

Jeremiah Chapter 27

Verses 1-5

Envoys from Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon came to Jerusalem in 593 B.C to confer with King Zedekiah and his officials about a military coalition against Babylon.

Jeremiah wore a “yoke” around his neck symbolizing the need for submission to Babylon because the LORD had decreed Babylon’s sovereignty over the nations (25:9; 27:12).

Zedekiah went to Babylon in this same year (51:59), perhaps to report on his activities and the reasons for this conference.

Jeremiah 27:1 "In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,"

“Reign of Jehoiakim”:

This refer to Jehoiakim (around 609/608 B.C.; as chapter 26).

Or possibly, the correct reading is “Zedekiah” (as in verses 3, 12 and 28:1), which would put the date at the outset (of his 597-586 B.C. reign).

This was probably in the first year or two of the reign of Jehoiakim.

Jeremiah 27:2 "Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck,"

“Make ... bonds and yokes”:

This object lesson symbolized bondage to Babylon.

The yoke was bound on Jeremiah’s neck to picture Judah’s captivity (verse 12), then sent to 5 kings of nearby nations who would also be under Babylon’s power (verse 3; compare Jeremiah 28:10-12).

Many times, the LORD would have the prophet do something in the physical that would show the condition of the people in the land.

The yoke that was put on Jeremiah's neck, was to signify the people being under the yoke to Babylon.

When Jeremiah had this yoke upon his neck it showed them exactly their own condition.

Jeremiah 27:3 "And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah;"

The princes that are named had, as the context shows, sent their ambassadors to Zedekiah, proposing an alliance against Nebuchadnezzar.

They are named in the same order as in the prophecy of (Jer. 25:21-22), which had been delivered fifteen years before.

The prophecy then delivered had been in part fulfilled, but these princes were still struggling against it.

Encouraged apparently, by the difficulties which in Media and elsewhere seemed to delay the complete triumph of the Chaldean king.

And the prophet is commissioned to tell all of them alike that their efforts are in vain, and that the supremacy of Babylon was, for the time, part of God's order, for the chastisement of the nations.

In Jeremiah 49, we have a fuller, and probably later, development of the same strain of prediction.

It appears from this that Jeremiah made a yoke for each leader to demonstrate their being in bonds to Babylon.

All of the countries listed here were under bondage to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

Zedekiah was made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.

Zedekiah's name had been Mattaniah.

He was very evil.

Jeremiah 27:4 And command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters;

The prophet is sent with authority, and ordered to speak in a very high strain, having his orders from the King of kings and Lord of lords.

A greater master than those messengers had.

And to enjoin them to tell their several masters in his master's name; as follows.

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel":

Who, though in a peculiar manner the God of Israel, yet was LORD of the whole world.

And had all the armies of heaven and earth at his command, to enforce his power and authority.

Wherefore what he says ought to be attended to.

"Thus shall ye say unto your masters":

Deliver to them the following words of the great Jehovah.

The yokes had been carried from Jeremiah to the kings by messengers.

They are not only to take them a yoke, but to carry a message to them as well.

The message is spoken to the messengers by Jeremiah, but actually it was the Word of the LORD of hosts.

Jeremiah 27:5 "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that [are] upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me."

The earth was made by him on the first day, and man and beast on the sixth day, of the creation.

The earth is still supported in its being, and man and beast are continued on it in succession.

This is mentioned to show his right and authority to dispose of the earth, and all in it, at his pleasure.

Which is founded on his creation and sustaining of it, and all creatures in it.

Which was, and is, as he says.

"By my great power and by my outstretched arm":

For nothing less could have created the original chaos out of nothing, and brought that into form and order, and produced out of it such creatures as man and beast.

And nothing less than that could continue it in being, and a succession of creatures on it.

"And have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me":

Some part of it to one, and some to another; and more to one than to another.

But to none according to their merit, but according to His own sovereign will and pleasure (see Psalm 115:16).

God is explaining that since He is Creator of all the earth and all that is in it, He can give any part of it to whomever He desires.

The creation must obey its Creator.

God not only created the earth, but mankind as well.

He can do with His creation as He wishes.

Jeremiah 27:6 "And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him."

Before mentioned; of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Zidon, and Judea.

"Into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant":

Whom God used as an instrument in correcting and chastising the nations.

And who obeyed his will, though he knew it not.

Nor did what he did in obedience to it.

And yet had the honor of being called "His servant", and of being rewarded with a very large empire.

Which was owing, not so much to his prowess and valor, wisdom and management, as to the providence of God.

Who delivered the above kingdoms, with others, into his hands, as being the sole proprietor and sovereign disposer of them.

"And the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him":

Either to bring him, and his armies, and his carriages of provisions for them, and warlike stores, for the invasion and taking the above countries.

Or the cattle found there, which belonged to these countries, and the inhabitants thereof, which would fall into his hands with them.

The lands wherein they dwelled had been given to Nebuchadnezzar by God.

He has even been given the beasts of the field as well.

At this point, Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as the "servant of God" because he is carrying out the wishes of God.

Jeremiah 27:7 "And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him."

That is, all these nations.

And some think that it is expressed in the article used here demonstratively, though not so taken notice of by our translators.

"And his son, and his son's son":

And Evil-merodach his son, who succeeded him (Jer. 52:31).

And Belshazzar his grandchild (Dan. 4:1, 11).

Until the period of his kingdom shall come, (for nations have their periods).

Which was after seventy years, according to (Jer. 29:10), during which years some say four princes ruled in Babylon, the Scripture mentions but three.

After that he shall himself be conquered, as it came to pass in Belshazzar's time (Dan. 5:30).

Darius the emperor of the Medes taking his kingdom.

(Compare 25:13-14).

The time mentioned in another lesson was 70 years of service to Babylon.

We see here, the captivity lengthened to the third generation.

At the end of this time, Babylon will be overthrown.

It eventually will be destroyed never to be built again.

Cyrus is the attacker of Babylon, but "then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him."

Jeremiah 27:8 "And it shall come to pass, [that] the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand."

"Yoke ... of Babylon":

The point of the object lesson is simple.

Any nation that will serve Babylon willingly may stay in their own land, but nations that will not submit voluntarily to Babylon will suffer destruction.

Consequently, Judah should submit and not be removed from the land (verses 9-18).

This captivity of God's people to Nebuchadnezzar is a punishment from God.

They have rebelled against God and this is in judgment against them.

For them to refuse to go into captivity would be to refuse the chastisement of God.

Their captivity is for them to realize their need for God.

They must repent of their worship of false gods, and again recognize the One True God.

Those who refuse their captivity will be destroyed.

Jeremiah 27:9 "Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:"

False prophets, as the Targum.

These words are not directed to the Jews, but are a continuation of what the messengers of the nations should say to their masters from the God of Israel, by the mouth of his prophet.

For they had their prophets as well as the Jews.

As the prophets of Baal, and others.

"Nor to your diviners":

Or soothsayers; such a one as was Balaam.

"Nor to your dreamers":

Or "dreams"; such as they had themselves, and laid great stress upon. Or to those who pretended to interpret them to them.

"Nor to your enchanters":

Or stargazers; astrologers, who pretended by the position of the stars to foretell what would come to pass.

"Nor to your sorcerers":

Or wizards, or necromancers: Who, by unlawful methods, pretended to acquire knowledge of future things.

"Which speak unto you, saying, ye shall not serve the king of Babylon":

Meaning, either that they ought not to become tributary to him; or they should not be brought into subjection by him.

And so were stirred up to oppose him, and not submit to him.

Their false prophets, diviners, dreamers, enchanter, and sorcerers had been telling them that all was well.

They had said, peace, peace, peace, when there would be no peace.

They were telling the people not to go into captivity to Babylon.

A diviner is someone who determines by casting lots or by a magical scroll.

An enchanter is one who practices magic.

A "sorcerer" is one who is a magician.

These would be similar to fortune tellers, magicians, and readers of horoscopes today.

All of these things draw their power from the devil instead of God.

Jeremiah 27:10 "For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish."

That which was vain and false, and proved so.

Though they might not know it was when delivered.

"To remove you far from your land":

Not that they designed it by their prophecies, but so it was eventually.

For, standing it out against Nebuchadnezzar, encouraged by the lies and dreams of their prophets, he, in process of time, took them, and carried them captive into Babylon.

Whereas, had they surrendered at once, they might have continued in their own land, paying a tax or tribute to the king of Babylon.

"And that I should drive you out, and ye should perish":

Drive them out of their own land, and so perish in a foreign land.

God is said to do that which his servant or instrument did, being provoked by the sin and disobedience of the people, hearkening to their lying prophets, and not to him.

This is strange, but the only way to stay in their land and not perish is to go into captivity to Nebuchadnezzar.

Jeremiah 27:11 "But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein."

That at once, and readily, submit unto him, and pay him tribute.

"Those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD":

Undisturbed by any other enemy; peaceably dwelling in their own habitations.

Following their occupations and business of life; and enjoying their substance and estates, only paying the tax imposed on them.

"And they shall till it, and dwell therein":

Manure and cultivate it, and gather and eat the fruit of it, and continue to do so, they and their posterity after them.

Jeremiah stayed in Jerusalem by permission himself.

He is trying to express to them, that it would be better to surrender to these people and work for them, than to run to a foreign land for safety.

In their own land, they will be allowed to raise crops.

They will have enough to eat here.

Jeremiah 27:12 "I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live."

At the same time that he delivered the above message from the LORD to the ambassadors of several nations, who were then residents in Zedekiah's court, or however in Jerusalem.

"According to all these words":

The same things, and much in the same language, he said to the king of Judah, as to the messengers of the nations.

"Saying":

As follows.

"Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon":

You, O king, your nobles, and your people.

Zedekiah was set upon the throne by the king of Babylon.

Was a tributary to him, and had taken an oath to be faithful to him.

And yet was now meditating rebellion against him.

And was consulting and entering into a confederacy with the neighboring nations to throw off the yoke, and be independent on him.

Wherefore the sense of this advice must be to bring themselves, he and his people, to a cheerful submission to it, and a patient bearing it, and not attempt to shake it off.

"And serve him and his people, and live":

The king of Babylon, and the Chaldeans.

By faithfully paying the tribute, and acknowledging subjection to him.

And so "live" in their own land, enjoying all other civil and religious privileges.

This message was not just for Jerusalem, but for all who had been invaded by Babylon.

"Bring your necks under the yoke" just means to voluntarily surrender to their control.

Jeremiah 27:13 "Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?"

Through a blockade of the Chaldean army, which would invade their land, and besiege their city, upon a refusal to be subject to their yoke.

"As the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon":

As the LORD has threatened shall be the case of any and every one of the above nations that should refuse to be tributary to him.

Of which, no doubt, Zedekiah and his court had been apprized (see Jer. 27:8).

Jeremiah tries again to make them realize that the Babylonian invasion is a judgement of God against them.

They must surrender to God's chastisement or they will die.

Jeremiah 27:14 "Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you."

The false prophets, as the Targum; such bad kings always had about them, to whom they listened, and which often proved of bad consequence to them.

"That speak unto you, saying":

As follows:

"Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon":

Ye ought not to do it, but cast off his yoke.

To which if ye do not willingly submit, he will never be able to force you to it.

"For they prophesy a lie unto you":

And therefore should not be hearkened to, particularly when they promise safety from the king of Babylon.

This is just telling them that they are listening to false prophets.

Any prophet that goes against the will of God is a false prophet.

Verses 15-18

Jeremiah's life was often difficult.

Not only did he have to deliver an awesome message that left a great burden on his own heart for the people he loved so greatly, but he also had to face the constant opposition of Judah's leadership and the false "Prophets" (e.g., 23:9-40; 28:1 – 29:9).

Here as elsewhere, Jeremiah had to confront these lying prophets and challenge them to produce the fulfillment of their prophecies.

One of the tests of true "prophecy", especially those that dealt with the near future, was its fulfillment (Deut. 18:21-22).

Other tests required that:

- (1) The prophecy be in harmony with prior revelation (Deut. 13:1-3);
- (2) Both the prophecy and the prophet show evidence of a high moral quality (compare verses 8-10 with 23:14-17; 29-40; Ezek. 13:10-16; Micah 3:5, 8); and
- (3) The prophecy must sound a confirmative note in the hearts of true believers (compare Deut. 18:15-19 with Jer. 23:29; Ezek. 2:3-7; John 7:17; 1 John 2:20).

Jeremiah 27:15 "For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, yet they prophesy a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you."

(See Jer. 23:21).

"Yet they prophesy a lie in my name":

To deliver out a lie was a very wicked thing, sinful in them, and fatal to others.

But to make use of the name of the LORD, and cover it with that, and back it with his authority, was much more wicked and abominable.

"That I might drive you out, and that ye might perish":

Being driven out of their own land, perish in another.

Which, though the false prophets did not intend by their prophesying, yet such would be, and was, the issue of it.

"Ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you":

For it would end in the ruin and destruction of them both.

Both of the false prophets, as the Targum here again calls them, and those that listened to their prophecies.

Both would fall into the same ditch.

It is a dangerous thing for people to take it upon themselves to represent God to the people, when they are not chosen of God.

In the Scripture above, they are using the name of God to convince the people they are speaking for God.

Jeremiah says, do not believe a lie.

Jeremiah 27:16 "Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD'S house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you."

From the court he went to the temple, and spoke to the priests that were ministering there, and to all the people that were assembled for divine worship.

Either at the ordinary time of it, or at some one of the solemn feasts.

This was a proper time and place to meet with the people and the priests.

The priests, especially, had a concern in what he had to say concerning the vessels of the temple.

"Thus saith the LORD, hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you": Your false prophets, as the Targum.

"Saying":

As follows.

"Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon:"

Which were carried there, both in the times of Jehoiakim, and of Jeconiah (2 Chron. 36:7).

These, the false prophets said, would in a short time be returned.

That the king of Babylon, either willingly and of his own accord, or being pressed or forced to it, would send them back.

So little reason had they to fear an invasion from him, or captivity by him.

"For they prophesy a lie unto you":

That which is false, and will never be accomplished, at least in any short time.

Jeremiah had warned the people and the priests of what God intends to do.

The Babylonian captivity will not be over in a few days, but will last 70 years.

These false prophets are giving them false hope.

Jeremiah 27:17 "Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste?"

The false prophets.

"Serve the king of Babylon, and live":

Pay homage and tribute to him; which is the way to live in your own land, and enjoy the benefits of that.

And of the temple worship; which, if not, you will be utterly deprived of.

"Wherefore should this city be laid waste?"

As it certainly will, should you rebel against the king of Babylon.

And as it was in a few years after, when they did.

To save the city they must go into Babylonian captivity.

All of this is saying, "Realize you have sinned and accept your punishment for it".

Then God will not totally destroy this place.

Verses 18:21

Jeremiah challenged the false prophets to prove the validity of their message by interceding that the vessels remaining in the temple not be removed to Babylon (2 Kings 25:13-17).

Jeremiah 27:18 "But if they [be] prophets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the LORD, and [in] the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon."

"Intercession ... LORD of hosts":

God would not answer such a prayer, as proven by verses 19-22.

This revealed His indifference to the prayers of these false prophets.

Jeremiah is saying if these false prophets were truly prophets of God, they should pray for the city, people, and the things of the sanctuary, so they would not be taken away.

Jeremiah 27:19 "For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city,"

The pillars of brass that stood in the temple.

The one called Boaz, and the other Jachin (1 Kings 7:15).

"And concerning the sea":

The sea of molten brass, which stood upon twelve oxen (1 Kings 7:23).

"And concerning the bases":

The ten bases, which also were made of brass (1 Kings 7:27).

"And concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city":

In the king's palace, and in the houses of the noblemen.

And of the rich and wealthy inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The pillars spoken of here, are two bronze pillars called Jachin and Boaz.

1 Kings 7:21 "And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz."

"Bronze" symbolizes judgement, and "pillars" are spoken of as a support.

This then means that the support of the temple is the judgement of God.

If God did not, from time to time, judge the temple or the church, they would crumble and fall.

The "sea" is speaking of a large basin that held water for ceremonial washing.

This is symbolic of water baptism.

The "bases" are twelve oxen that hold the sea up.

The name "Jachin" meant establishes.

Many believe that pillar said, "Yahweh will establish thy throne forever".

Boaz's pillar possibly said, "In Yahweh is the king's strength".

All of these articles were heavy and probably difficult to travel with, so they had not been taken away.

Jeremiah 27:20 "Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem;"

For he seems only to have taken the vessels of gold, and left the vessels of brass, as the above were (see 2 Kings 24:13).

"When he carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem":

Of which see (2 Kings 24:12).

(Ca. 597 B.C.).

We have mentioned before that Jeconiah is the same as Jehoiachin.

He was held captive in Babylon 36 years.

They took them probably, so they would not be able to influence the people against Babylon.

Verses 21-22

Jeremiah revealed that Judah's temple vessels taken to Babylon (compare 2 Kings 13:14; Dan. 1:1-2), would be restored to the temple (fulfillment around 536 B.C.).

Jeremiah 27:21 "Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain [in] the house of the LORD, and [in] the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem;"

Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel.

"Concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the LORD":

Which are mentioned (in Jer. 27:19); together with others.

"And in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem":

See Jer. 27:18.

Jeremiah 27:22 "They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place."

As they were; and of which, with others, there is a particular account in (2 Kings 25:13).

"And there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD":

The Chaldeans in a way of wrath, and the Jews in a way of grace and favor.

Which was at the end of the seventy years' captivity.

And so long as the vessels of the sanctuary continued there.

Here we read of them as in use the very night that Belshazzar was slain, and Babylon taken (See Daniel 5:2).

"Then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place":

Which was fulfilled when the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia to give leave to the Jews to return to their own land, and rebuild their temple.

And at the same time delivered into the hands of Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah, the vessels of the temple (Ezra 1:1).

It appears the things of the temple will be carried to Babylon to be in safe keeping, until the captivity is over.

The Babylonian captivity was of God for their sins.

The restoration will be of God as well, after they repent.

Jeremiah Chapter 27 Questions

1. Who was the father of Jehoiakim?
2. What did the LORD tell Jeremiah to make?
3. Why did Jeremiah put a yoke on his neck?
4. Who did he send yokes to?
5. How did Zedekiah become king?
6. What had Zedekiah's name been changed from?
7. How had Jeremiah sent the yokes to the various leaders?
8. What privilege does God have, since He is Creator God?
9. Whose hands had God given these lands into?
10. Why Nebuchadnezzar was called "servant of God"?
11. What will happen to the nations, who will not surrender to Nebuchadnezzar?

12. Verse 9 says, hearken not to your _____, nor to your _____, nor to your _____, nor to your _____, nor to your _____.
13. What is a "diviner"?
14. What is an "enchanter"?
15. Who would they be similar to in our society today?
16. What does verse 10 say, their prophecies are?
17. Who will be able to stay in their own land and till it?
18. Who was Zedekiah?
19. What does "Bring your neck under the yoke", mean?
20. God had not sent them, yet they prophecy a lie in His _____.
21. What lie had they been telling?
22. What are the pillars mentioned in verse 19?
23. What were the names of the 2 pillars?
24. "Bronze" symbolizes _____.
25. "Pillars" are spoken of as a _____.
26. What was the "sea", here?
27. What were the "bases"?
28. What two messages were believed to be on the 2 pillars?
29. Where will the things of the temple be in safe keeping, until the end of the captivity?