Jeremiah Chapter 11

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Chapter 11

Theme: God reminded Judah of covenant promises and rejected the Jews by its terms but saved Jeremiah.

Outline:

1-5 God Restated Moses Covenant and Benefits

6-10 God Restated Moses Covenant and Curses

11-14 Rejection of Judah for Its Many Idol Gods

15-17 Rejection of Judah for Her Lewd Betrayal

18-23 God Revealed and Revenged a Conspiracy

Preparatory Reading: Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; Deuteronomy 30; II Kings 22; II Kings 23.

Related Links:

1. *Introduction to the Book of Jeremiah … here.*
2. The Genius of the O.T. Law of Moses.
3. Exposition of Isaiah 44 *(verses 9-20).*
4. Spiritual or Religious Adultery, *here.*

Introduction:

1. God had made an incredible choice of Israel through Abraham and made a covenant with their fathers.
2. A covenant is a compact and contract agreed to by both parties with duties and/or benefits for each.
3. God made His covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai in the year 2513 (Anno Hominis; in the Era of Man).
4. Jeremiah began to preach in Josiah's 13th year, the year 3499 from creation (986 years after Sinai).
5. Thus, Israel through their fathers from Egypt and afterwards had 1000 years of dealings with Jehovah.
6. God had promised to protect Jeremiah from Judah's rebel truth haters, and the first conspiracy is here.
7. Though we are New Testament Christians, remember that you made a covenant with God in baptism.
8. Do you live your baptism, as Paul wrote in Romans 6 and Colossians 3? It is your reasonable service.

God Restated Moses Covenant and Benefits – Verses 1-5

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

A. Jeremiah, like all other pastors and preachers, has nothing of his own will to say to men.

B. The LORD Jehovah revealed Himself and His will by chosen preachers, Jeremiah here.

2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

A. The plural here need not mean more than an introduction of message to Judah (Jer 1:6).
   1. God's message came to Jeremiah (singular) in the opening verse of this chapter.
   2. And it is Jeremiah (singular) in the next verse that was to declare the covenant terms.
   3. If Zephaniah or priests were included in this verse, it is not clear (Zeph 1:1; Mal 2:7).

B. The covenant was that of Moses with Israel, for the following verses say so (Jer 11:4).

C. Though Deuteronomy was 1000 years past, Josiah restored it (II Kgs 22:8-20; 23:1-3).

D. Lesson: God does not forget commitments or vows we have made to Him (Eccl 5:1-7

3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant,

A. Jeremiah was to identify the source of the message as the Jehovah God of the Israelites.

B. The terms of the law of Moses included God's curse on any disobeying it (Deut 27:26).

C. The Israelites as soon as coming out of Egypt had promised to obey it (Exodus 24:3,7).

D. Lesson: The worship of God and His Son is not a take it or leave it matter (I Cor 16:22).

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

A. The engagement between Jehovah and Israel was glorious, as He offered them so much.
   1. He had delivered them from hard labor and degrading servitude, like an iron furnace.
   2. He also promised to be their personal God and they His personal people as blessings.
   3. What an incredible opportunity to be so close to God and have such perfect laws!

B. The Jewish fathers had agreed to the covenant, for it was obviously good in all respects.
   1. The terms of Moses' law included God's curse on any disobeying it (Deut 27:26).
   2. Israelites as soon as coming out of Egypt had promised to obey it (Exodus 24:3,7).
   3. What an incredible opportunity to be so close to God and have such perfect laws!

C. The simplicity of the covenant is repeated – *Obey my voice* – for blessings (Jer 11:7).

D. Lesson: We have promises if we separate from the world and sin (II Cor 6:14-18; 7:1).

E. Lesson: God's commands are not grievous but liberating (I Jn 5:3; Matthew 11:28-30)

5 That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O LORD.

A. Covenants are agreements between two parties – both parties agreeing to certain duties.
   1. The previous verse has Israel's duty – obey; this verse has God's promised blessings.
   2. God reminded them that He would do His part if they would do their part. Glorious!
   3. God had performed His part in giving them the prepared land of Canaan to enjoy.
   4. The words, as it is this day, was God's declaration that Israel had the promised land.

B. Jeremiah had been given his message, and he agreed to the truth of it with zeal – *Amen!*

C. Lesson: God did all that He has promised – His Son is the Faithful and True Witness.

D. Lesson: God's best life for you – the only way to live – is conditional on your obedience.

E. Lesson: It is assumed by Paul, fit, and useful for Christians to say, *Amen* (I Cor 14:16).

Section Lessons

A. Lesson: God does not forget commitments or vows we have made to Him (Eccl 5:1-7).

B. Lesson: The worship of God and His Son is not a take it or leave it matter (I Cor 16:22).

C. Lesson: We have promises if we separate from the world and sin (II Cor 6:14-18; 7:1).

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G. Lesson: It is assumed by Paul, fit, and useful for Christians to say, *Amen* (I Cor 14:16).

God Restated Moses Covenant and Curses – Verses 6-10

6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.

A. The repetition should not bother you of such an important matter, as Moses repeated it.

B. The difference in our section titles is that these verses end with judgment, not blessings.

C. Another difference between the first verses and these five were the accumulating sins.
   1. We know Manasseh is the reason for judgment – being the end of mercy (Jer 15:4).
   2. God promised to wipe Jerusalem like a dish because of Manasseh (II Kgs 21:11-13).
   3. Josiah's revival was nice; God honored him, but it was not enough (II Kings 23:26).

D. Manasseh killed many innocent people, so God could not pardon (II Kings 24:3-4).

E. We rejoice in Manasseh's repentance and restoration, but it did not solve Judah's guilt.

F. Lesson: Never resent repetition. It is how you learn anything, and God's truth is crucial.

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

A. Jeremiah preached to all the Jews that God had reminded them of duties for 1000 years.
   1. God's timeline here in this verse began with Egypt up to this very day with Jeremiah.
   2. God was not negligent or slothful; He rose early and went to work – reminding Israel.

B. What was His message? Very simple and just stated earlier – *Obey my voice!* (Jer 7:4).

C. **Protest** = to declare or state formally or solemnly. See scripture (I Kgs 2:42; Gen 3:3).

D. Lesson: We should gladly and intensely love and obey all He tells us for it is the best.

8 Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.

A. The plural they here is the Jewish fathers extending from the Exodus to the present day.
   1. The Jewish fathers did not obey God, so He killed all those over 20 in the wilderness.
   2. Stephen, preaching before being stoned, ripped the Egypt generation (Acts 7:35-43).
   3. We rejoice in Manasseh's repentance and restoration, but it destroyed any remedy.

B. Jeremiah blasted disobedience, rebellious ears, and following their hearts to do evil.

C. Lesson: Incline your ear for preaching by humbling, preparing, praying, and listening.

D. Lesson: Your heart is the most evil thing you will meet, so hate it rather than trust it.

9 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

A. The conspiracy is informal, not Illuminati or Rothschilds, so grasp the word correctly.

B. The whole nation in general all acted alike in this rejection of the terms of the covenant.

C. Others told of a more formal conspiracy of prophets and priests (Ezek 22:25; Hos 6:9).

D. The same is happening today with Christians and churches turning from truth to fables.
   1. We live in the perilous times of the last days of compromise (II Tim 3:1-17; 4:1-4).
   2. For much more about this terrible situation threatening Christians today … Perilous Times, Perilous Times.

E. Lesson: Let us be different, intentionally very different, from others in perilous times.

F. Lesson: Is there not a cause? God chose us for this generation and its great compromise.

10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went 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.

A. What an indictment of the human race and the most favored people of the O.T. world.
   1. These wretches ignored their glorious and great heritage from Abraham and Moses.
   2. They knew by their history in the Bible's historical books of God's judgment for sin.
   3. But in spite of what happened to their forefathers, they turned back to their rebellion.
   4. Like dogs eating their vomit or pigs returning to wallowing in mud, there go fools.

B. Going after other gods to serve them happened many times, but especially Manasseh.
   1. We know Manasseh is the reason for judgment – being the end of mercy (Jer 15:4).
   2. God promised to wipe Jerusalem like a dish because of Manasseh (II Kgs 21:11-13).
   3. Josiah's revival was nice; God honored him, but it was not enough (II Kings 23:26).
   4. Manasseh killed many innocent people, so God could not pardon (II Kings 24:3-4).

C. God is righteous. He made a covenant with Israel. They broke its terms. He must judge.
   1. Therefore, everything in this book and the matching history books is pure justice.
   2. Therefore, as the next verse will start with this word, God's wrath was fully justified.

D. Lesson: A change in environment or treatment will not make a child of God (Is 26:10).

E. Lesson: Let us hate the old man's default to be a dog or pig and never back from God.

F. Lesson: We are the most blessed of the N.T. world, so we owe God perfect obedience.

Section Lessons

A. Lesson: Never resent repetition. It is how you learn anything, and God's truth is crucial.

B. Lesson: We should gladly and intensely love and obey all He tells us for it is the best.

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Rejection of Judah for Its Many Idol Gods – Verses 11-14

11 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

A. God now concluded with the total ruin of Judah for violating His covenant with idols.

B. The coming evil, as is clear through the whole book, was the destroying Chaldean army.
   1. They would not be able to escape, though Zedekiah did try to escape (Jer 52:7-11).
   2. Though they would pray to God in trouble, He would not hear them (Prov 1:20-32).

C. Lesson: There is a point in time with God's dealings when it becomes too late to repent.

D. Lesson: When you offend God enough times, He will not hear your prayers for mercy.

12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble.

A. When Jehovah would not hear or help, the foolish Jews would pray to their idol gods.

B. Their false gods had never helped them, and they would certainly not help them now.
   1. Consider the lie. When good things happened by God's mercy, they thanked idols.
   2. But now with terrible war coming, it became very apparent no God would help them.
   3. Elijah led a fabulous and thrilling desecration of Baal worship (I Kings 18:21-40).

C. Lesson: If you get comfort, joy, pleasure, trust from anything, God will expose its folly.

13 For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal.

A. The true and living God, Jehovah of Moses, now mocked them for their many gods.
   1. Surely, with so many gods, they might be able to escape the Chaldeans, but alas, no!
   2. God called Baal a shameful thing – shamefully impotent and would shame them.

B. Baal = lord, supreme male deity of Phoenicians and Canaanites (Ashtoreth the female).
   1. We read of Baal 1000 years earlier with Moses and the Moabites (Numbers 22:41).
   2. Israel was known for Baal worship, with Ahab marrying Jezebel of Ethbaal of Sidon.
   3. The Babylonian god Bel or Belus was a related deity worshipped by the Chaldeans.
   4. Jeremiah has Baalim (plural), likely idols or emphasis e.g. Baalzebub, Baalpeor, etc.
   5. His name's nearness to lord or Lord had been rejected by Jehovah (Hosea 2:16).

C. Lesson: The depravity of man, revealed here very terribly, is as close as your own heart.

D. Lesson: We must continue to be careful with God's names – Jehovah, not Yahweh, etc.

14 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

A. The longsuffering and mercy of God does not last forever. Prayer will not always work.
   1. Jeremiah has declared his word of Jehovah before and will again (Jer 7:16: 14:11).
   2. Chronicles ends with this terrible judgment and no remedy for it (II Chr 36:14-21).
   3. This was not new; it had been shown and taught before (Num 14:26-37; Prov 29:1).
   4. David had written clearly of God swearing against rebellious sinners (Ps 95:7-11).
   5. God heard Moses' appeal to His words, but God got Himself glory (Num 14:17-24).
   6. God's finality here matches His rejection of Moses and Samuel for them (Jer 15:1).
   7. God's finality here matches His rejection of Noah, Daniel, and Job (Ezekiel 14:14).
   8. Note the repetition – do not pray; do not cry for them; make no intercession to God.

B. This end or limit to God's longsuffering is true in both testaments. Let Gentiles tremble.
   1. Jesus gave the false prophetess at Thyatira only a space of time to repent (Rev 2:21).
   2. Paul took David's words and applied them to Jews (Ps 95:7-11; Heb 3:1-19; 4:1-11).
   3. When God swears, there is no remedy (Hebrews 2:1-4; 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 12:25-29).
   4. Apostasy from Jesus Christ is not to be prayed for according to John (I Jn 5:16-17).
   5. Proverbs is for all men – you must love death, if you neglect her (Pr 1:20-32; 8:36).

C. We may balance this request from God a little with several considerations to help us.
   1. Extreme words of God like this encouraged great men to pray (Ex 32:10; Is 38:1).
   2. Such words from God through Jeremiah should have terrified the people to good.
   3. He opened and closed this section saying He would not hear them; this confirms it.
   4. Jeremiah knew there would be a remnant; God intended no prayer for the rebel ones.

D. Lesson: Do not play with God; do not be lukewarm; He will not hear begging for mercy.

E. Lesson: We have the answers for the difficult verses of Hebrews and I John … Hebrews Threatening Verses, First John Chapter 5 (#1) … Verses 1-5.

Section Lessons

A. Lesson: There is a point in time with God's dealings when it becomes too late to repent.

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Rejection of Judah for Her Lewd Betrayal – Verses 15-17

15 What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.

A. This section is distinct from the previous that ended by God telling Jeremiah not to pray.

B. God called Judah (Israel) His beloved, since that is what they were by choice and favor.
   1. We have already seen a marital relationship of God and Judah (Jeremiah 2:2; 3:8,14).
   2. We will again see this tender relationship God had with those of Judah (Jer 12:7).

C. But He mocked them for worshipping Him in His temple due to their spiritual adultery.
   1. Spiritual adultery is primarily when a worshipper of God chooses to adore an idol.
   2. This wife of Jehovah had committed whoredom with many … a very whorish wife.
   3. **Lewd** = Lascivious, unchaste. Note context and scripture (Jer 13:27; Ezek 23:21,44).
   4. But this strumpet (commentators) would skip into the temple for love with Jehovah!
   5. What does God think of such worship? It is an abomination (Prov 15:8; 21:27; 28:9).
   6. He had rebuked trust in temple, sacrifices, scripture, ordinances (Jer 7:8-11,17-23).

D. They continued to attend God's house though idolaters elsewhere with Baal (Jer 11:17).
   1. The third clause in this verse … *the holy flesh is passed from thee* … is quite obscure.
   2. The verse shifts from third person to second by *thee, thou, thou* … thus, thee = her.
   3. We understand peace offerings here, for the holy flesh is in her power (Haggai 2:12).
   4. The holy flesh is only holy by duty to His holy precept and offered in His holy house.
   5. The Jews were active in the clause, for the final clause is active joy while doing evil.
   6. They passed holy flesh of peace offerings to friends or even idols in joyful hypocrisy.
   7. How could these whores come into His temple with joy to feast on peace offerings?
   8. We take this view of the verse by the full context of joy in doing evil, peace offerings.
   9. We cannot see it future with the temple gone nor passive as unholy due to her doing.

E. Lesson: Our jealous and possessive God demands our full love or counts us adulterers.

F. Lesson: We are the bride of Christ, and we must be chaste and pure and devoted to Him.

G. Lesson: We should not enjoy or use the religion of Jesus while engaging in any sins.

16 The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

A. Jeremiah blasted the Jews this time not as adulterers but rather as His former olive tree.
   1. When God brought Israel to Canaan, He set her up as a green olive tree, fair, fruitful.

2. Compare God's condemnation of Jews as a vineyard yielding wild grapes (Is 5:1-7).

B. But the raging sound of a foreign, destroying army would burn the tree to the ground.

C. Lesson: When God does not get a return for His investment, He can take more than all.

17 For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

A. Israel was but a few shepherd nomads until God made them something great in Canaan.

B. But now, the same God would destroy them by Babylon for their blasphemous idolatry.

C. They provoked God to anger by their sins, but it was actually done against themselves.

D. Lesson: Your sins provoke God, but they hurt you most; you must love death (Pr 8:36).

Section Lessons

A. Lesson: Our jealous and possessive God demands our full love or counts us adulterers.

B. Lesson: We are the bride of Christ, and we must be chaste and pure and devoted to Him.

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God Revealed and Revenged a Conspiracy – Verses 18-23

18 And the LORD hath given me knowledge of it, and I know it: then thou shewedst me their doings.

A. What a change of content! It is large. God told Jeremiah about a conspiracy to kill him.
   1. What a unique way to introduce a conspiracy to murder a prophet. Love God's word.
   2. All we have here are two rather vague pronouns and a vague gerund – *it, it, doings.*
   3. We use the past tense for the section title; it is past tense, for His revenge was sure.

B. We love God's revelation, without which we would know nothing of value. Hallelujah!
   1. All things are naked and opened to His eyes that see and know all (Heb 4:12-14).
   2. Here the revelation is several men from Jeremiah's hometown committed to kill him.

C. Lesson: God deals personally with men like here, but especially His faithful preachers.

D. Lesson: We despise rationalization and all other efforts to learn, for truth is from God.

19 But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I

knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy ***the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.***

A. Before God revealed the conspiracy, Jeremiah was ignorant as an animal for slaughter.
    1. Remember his ordination, when Jehovah had promised to protect him (Jer 1:18-19).
    2. Remember other examples, for it is not wise to touch His anointed (Psalm 105:15).
    3. It is better to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God than to avenge yourself.
B. This devising of devices against Jeremiah was a conspiracy to kill him, to murder him.
    1. Their hatred for him preaching truth is incredible to consider, but Jews killed Jesus.
    2. The tree is Jeremiah; the fruit his words; they wanted to destroy the speaker as well.
    3. They wanted to wipe out remembrance of him, like similar beasts did to the martyrs.
C. Lesson: Without God's revelation of truth and wisdom, we could/would know nothing.
D. Lesson: We do not have to worry about the unknown, if we trust God to take care of us.
E. Lesson: We are happy Baptists, the hated sect of Christians from John, Jesus, apostles.

20 But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause.

A. Jeremiah's prayer was precious, and its content showed his holy character and wisdom.
    1. He first appealed to the LORD of Sabaoth, God and King of heaven's angelic armies.
    2. He then appealed to His righteousness – rewarding the righteous; punishing sinners.
    3. He then appealed to His omniscient knowledge of all hearts for either good or evil.
    4. After the God-glorifying statements, He asked to see God vengefully destroy them.
    5. For he had given the matter to God Himself, without seeking any revenge himself.
B. **Reins** = when plural, always and only kidneys or the internal place of feelings or affections; **rein** = when singular, it is a leather strap attached to bridle or bit for a horse.
C. Jesus had done similarly, according to Peter, when facing death on the cross (I Pet 2:23).
D. David, after God's heart, also prayed to see vengeance (Ps 37:34; 54:7; 112:8; 118:7).
E. Lesson: It is not wrong to pray for vengeance on enemies if submitted to God's holiness.
F. Lesson: The martyrs under God's altar cry loudly for His holy vengeance (Rev 6:9-11).

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD of the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Prophesy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand:

A. Other than the first verse of introduction (Jer 1:1), here is the first mention of Anathoth.

B. The small town of Anathoth near Jerusalem was a place of priests and Jeremiah's home.
C. God confirmed the men wanted to kill him for preaching what Jehovah had commanded.
D. Lesson: What should pastors do if threatened with death for preaching? Preach right on.
E. Lesson: God's omniscience of things on earth should comfort you to trust Him always.

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine:

A. Here is the judgment of the living God against those that resist or threaten His ministers.
    1. Jeremiah's God responded as the LORD of Sabaoth, just as Jeremiah had prayed.
    2. He promised to punish the wicked priests by killing them with the Chaldean army.
    3. He would also kill their children by starvation, a painful judgment on such fathers.
    4. This ferocious judgment should remind you of Korah and company, 42 children, etc.
B. God heard Jeremiah's imprecatory prayer against His enemies and answered it well.
C. Lesson: You will never match God's vengeance, so let Him revenge and repay wrongs.

23 And there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.

A. While God would keep a remnant of Judah, He would not reserve any of these families.
    1. Instead of Jeremiah not being remembered, the wicked priests would be forgotten.
    2. God would visit the vile priests with the Chaldean army to kill and siege for famine.
B. God does create evil, when evil is understood as pain and trouble (Is 45:7; Amos 3:6).
C. Lesson: God has kept a small remnant of believers in time, make sure you are part of it.
D. Lesson: God can and does visit for good or for evil. Which will it be for you and yours?

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