
JEREMIAH 11: 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

The prophet proclaims the tenor of God's covenant with the Jews of old, Jer 11:1-5; and then reproves them for their hereditary disobedience, Jer 11:6-19. In consequence of this the Almighty is introduced, declaring he will show them no pity, Jer 11:11-13; forbidding Jeremiah to intercede, Jer 11:14; rejecting their sacrifices, Jer 11:15; and in a word, condemning this fair but unfruitful tree to the fire, Jer 11:16, Jer 11:17. In what remains of the chapter the prophet predicts evil to his neighbors of Anathoth, who had conspired against him, Jer 11:18-23. "Let us," said they, "destroy this tree, with the fruit thereof," etc., alluding to what Jeremiah had said in the sixteenth verse.

Verse 1

The word that came to Jeremiah - This discourse is supposed to have been delivered in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah. See Dahler.

JEREMIAH 11: 2 Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

Verse 2

Hear ye the words of this covenant - It is possible that the prophet caused the words of the covenant made with their fathers in the desert (Exo 24:4-8) to be read to them on this occasion; or, at least, the blessings and the cursings which Moses caused to be pronounced to the people as soon as they had set foot in Canaan, Deuteronomy 27, 28.

JEREMIAH 11: 3 and say to them, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed is the man who doesn't hear the words of this covenant,

Verse 3

Cursed be the man that obeyeth not - After the reading, the prophet appears to sum up the things contained in what was read to them; as if he had said, "Ye hear what the Lord saith unto you: remember, the sum of it is this: The man is cursed who obeyeth not; and he is blessed who obeys. From these declarations God will not depart."

JEREMIAH 11: 4 which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so you shall be my people, and I will be your God;

JEREMIAH 11: 5 that I may establish the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then answered I, and said, Amen, LORD.

Verse 5

So be it, O Lord - Let thy promises be fulfilled; and let the incorrigible beware of thy threatenings!

JEREMIAH 11: 6 The LORD said to me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear the words of this covenant, and do them.

Verse 6

Proclaim all these words - Let the same covenant, with the blessings and cursings, be read in every city of Judah, and in all the streets of Jerusalem, that all the people may know their duty, their privileges, and their danger.

JEREMIAH 11: 7 For I earnestly protested to your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

JEREMIAH 11: 8 Yet they didn't obey, nor turn their ear, but walked everyone in the stubbornness of their evil heart: therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they didn't do them.

JEREMIAH 11: 9 The LORD said to me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Verse 9

A conspiracy is found - They were all fratres conjurati, sworn brothers, determined to cast off the Divine yoke, and no longer to have God to reign over them.

JEREMIAH 11: 10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words; and they are gone after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

Verse 10

They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers - A great reformation had taken place under the reign of Josiah, and the public worship of idols had been abolished, and most of the high places destroyed; but under the reign of his son and his successors, they had turned back again to idolatry, and were become worse than ever. It required a captivity to cure them of this propensity: and God sent one: after that, there was no idolatry among the Jews.

JEREMIAH 11: 11 Therefore thus says the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape; and they shall cry to me, but I will not listen to them.

JEREMIAH 11: 12 Then shall the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem go and cry to the gods to which they offer incense: but they will not save them at all in the time of their trouble.

Verse 12

Go, and cry unto the gods - See Jer 2:28.

JEREMIAH 11: 13 For according to the number of your cities are your gods, Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have you set up altars to the shameful thing, even altars to burn incense to Baal.

JEREMIAH 11: 14 Therefore don't pray for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry to me because of their trouble.

Verse 14

Therefore pray not thou for this people - I am determined to give them up into the hands of their enemies; I will neither hear thy intercession, nor regard their prayers. Their measure is full.

JEREMIAH 11: 15 What has my beloved to do in my house, since she has worked lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from you? when you do evil, then you rejoice.

Verse 15

What hath my beloved to do in mine house - This has been supposed to refer to Abraham, Moses, or such eminent servants of God, whose intercession was very powerful. Were even they to appear as intercessors, their prayer should not be regarded. Others think that this is an endearing expression which properly belonged to the Israelites. When God took them into covenant with himself, they were espoused to him, and therefore his beloved; but now that they have forsaken him, and joined themselves to another, what have they to do with his house or its ordinances, which they wish now to frequent with vows and sacrifices, when they see the evil fast coming upon them? This is probably the sense of this very obscure passage. Dr. Blayney translates, "What hath my beloved to do in my house whilst she practiseth wickedness? Shall vows and holy flesh (sacrifices) be allowed to come from thee? When thou art malignant, shalt thou rejoice?"

JEREMIAH 11: 16 The LORD called your name, A green olive tree, beautiful with goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he has kindled fire on it, and its branches are broken.

Verse 16

The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree - That is, he made thee like a green olive - fair, flourishing, and fruitful; but thou art degenerated, and God hath given the Chaldeans permission to burn thee up.

JEREMIAH 11: 17 For the LORD of Armies, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you, because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have worked for themselves in provoking me to anger by offering incense to Baal.

JEREMIAH 11: 18 The LORD gave me knowledge of it, and I knew it: then you showed me their doings.

Verse 18

The Lord hath given me knowledge of it - The men of Anathoth had conspired against his life, because he reprov'd them for their sins, and denounced the judgments of God against them. Of this God had given him a secret warning, that he might be on his guard.

JEREMIAH 11: 19 But I was like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I didn't know that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

Verse 19

I was like a lamb or an ox - Dahler translates, "I was like a fattened lamb that is led to the slaughter." Blayney, "I was like a tame lamb that is led to slaughter." The word **אלופ** alluph, which we translate ox, is taken by both as an adjective, qualifying the noun **כבש** kebes, a lamb. It may probably signify a lamb brought up in the house-fed at home, (**אלופ** alluph), instructed or nourished at home; perfectly innocent and unsuspecting, while leading to the slaughter. This meaning the word will bear in Arabic, for **אל** signifies accustomed, familiar, (to or with any person or thing); a companion, a comrade, an intimate friend. I therefore think that **כבש אלופ** kechebes alluph signifies, like the familiar lamb - the lamb bred up in the house, in a state of friendship with the family. The people of Anathoth were Jeremiah's townsmen; he was born and bred among them; they were his familiar friends; and now they lay wait for his life! All the Versions understood **אלופ** alluph as an epithet of **כבש** kebes, a chosen, simple, innocent lamb.

Let us destroy the tree with the fruit - Let us slay the prophet, and his prophecies will come to an end. The Targum has, Let us put mortal poison in his food; and all the Versions understand it something in the same way.

JEREMIAH 11: 20 But, the LORD of Armies, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind, I shall see your vengeance on them; for to you have I revealed my cause.

Verse 20

Let me see thy vengeance on them - Rather, I shall see (ראה ereh) thy punishment indicted on them.

JEREMIAH 11: 21 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, saying, You shall not prophesy in the LORD's name, that you not die by our hand;

JEREMIAH 11: 22 therefore thus says the LORD of Armies, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine;

Verse 22

Behold, I will punish them - And the punishment is, Their young men shall die by the sword of the Chaldeans; and their sons and daughters shall die by the famine that shall come on the land through the desolations occasioned by the Chaldean army.

JEREMIAH 11: 23 and there shall be no remnant to them: for I will bring evil on the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.

Verse 23

The year of their visitation - This punishment shall come in that year in which I shall visit their iniquities upon them.