests and to all the people saying: "This is what the Lord declares: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you saying, 'Behold, the vessels of the Lord's house will be returned from Babylon any day now.' This is a lie which they are prophesying to us. ⁷⁷² 17 Do not listen to them! Serve the king of Babylon and you will live. Why should this land become desolate?) 18 If they are prophets, and if the word of the Lord is with them, let them intercede with the Lord of Hosts, that the vessels which have remained in the House of the Lord and in the royal palace of Judah ⁷⁷³ may be taken to Babylon. 19 The Lord of Hosts declares: The [pillars, the sea, ⁷⁷⁴ the stands and the remainder of the vessels] ⁷⁷⁵ which are left in the city, 20 which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take away, when he took Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakin, king of Judah from Jerusalem into exile along with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. 21 The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, declares concerning the vessels which were left in the House of the Lord or in the royal palace of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem: 22 they really will be carried to Babylon and they will remain there until the day when I direct my attention to them, ⁷⁷⁶ says the Lord. Then I will bring them back and restore them in their place." ⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁰ LXX: "false prophets."

⁷⁷¹ This verse is omitted in the LXX.

⁷⁷² LXX: "I spoke to you, to all the people, and to the priests, saying the Lord says, When the words of the prophets that prophesy to you say; 'The vessels of the Lord's house will return from Babylon' they are prophesying unrighteous words to you."

⁷⁷³ "The royal palace of Judah" is omitted in the LXX.

⁷⁷⁴ TAN: "tank."

⁷⁷⁵ The portion of the sentence within the [] is omitted in the LXX.

⁷⁷⁶ CB: "until the day I take cognizance of them."

⁷⁷⁷ Some scholars feel verses 21 - 22 are a later interpolation. Virtually the entirety of these verses is omitted in the LXX.

<CHAPTER 28>

4. Conflict with Hananiah 28:1 – 7 [LXX: 35:1 – 7]

¹ In the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month, Hananiah the son of Azzur, the [false] prophet who was from Gibeon spoke to me ⁷⁷⁸ in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the high priest and all the people, saying: ² “This is what the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel declares: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. ³ Within two years I will return all the vessels of the Lord’s house which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took from this place and carried to Babylon. ⁴ I will also bring back King Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah to this place, as well as all the exiles from Judah who will also return from Babylon, says the Lord, for I will definitely break the yoke of the king of Babylon.”

⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Hananiah the [false] prophet in the presence of the priests and all the people who were in the house of the Lord. ⁶ The prophet Jeremiah said, “Yes indeed (*or, Amen!*)! Would that the Lord would do so! ⁷⁷⁹ May the Lord make the words which you have prophesied come true and return the vessels of the house of the Lord from Babylon, along with the exiles! ⁷ But: listen to the word ⁷⁸⁰ which I will speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. ⁸ The prophets who preceded you and those since ancient times prophesied war, famine and disease among the countries and the great kingdoms. ⁷⁸¹ ⁹ As for the prophets who prophesy peace: when the predictions of that prophet come true, it will be revealed that the Lord has truly sent that prophet.” ⁷⁸² .

¹⁰ Then the prophet [false] Hananiah took the yoke-bars from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet and shattered them. ¹¹ Hananiah also spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, “This is the message of the Lord: Even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the necks of all the nations within two years.” Jeremiah the prophet left the crowd that had gathered.

¹² Some time later, after the [false] prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke-bars from off the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. ¹³ “Go tell Hananiah: This is the declaration of the Lord! You have broken wooden bars, but I

⁷⁷⁸ The Hebrew is unclear. This translation is based largely on the LXX. LXX: “In the fourth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the false prophet the son of Azzur, from Gibeon spoke to me in the house of the Lord, in the sight of the priests and all the people who were in the temple, saying:” The fourth year of Zedekiah’s reign would be December / January 594 – 593 BCE. The name Hananiah means “The Lord has been gracious.” Gibeon was located five miles north-west of Jerusalem and is presently called El-Jib.

⁷⁷⁹ Jeremiah’s tone surely was that of irony.

⁷⁸⁰ LXX: “word of the Lord.”

⁷⁸¹ LXX: “The prophets that preceded me and you who are aged, who prophesied about many countries and against great kingdoms concerning war.”

⁷⁸² NAB: “But the prophet who prophesies peace is recognized as truly sent by the Lord when his prophetic prediction is fulfilled.” Verses 8 & 9 are not to be interpreted as accusations that the messages of all prophets prior to Jeremiah were false and only spoke doom. LXX: “sent them in truth.”

will make bars of iron to replace them.⁷⁸³ 14 The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel declares: I have placed an iron yoke of subservience to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon on the neck of all the nations and these nations will serve him, for I have even granted that the wild beasts be subservient to him.⁷⁸⁴ 15 Jeremiah the prophet said to the [false] prophet Hananiah, “Listen, Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you, and you can even make these people trust in a lie!⁷⁸⁵ 16 Assuredly this I what the Lord declares! I will remove⁷⁸⁶ you from the face of the earth. You will die during this year because you have spoken rebelliously (or, heretically) concerning the Lord.”⁷⁸⁷

17 In that same year, in the seventh month the prophet Hananiah died.⁷⁸⁸

<CHAPTER 29>

C. Letters to the Exiles in Babylon 29:1 - 32 [LXX: 36:1 – 32]⁷⁸⁹

1. General Letter to the Exiles 29:1 – 23 [LXX: 36:1- 23]⁷⁹⁰

1 These are the words of the letter⁷⁹¹ which Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the elders⁷⁹² of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. 2 (This followed the surrender of King Jeconiah, when he, the queen-mother,⁷⁹³ the courtiers,⁷⁹⁴ and the craftsmen (or, artisans)⁷⁹⁵ were deported from Jerusalem.) 3 The letter was sent⁷⁹⁶ by the hand of Elasah, the son of Shaphan⁷⁹⁷ and Gemariah the son of Hilkiyah whom King Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon. 4 It states “The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:⁷⁹⁸ 5 Build houses and live in them: plant gardens and eat their produce.⁷⁹⁹ 6 Take wives and have children, take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear children, increasing the

⁷⁸³ Literally: “You will make bars of iron instead.” LXX: “Go and speak to Hananiah saying, Thus says the Lord: You have broken the wooden yokes but I will make iron yokes to replace them.” NAB: “by breaking a wooden yoke you forge an iron yoke.”

⁷⁸⁴ NIV: “I will even give him control over the wild animals.”

⁷⁸⁵ NIV: “You have raised false confidence these people.”

⁷⁸⁶ Literally: “send you away.”

⁷⁸⁷ JB: “since you have preached apostasy against Yahweh.”

⁷⁸⁸ LXX: “So he died in the seventh month.”

⁷⁸⁹ According to 52:28 3,023 people had been taken as captives to Babylon in 587/586 BCE.

⁷⁹⁰ A letter sent by envoys of King Zedekiah sent to Babylon to declare his loyalty to King Nebuchadnezzar.

⁷⁹¹ TAN: “the text of the letter.”

⁷⁹² MT: “the rest of the elders.” The Hebrew might mean: “the pre-eminent elders.”

⁷⁹³ Jeconiah’s official name was “Jehoiachin.” The queen-mother was “Nehushta.” Cf. II Kings 24:8 – 12.

⁷⁹⁴ Literally: “eunuchs.” This might imply the sending of the wives of the king since the harem was cared for by eunuchs. Several translators use the word “harem.”

⁷⁹⁵ Literally: “smiths.”

⁷⁹⁶ NIV: “He entrusted the letter to....”

⁷⁹⁷ Elasah was possibly the brother of Ahikam who had taken Jeremiah’s part when he was in the temple in chapter 26, verse 24. Some scholars feel he was the son of the High Priest.

⁷⁹⁸ Zedekiah possibly dispatched these men to Babylon for the payment of tribute. Jeremiah took advantage of their travels to send a letter with them --- not an unusual action.

⁷⁹⁹ Jeremiah’s message is very revolutionary!

population there, so that your numbers will not decrease. ⁷ Take part in the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for it is in the prosperity of these cities that you will prosper. ⁸⁰⁰ ⁸ The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel declares: Do not let your ⁸⁰¹ prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. ⁸⁰² ⁹ They prophesy lies to you in my name! I did not send them, says the Lord.

¹⁰ “I the Lord declare: When seventy years will have been completed in Babylon I will visit you, and I will fulfill my promise to you for I will bring you back to this place. ¹¹ I know what I have planned for you, says the Lord. My plans are for your welfare, not for evil (*or, for your woe*), that I might give you hope for the future. ⁸⁰³ ¹² Then you will call on me, coming to pray to me and I will hear you. ¹³ You will search for me and you will find me --- when you seek me wholeheartedly. ¹⁴ I will be found ⁸⁰⁴ by you, says the Lord, [and I will restore your future and gather you from all the nations, and all the places where I have exiled you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you.] ⁸⁰⁵

¹⁵ “Because you have said: ‘The Lord has raised up prophets for us in Babylon’ – ¹⁶ the Lord declares concerning the king who sits on the throne of David ⁸⁰⁶ and concerning all the people who reside in this city: As for your relatives who did not go into exile with you --- ¹⁷ Behold I am sending war, famine and disease on them, and I will make them like rotten figs ⁸⁰⁷ that are uneatable. ¹⁸ I will pursue them with war, famine and disease, and they will be looked upon by all the kingdoms of the earth as a horror, a curse, a terror, a hissing ⁸⁰⁸ and a reproach among all the nations where I have exiled them, ⁸⁰⁹ ¹⁹ because they have not heeded my words: the words which I persistently sent to you by my servants, the prophets, but you would not listen to them, says the Lord. ⁸¹⁰ ²⁰ Hear the word of the Lord, all you who I have deported from Jerusalem to Babylon. ²¹ The Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel declares this concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, ⁸¹¹ and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah who are prophesying a lie to you in my name. Be

⁸⁰⁰ Some scholars feel verses 8 – 9 should be placed after verse 15. JB: “since on its welfare yours depends.” MFT: “Do your best for the welfare of the country where I have sent you to be exiled. Pray to the Eternal for it, since your welfare lies in its welfare.”

⁸⁰¹ LXX inserts: “false.”

⁸⁰² The Hebrew is vague. Literally: “have your dreams which you cause to dream.” LXX: “*ἐνυπνιαζανται*.” This translation leans heavily on the LXX.

⁸⁰³ Some scholars feel verses 10 – 11 are of a secondary nature and possibly are a later gloss.

⁸⁰⁴ LXX: “I will appear to you.”

⁸⁰⁵ The passage in [] is omitted in the LXX.

⁸⁰⁶ The passage beginning with verse 16 to the end of the chapter is omitted in the LXX.

⁸⁰⁷ NASB: “split open figs that cannot be eaten due to rottenness.”

⁸⁰⁸ Cf.: footnote 18:16, no. 546

⁸⁰⁹ NEB: “an object of execration and horror, of derision and reproach.” NAB: “made them an object of Malediction, astonishment, ridicule and reproach.” MFT: “to turn them into a horror among the kingdoms of the world, to be execrated. Stared at and hissed and derided among all the nations wherever I deprot them.”

⁸¹⁰ Verses 15 – 19 are omitted in the LXX.

⁸¹¹ There is a word play with this name and the Hebrew word for “roasted” in v. 22. Scholars feel these verses indicate a Neo-Babylonian date (612 – 539 BCE) since the Persians considered fire to be sacred and thus would not ‘roast’ anyone.

assured, I will turn them over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he will execute them in your presence.⁸¹² 22 It is because of them that this curse will be used⁸¹³ by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: ‘The Lord make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon burned at the stake (*or, roasted*) in the fire,⁸¹⁴ 23 because they have committed foolishness⁸¹⁵ in Israel. They have committed adultery with their neighbor’s wives, spoken lying words in God’s name which I did not command them to do! I am the one who knows, and I am the witness, says the Lord!’

2. Letter concerning Shemaiah 29:24 – 32 [LXX: 36:24 – 32]

24 ”You will tell⁸¹⁶ Toshumuia of Nehelam: 25 [*In your letter to the priest Zephaniah*] which you have sent⁸¹⁷ in my name to all the people who reside in Jerusalem [*and read publicly*] by Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah and all the priests it said, 26 ’The Lord has appointed you to be the priest in the place of Jehoiada the priest so that you will have responsibility⁸¹⁸ in the house of the Lord over every madman who wants to pretend to be a prophet, to have him placed in the stocks and collar (*or, pillory*).⁸¹⁹ 27 Why have you not rebuked (*or, reprimanded*) Jeremiah of Anathoth who has been prophesying to you?⁸²⁰ 28 He has actually sent⁸²¹ a message to us in Babylon saying, ‘Your exile will be long; build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce.’”⁸²²

29 When Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing⁸²³ of Jeremiah the prophet 30 the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah. 31 “Send a message to the exiles saying, ‘This is the message of the Lord concerning Shemaiah of Nehelam because Shemaiah has prophesied to you when I did not send him, and has made you trust in false promises. 32 Therefore the Lord declares: Behold I will punish Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants! He will not have anyone living among his people to see the grave nor will his children live to see the grave I have prepared for these people, says the Lord, for he has proclaimed disloyalty toward (*or, rebellion against*) the Lord.”⁸²⁴

⁸¹² NEB: “He will be put to death before our eyes.”

⁸¹³ Literally: “taken.”

⁸¹⁴ LXX: “And they will make [*or, take*] of them a curse in all the captivity of Judah in Babylon, saying: ”The Lord do you as he did to Zedekiah, and as he did to Ahab when the king of Babylon fried them in the fire.” MFT: “to be roasted alive in the fire.”

⁸¹⁵ MFT: “behaving impiously.” NRSV: “perpetuated outrage.” JB: “perpetrate infamies.”

⁸¹⁶ The MT has: “you shall say, saying.” This is surely only a partial letter.

⁸¹⁷ The LXX includes Zephaniah. Grammatically it could say, as above, or “letter sent to Zephaniah.”

⁸¹⁸ Literally: “that there might be officials.”

⁸¹⁹ Hebrew unclear. JB: “iron collar.”

⁸²⁰ TAN: “why have you not rebuked Jeremiah the Anathothite who plays the prophet among you?”

⁸²¹ So: LXX.

⁸²² LXX: “Didn’t he send for their purpose? In this course of the months he sent to you to Babylon saying, It is far off. Build houses and reside in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit.” Verses 26 – 28 seem, in Hebrew, to be incomplete. Presumably only a portion of Jeremiah’s message to the false prophet Shemaiah appears in the text of chapter 29.

⁸²³ Literally: “in the ears of.”

⁸²⁴ LXX: ”Therefore the Lord says: behold I will visit Shemaiah and his family and there will not be a man of them in the midst of you to see the grave which I will do to you.”

<CHAPTER 30>

XXI The Book of Comfort 30:1 – 31:40 [LXX: 37:1 – 28:40] ⁸²⁵

A. Introduction 30:1 – 3 [LXX: 37:1 – 3]

¹ The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² “The Lord, the God of Israel says: Write all the words that I have spoken to you on a scroll (*or, book*). ³ Assuredly the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will restore the fortune ⁸²⁶ of my people Israel and Judah, and I will bring them back to the land which I gave to their ancestors, and they will possess it.”

B. Terror of the Day of the Lord 20:4 – 9 [LXX: 37:4 – 9] ⁸²⁷

⁴ These are the words of the Lord which were spoken concerning Israel and Judah: ⁵ {The Lord declares: We have heard a fearful scream of terror, ⁸²⁸ and there is no peace (*or, relief*). ⁶ Inquire, and see: A man is surely unable to become a child. Why is its that I see every man with his hands on his stomach, like a woman in labor?⁸²⁹ Why has everyone become deathly pale? ⁷ All is woe! ⁸³⁰ That day is awful. There is none like it! It is a time of disaster for Jacob! However! He will be delivered from it!} ⁸ It will truly take place in that day, says the Lord, that I will break the yoke ⁸³¹ off from your neck and I will burst the bonds and strangers will no longer be force you to be servants. ⁸³² ⁹ Instead they will serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. ⁸³³

C. The Salvation of Israel, the Lord’s Servant 30:10 – 11 [LXX: 37:10 – 11] ⁸³⁴

¹⁰ {“My servant, Judah, do not be fearful, says the Lord. Do not be dismayed, O Israel, for I will save you from that distant land. Your children from the land of their captivity, O Jacob, will return and live quiet lives and they will have no need to be fearful (*or, will be calm*). ¹¹ I am with you, says the Lord. I will destroy the nations into which you have been scattered and they will no longer exist but will be replaced as nations by others but as for you --- I will not annihilate you! I will discipline you for it would not be proper for you to go unpunished.”}

⁸²⁵ Some scholars feel that the oracles of chapters 30 – 31 were uttered as one message. Other scholars feel these oracles have been collected from various times in Jeremiah’s ministry and recorded here.

⁸²⁶ LXX: “captivity.”

⁸²⁷ Many scholars feel this was spoken at the time of the final siege for Jerusalem.

⁸²⁸ LXX: “sound of fear.”

⁸²⁹ This phrase is omitted in the LXX.

⁸³⁰ LXX: “εγγενηθη.”

⁸³¹ Cf.: Jeremiah 27:2, footnote 764.

⁸³² Literally: “make a servant of him.”

⁸³³ The reference is not that God will resurrect David but that God will provide a king from the line of David. Jeremiah places emphasis on a Davidic Messiah. LXX: “But I will raise up David their king.”

⁸³⁴ These verses are found with slight changes in 46:27 – 28. These verses are omitted in the LXX. Some scholars feel these verses are a later interpolation. Israel in this small passage means the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

D. Healing of Zion's Wounds 30:12 – 17 [LXX: 37:12 – 17]

¹² {The Lord says: Your injury is incurable ⁸³⁵ and your wounds are severe. ⁸³⁶ ¹³ There is no one to plead your cause and there is no medicine for your wound and your recovery. ⁸³⁷ ¹⁴ All your allies (*or, lovers*) have forgotten you; they are not concerned about you; for I have wounded them as an enemy would do, with a cruel punishment: a punishment that resembles that which would be carried out by a cruel enemy because of the greatness (*or, extent*) of your guilt

⁸³⁵ The language of this prophecy is similar to the language of Jeremiah's own suffering.

⁸³⁶ LXX: "I have brought destruction on you; your stroke is painful."

⁸³⁷ NAB: "There is none to plead your cause, no remedy for your running sore; not healing for you." NEB: "there can be no remedy for your ills."