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Series III: The Temple Tifereth-Israel, 1946-1993, undated. Sub-series A: Events and Activities, 1946-1993, undated.

Reel Box Folder 43 13 658

Women's Association, Lecture Series 1974, notes for "Jeremiah", 1974.

28. THE YEAR 594: JEREMIAH AND THE EXILES IN BABYLON (xxix 1-15; 21-23; 16-20; 24-32; li 59-64b)

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles

XXIX ¹ This is the text of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem ato those who were left of the elders of the exiles, to the priests and the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had deported from Jerusalem to Babylon. ² (This was after King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the palace officials, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, together with the artisans and the [smiths (?)], had gone from Jerusalem.) ³ The letter was sent through the agency of Elasah ben Shaphan and Gemariah ben Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah, king of Judah, sent to Babylon on a mission to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. It said:

4 "This is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said to all the exiles whom I have deported from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens, and eat their produce. ⁶ Marry, and beget sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they too may have sons and daughters, in order that you may increase in number there, rather than decrease. ⁷ Seek the welfare of the country to which I have deported you, and pray on its behalf to Yahweh, for on its welfare your own depends. ⁸ Yes, this is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: Do not let those prophets of yours who are in your midst, or your diviners,

a-a LXX has merely "to the elders." Although some scholars (and so RSV) prefer this, MT seems to represent the more difficult, and preferable, reading. See Note.

^b So LXX. Hebrew has "the city." See Note.

deceive you. Pay no heed to 'the dreams that they are always dreaming.6 9 It's a lie that they are preaching to you in my name! I did not send them-Yahweh's word.

10 "For this is what Yahweh has said: Only when Babylon's seventy years have been completed will I intervene in your behalf, and fulfill my promise to you to bring you back to this place. 11 Surely I know the plans that I have for you-Yahweh's word-plans for your welfare, not for your hurt, to give you the future you hope for. 12 dWhen you call on me, and comed and pray to me, I will hear you. 13 When you search for me, you will find mc. Yes, when you seek me wholeheartedly, 14 °I will be found by you'-Yahwch's word. I will reverse your fortunes and will gather you out of all the nations and places to which I have driven you-Yahweh's word-and will restore you to the place from which I have deported you.

15 "Now, because you say, 'Yahweh has raised up prophets for us in Babylon,' - 21 this is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said regarding Ahab ben Kolaiah and Zedekiah ben Maaseiah, who are prophesying a lie to you in my name: Believe me, I am going to hand them over to Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, who will execute them before your very eyes. 22 And a curse word will be derived from them which will be used by all the exiles of Judah in Babylon: 'May Yahweh make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire!' - 23 because they have done a scandalous thing in Israel, committing adultery with their neighbors' wives, and speaking 'in my name a word' that I did not tell them to speak. But I both know this and am witness to it—Yahweh's word."

o-o This emendation, though conjectural, is adopted by many scholars; the context requires something of the sort. Hebrew is corrupt: "your dreams which you cause to be dreamed [?]"; the verb form mahlemīm is a mixture, and probably is an error for hēm holemim. LXX has "your dreams which you dream" (but cf. third person in vs. 9).

d-d LXX omits this; Syr. omits "and come." Possibly MT combines variants. o-c LXX reads, "I will manifest myself to you." LXX also omits the rest of the verse, which may well be an expansion.

1-1 Heb. "a word in my name, a lie. . . ." LXX omits "a lie," which is apparently a gloss.

The New Covenant

will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah: ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which covenant of mine they broke, though I was their Lord—Yahweh's word. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel when that time comes—Yahweh's word: I will put my law within them, and on their hearts will write it; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer need each man teach his neighbor, and each his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh!' For they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest—Yahweh's word; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

"I'll Never, No Never, No Never Forsake"

- Who provides the sun to illumine the day,

 The moon and the stars to illumine the night,

 Who lashes the sea so its billows resound—

 Yahweh of Hosts his name.
- 36 "If this fixed order should vanish
 From before me—Yahweh's word—
 Then Israel's descendants might cease
 From being a nation forever before me."
- This is what Yahweh has said:

 "If the heavens above can be measured,

 Or earth's foundations below be explored,

 Then might I cast off "the descendants of Israel"

 For all that they have done—Yahweh's word."

*Heb. "The ordinances [fixed order] of the moon and stars." But the word huqqōt overloads the meter, and is lacking in LXX. It may be a misplaced alternate reading for the synonymous word huqqīm in the next verse.

*- So with LXX; Heb. "all the descendants. . . ." LXX, incidentally, reads vs. 37 before vss. 35-36.

7. THE "TEMPLE SERMON" AND APPENDED SAYINGS (vii 1-34; viii 1-3)

The "Temple Sermon"

VII ¹The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh: 2"Stand in the gate of Yahweh's house and there proclaim this word. Say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah who enter by these gates to worship Yahweh! ³This is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said:

"'Reform the whole pattern of your conduct, "so that I may dwell with you" in this place. 4Do not put your trust in that lie: "This is Yahweh's temple, Yahweh's temple!" 5 No! Only if you really reform your whole pattern of conduct—if you really behave justly one toward another, 6 no longer oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow [nor shed innocent blood in this place], nor follow other gods to your own hurt— 7 only then bcan I dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers of old for all time to come.

8 "'Look! You are putting your trust in a worthless lie! 9 What? You think you can steal, murder, commit adultery, perjure yourselves, burn sacrifices to Baal, and follow other gods of whom you know nothing, 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my name, and say, "We are safe!"—just so you can go right on doing all these abominations? 11 A robber's hide-out—is that what this house, which bears my name, has become in your opinion? But look! I too can see—Yahweh's word. 12 Yes, go, if you will, to my place that used to be in Shiloh, where I first established my resi-

a-a The reading follows Aq., Vulg. and differs from MT only in vocalization. See Note on vs. 3.

b-b So Vulg.; see Note on vs. 3.

dence, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. ¹³ And now, because you have done all these things—Yahweh's word—and did not listen, though I spoke to you carnestly and persistently, nor answer when I called you, ¹⁴ I will treat the house which now bears my name, and in which you place your trust, the place which I provided for you and your fathers before you, just as I treated Shiloh. ¹⁵ And I will cast you out of my sight, just as I cast out all those kinsmen of yours, Ephraim's entire progeny.'"

The Cult of the Queen of Heaven

offer in their behalf any entreaty or prayer, or make intercession with me, for I will not listen to you. ¹⁷ Don't you see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?— ¹⁸ how the children gather wood, and their fathers kindle the fire, while the women knead dough to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven, and how they pour out libations to other gods in order to spite me. ¹⁹ Am I the one they are spiting?—Yahweh's word. Is it not rather themselves, to their own confusion?" ²⁰ Therefore, this is what Lord Yahweh has said: "See! My hot anger is about to be poured out on this place, on man and beast, on the trees of the field and the produce of the ground; and it will burn and never be quenched."

Yahweh Demands Obedience, Not Sacrifice

21 This is what Yahweh of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "Put your burnt offerings with your other sacrifices, and cat the meat! ²² For when I brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt, I said nothing to them, nor gave them any command, regarding burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³ But this one commandment I did give them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. Conduct yourselves in all things just as I command you, that it may go

JEREMIAH

\$ 14

Jeremiah's Inner Struggle

Ah me, my mother, that you bore me To accuse and indict the whole land! Neither lent I, nor loan received. bYet all of them curse me.b

But I swear, O Yahweh, for their good I have served thee.

And with thee for the foe interceded In the time of his trouble and woe. Ah, but thou knowest!°

12-14 4

15 Remember me, Yahweh! Take note of me! Avenge me of those that harass me! Do not through thy patience destroy mel Consider! For thy sake I suffer abuse.

16 There were thy words, and I ate them; "And it was my joy," my heart's delight, That I bore thy name, was thine. O Yahweh, thou God of Hosts. 17 Not for me to sit with the crowd,

Laughing and merry. Gripped by thy hand I did sit all alone, For with rage thou didst fill me.

Why, O why, is my pain without end, My wound ever worse, defying all cure? Ah, truly you are a dry wadi to me, Whose waters have failed.

b-b Add kī (lost by haplography) and redivide consonants to read kullehem qilclūnī (cf. BH).

The text of the verse is disturbed. See NOTE. d-d On the omission of these verses, see NOTE. xv 5-21 - xvi 1-21

At that, Yahweh and "If you repent, I'll re To serve me once If you mix not the As my mouth you Let them come ove Don't you go ove 20 Then before this pe An impregnable v Attack you they wil Overcome you th For with you am I To help you and From the grasp of the From the clutch

Jeremiah Is F with

XVI 1 The word of Yah not to marry and have so this is what Yahweh has born here in this land, a them and the fathers who deaths! Unlamented and manure to fertilize the s starvation, their corpses w the wild beasts."

⁵ Yahweh said further: is mourning. Take no par with them; for I have wi Yahweh's word--my graci and small will die in this one will gash himself or break bread with the be

1-1 Heb. "break for them on a for lähem, and point 'ābēl inst

e-e Heb. "And thy word [so Qre, manuscripts, Vrs.; Ktib plural] was. . . . " Omit "thy word(s)" as a dittography or mistaken gloss from the preceding colon (Duhm, Giesebrecht). LXX (cf. Note on vs. 16), dividing the clauses differently, reads, "Consume them, and let thy word be my joy," but this is scarcely preferable.

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