



SEFER YIRMIYAHU

2019-2020 Shiur
Rabbi Reuven Travis

CHAPTER FIVE

➤ Overall theme of Chapter 5

- This chapter takes place during the reign of Yoshiyahu (as did the previous four chapters and as will be the case with Chapter 6). The people think they have turned over a new leaf. They think they have done (or are doing) proper teshuva. Jeremiah again reminds them that they are fooling themselves, and in this chapter he spells out what sins they continue to commit.

➤ Specific verses that reinforce this theme

- Verse 3 reinforces this point. The people think they are repenting, but they are not doing so fully or sincerely. Worse still, they do not and cannot see events for what they really are – warnings from Hashem of their impending destruction.

י-וְהָ עֵינֵיהֶם הִלּוּא לְאַמוּנָהּ הַכִּיּוֹתָה אֲתֵם וְלֹא־חָלוּ כְּלִיָּתֵם מֵאַנּוּ קָחַת מוֹסֵר חֲזָקוֹ פְּנִיָּהֶם מִסְּלַע מֵאַנּוּ לְשׁוּב:

- Verse 6 is even more explicit in its warnings. Is it possible that Jeremiah couches the impending destruction in terms of “natural occurrences” so as to test the people or give them room to err?

עַל־כֵּן הִפֵּם אֲרִיֵּה מִזֶּעַר וְאָב עֲרָבוֹת יִשְׁדָּדֵם נִמְר שִׁקֵּל עַל־עֲרִיָּהֶם כְּלִי־הַיּוֹצֵא מִהַגָּזָה יִטְרַף כִּי רַבּוּ פִשְׁעֵיהֶם עֲצָמוּ מִשְׁבוֹתֵיהֶם [מְשׁוּבוֹתֵיהֶם]:

- Compare verses 4 and 5. Verse 4 suggests that the masses may just be simple, too simple to understand the warnings and the impending destruction. However, verse 5 makes clear that the educated and the elite class “got it,” but chose instead to reject the message of the Navi.

(ד) וְאֲנִי אֹמְרֵתִי אֶל־דָּלִים הֵם נוֹאָלוּ כִּי לֹא יָדְעוּ דְרָהּ? וְהָ מִשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהֵיהֶם: (ה) אֶלְכָה־לִּי אֶל־הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֶדְבַּרְהֶם אוֹתָם כִּי הִמָּה יָדְעוּ דְרָהּ? וְהָ מִשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֶל הַמָּה יַחֲדוּ וְשָׁבְרוּ עַל גִּתְקוֹ מוֹסְרוֹת:

➤ Structure of Chapter 5

- Rabbi Leibtag sees five “parshiyot” in the perek, beginning with verses 1, 10, 14, 20, and 30.
- These are group not be linguistic hints but by message/theme.

➤ **Verses 11 – 12: Rav Hirsch**

- Here, in a few words, is a brief history of Israel’s defection from God. The truths recorded in these passages remain valid for all time. All that is said here primarily with regard to the house of Judah can be applied in its entirety also to the history of the defection of the house of Israel. Defection from God does not always begin with a denial of God in theory and end logically with a rejection of God’s moral law in practice. In this instance, too, as is mostly the case, the first step is “faithlessness.” First, unbridled lust causes man to sink to the level of a “well-fed horse” (verse 8); only thereafter does a so-called philosophical *Weltanschauung* [a particular philosophy or view of life] provide him with a threadbare but nonetheless welcome theoretical justification for his behavior. This justification is obtained by obliterating from one’s mind the One Who, as Creator of the moral law, has by now become an irksome disturbance in a life that seeks only the gratification of selfish desires. Once one has reached the daring, “brilliant” conclusion that “God is not” (verse 12), the mind is no longer troubled by thoughts of accountability and punishment and permits one to abandon oneself completely to uninhibited sensuality.

➤ **Not total destruction, but necessary nonetheless**

- In verse 18, we see a message Jeremiah gives over to the people time and time again. Destruction is imminent if you do not sincerely change your ways, but it will not be total.

וְגַם בַּיָּמִים הַהֵמָּה נֹאֲמֵי יְהוָה לֹא־אֲעֲשֶׂה אִתְּכֶם כְּלָה:

- Yet, Hashem asks rhetorically (verses 9 and 29), “Shall I not punish?”

➤ **Verses 21: obvious and intentional reference to Tehillim 135**

| Jeremiah 5:21 | Tehillim 135:15 - 18 |
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| שָׁמְעוּנָא זֹאת עַם סְכֵל וְאֵין לֵב עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ אֲזַנַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ: | עֲצָבֵי הַגּוֹיִם כְּסוֹף וְזָהָב מְעֻשָׂה יְדֵי אָדָם: פֶּה־לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ: אֲזַנַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אֵיךְ אֵין־יִשְׁרֹיחַ בְּפִיהֶם: כְּמוֹתָם יִהְיוּ עֲשִׂיהֶם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בָּטַח בָּהֶם: |

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