



# SEFER YIRMIYAHU

2019-2020 Shiur  
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## CHAPTER TEN

### ➤ Chapter 10 – Jeremiah again echoes Sefer Devarim

- This chapter clearly marks a new unit, as indicated by the opening words of verse. So we should expect a new warning.

שִׁמְעוּ אֶת־הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִשְׂרָאֵל:

- In verse 2, the prophet warns the people about following the ways of other nations, a verse says Rabbi Leibtag that harkens back to Devarim, Chapter 18.

Jeremiah, 10:2 – 3	Devarim 18:9 – 15
<p>Thus said the LORD: Do not learn to go the way of the nations, And do not be dismayed by portents in the sky; Let the nations be dismayed by them! For the laws of the nations are delusions: For it is the work of a craftsman's hands.</p>	<p>When you enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. Let no one be found among you who consigns his son or daughter to the fire, or who is an augur, a soothsayer, a diviner, a sorcerer, one who casts spells, or one who consults ghosts or familiar spirits, or one who inquires of the dead. For anyone who does such things is abhorrent to the LORD, and it is because of these abhorrent things that the LORD your God is dispossessing them before you. You must be wholehearted with the LORD your God. Those nations that you are about to dispossess do indeed resort to soothsayers and augurs; to you, however, the LORD your God has not assigned the like. The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet from among your own people, like myself; him you shall heed.</p>

- The crux of the warning is this. On a national level, much more so than on an individual level, our collective deeds matter. When we turn from Hashem, when we show a lack of trust by turning to diviners and soothsayers, when we do not represent Him well, His punishment can be swift and fierce.
- Moshe in Devarim 18 is further warning the people to turn to the prophet in difficult times, for it is the true prophet who brings the word of Hashem to the people. Here, Rabbi Leibtag maintains, we have yet another example of Jeremiah applying the principles that Moshe sets forth in Devarim.

- How could the people lose sight of Hashem and turn to alien cultures and practices? Rav Hirsch offers this observation: “The answer lies in an ancient truth set down in the opening pages of the Torah. The name ELOKIM alone is not sufficient to guard us permanently against becoming estranged from God, even from idolatry. We must perceive God not only as ELOKIM but also as HASHEM. God Who created the world and still molds and commands the abundance of natural forces emanating from Him must live in our consciousness, too, as the same shaping and commanding Master, developing every aspect of His creation, great and small, according to the educational needs of His mankind.”

➤ **Verses 3 – 9: Note the mocking language of the prophet**

- Verse 3 – “For the laws of the nations are delusions.”
- Verse 5 – “They are like a scarecrow in a cucumber patch; they cannot speak. They have to be carried, for they cannot walk.
- Verse 8 – “But they are both dull and foolish; [Their] doctrine is but delusion; It is a piece of wood.”

➤ **Verse 11: Switch from Hebrew to Aramaic**

- Why? Rabbi Leibtag suggests that it may be a sort of letter from Jeremiah to the people, giving them the language spoken in the place to which they will be exiled so that the Jews may rebuff the urgings of their hosts to worship their idols and their gods.
- Rav Hirsh has a different approach. He argues that Jeremiah “already visualized his people carrying out its mission among nations that speak a foreign language.” And what is this message? “To tell the world that the time will come when all these deities, which never created heaven and earth, will vanish.”
- Interesting, the verse ends with a Hebrew word, which Rav Hirsch believes was “to define precisely the succinctly the relationship between the fictitious gods and the true God.”
- Regardless of which view one prefers, the play on words is obvious. The gods who did NOT make the heavens and the Earth will vanish from the face of heaven and Earth.

כְּדָנָה תֵּאֲמָרוּן לְהוֹם אֱלֹהֵיָא דִּי־שָׁמַיָא וְאַרְכָּא לֹא עֲבָדוּ וְאַבְדוּ מֵאַרְעָא וּמִן־תַּחֲוֹת שָׁמַיָא אֲלֵהּ:

➤ **Verses 16 – 19: Stern yet pained**

- The verses still announce the upcoming doom. The people are told in verse 17 to pack up their belongings in the face of the impending exile. In verse 18, Hashem tells them that they will be flung from the land like a rock thrown from a slingshot. And yet, Hashem is pained by all this, as He proclaims in verse 19.

אֲוִי לִי עַל־שִׁבְרֵי נַחֲלָה מִכְּתִי וְאֲנִי אֲמַרְתִּי אֶדָּה יָהּ חֲלִי וְאַשְׁאֲנֵנוּ:

