



SEFER YIRMIYAHU

2019-2020 Shiur
Rabbi Reuven Travis

CHAPTER TWO

➤ Remember that the first three verses properly belong to Chapter 1

- Verse 2:1 – same language the delineates the other parshiyot in Chapter 1
וַיְהִי דְבַר יְ-וָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:
- Further proof found from Hatorah of Parashat Masei, which begins with verse 4!
- While we often see Jeremiah's prophecy focused on doom and destruction, in the opening words of this chapter, the prophet now presents himself not as the messenger of God's stern judgment but as the herald of God's eternal love for Israel, a love that endures despite Israel's temporary estrangement from Him. (Hirsch) This, too, makes these verses align more closely with the first chapter.
- It is therefore fitting that these words appear in our tefillot on Rosh Hashana. (Leibtag)

➤ Verses 4 – 8

- Opening of these words of rebuke appeal both to Beit Yaakov and Beit Yisrael! An echo of Har Sinai when Hashem tells Moshe (Shmot 19:3):
כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל:
- This reference to both Beit Yaakov and Beit Yisrael reinforces how the people have broken with the Torah and the commitment they made at Har Sinai.
- Rabbi Leibtag suggests that this may be an earlier prophecy, dating to the days of Yoshiyahu and may have actually been the words of rebuke that prompted him to tear down the idols of the people and to return them back to the ways of Hashem.
- "What wrong has God done to you" (v. 5) – The prophet asks Israel in bitter, reproachful words The prophet sees this alienation above all in the fact the God and His requirements are no longer the central influence in their lives. (Hirsch) [Compare to verse 2 – I remember for you the affection of your youth, the loving devotion of your nuptials, when you followed Me into the wilderness, into a land that was not sown.]
- "Where is God?" (v. 6) – And yet the prophet sees that the question, where is God?, which should accompany and dominate every phase of human life is no long asked.

➤ Verse 9 – "I will accuse your children's children!"

➤ **Verse 11 – “Has any nation changed its gods!”**

- Compare to Devarim 4:7-8
For what great nation is there that has a god so close at hand as is the LORD our God whenever we call upon Him? Or what great nation has laws and rules as perfect as all this Teaching that I set before you this day?
- Compare to Devarim 4:33-34
Has any people heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have, and survived? Or has any god ventured to go and take for himself one nation from the midst of another by prodigious acts, by signs and portents, by war, by a mighty and an outstretched arm and awesome power, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

➤ **Verse 13 “For My people have done a twofold wrong.”**

- Why the metaphor of “living waters” and the comparison to “broken cisterns”?
- They possess the pure source of eternal, living waters which never runs dry but flows for them in ever-fresh, unending abundance. But they have walked away from this fountain and have dug a multitude of cisterns, claiming that these are wells which they have dug by themselves and which will produce a far greater supply of water than the original source. (Hirsch)
- Is this not emblematic of idol worshippers? They craft gods in their own image and think that superior to the belief that man is in fact created in the image of God.

➤ **Verses 27-28**

- The worship of nature and power are the basic causes of moral decay. But the impending disaster will accomplish what even the most forceful words failed to bring home to the people – it will demonstrate the utter impotence of the forces to which Israel looked for salvation. Someday, gazing upon the ruins of its past glory, Israel will understand at last the impressive words with which the prophet described the lamentable state of his generation: The number of your cities have become your gods, Judah.” (Hirsch)

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