Before you were born I set you apart. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations.”

1:6 I answered, “Oh, Lord God, I really do not know how to speak well enough for that, for I am too young.”

1:7 The Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’”

But go to whomever I send you and say whatever I tell you.

1:8 Do not be afraid of those to whom I send you, for I will be with you to protect you, says the Lord.

1:9 Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I will most assuredly give you the words you are to speak for me.”

1:10 Know for certain that I hereby give you the authority to announce to nations and kingdoms that they will be uprooted and torn down, destroyed and

Jeremiah’s Call and Commission

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11 Later the LORD asked me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” I answered, “I see a branch of an almond tree.”

12 Then the LORD said, “You have observed correctly. This means I am watching to make sure my threats are carried out.”

13 The LORD again asked me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a pot of boiling water; it is tipped toward us from the north.”

14 Then the LORD said, “This means destruction will break out from the north on all who live in the land. For I will soon summon all the peoples of the kingdoms of the north,” says the LORD. “They will come and their kings will set up their thrones near the entrances of the gates of Jerusalem. They will attack all the walls surrounding it, and all the towns in Judah.

15 You will be able to stand up against all who live in the land. You will be able to stand up against all the peoples of the north. You will be able to stand up against all who live in the land, including the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and all the people of the land. They will attack you but they will not be able to overcome you, for I will be with you to rescue you,” says the LORD.

16 In this way I will pass sentence on the people of Jerusalem and Judah because of all their wickedness. For they rejected me and offered sacrifices to other gods, worshiping what they made with their own hands.”

17 “But you, Jeremiah, get yourself ready! Go and tell these people everything I instruct you to say. Do not be terrified of them, or I will give you good reason to be terrified of them. I, the LORD, hereby promise to make you as strong as a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall. You will be able to stand up against all who live in the land, including the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and all the people of the land. They will attack you but they will not be able to overcome you, for I will be with you to rescue you,” says the LORD.

Visions Confirming Jeremiah’s Call and Commission

1sn These three pairs represent the twofold nature of Jeremiah’s prophecies, prophecies of judgment and restoration. For the further programmatic use of these pairs for Jeremiah’s ministry see 18:7-10 and 31:27-28.

2tn This represents the Hebrew particle (הָעָשָׂה, ha-‘aswa) that is normally rendered “for” or “because.” The particle here is meant to give the significance of the vision, not the rationale for the statement “you have observed correctly.”

3tn “watching over my word to do it.”

4tn There is a play on the Hebrew word for “almond tree” (שָׁקֵד, shoqed), which blossoms in January/February and is the harbinger of spring, and the Hebrew word for “watching” (שָׁקֵד, shoqed), which refers to someone watching over someone or something in preparation for action. The play on words announces the certainty and imminence of the LORD carrying out the covenant curses of Lev 26 and Deut 28 threatened by their presence of the subject pronouns at the beginning of each of these two verses.

5tn Heb “a blown upon [= heated; boiling] pot and its face from the face of the north [= it is facing away from the north].”

6tn There is nothing in the Hebrew text for these words but it is implicit in the connection. Once again the significance of the vision is spelled out. Compare the translator’s note on v. 12.

7tn Heb “they will each set up.” The pronoun “they” refers back to the “kingdoms” in the preceding sentence. However, kingdom comes to mean “nation”; their kings will set up their thrones. This is an example of a figure of speech called metonymy where the king kingdom does not sit on thrones; their kings do. This is an example of a figure of speech called metonymy where the king kingdom does not sit on thrones; their kings do. This is an example of a figure of speech called metonymy where the king kingdom does not sit on thrones; their kings do.

8tn For the literal use of this idiom see 2 Kgs 4:29; 9:1. For the idiomatic use to refer to spiritual and emotional preparation as here, see Job 38:3, 40:7, and 1 Pet 1:13 in the NT.

9tn The Hebrew particle (the vav [ו] consecutive), which is often rendered in some English versions as “and” and in others is simply left untranslated, is rendered here exeggetically, reflecting a summary statement.

10tn The Hebrew idiom (literally “I will speak my judgments against”) is found three other times in Jeremiah (4:12; 39:5; 52:9), where it is followed by the carrying out of the sentence. Here the carrying out of the sentence precedes the pronoun “on them.” The antecedent goes back to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (i.e., the people in them) in v. 15.

11tn Heb “on them.”

12tn l.e., idols.

13tn The name “Jeremiah” is not in the text. The use of the personal pronoun followed by the proper name is an attempt to reflect the correlative emphasis between Jeremiah’s responsibility noted here and the LORD’s promise noted in the next verse. The emphasis in the Hebrew text is marked by the presence of the subject pronouns at the beginning of each of the two verses.

14tn Heb “gird up your loins.” For the literal use of this idiom to refer to preparation for action see 2 Kgs 4:29; 9:1. For the idiomatic use to refer to spiritual and emotional preparation as here, see Job 38:3, 40:7, and 1 Pet 1:13 in the NT.

15tn Heb “you will make you terrified in front of them.” There is a play on words here involving two different forms of the same Hebrew verb and two different but related prepositional phrases, “from before/of,” a preposition introducing the object of a verb of fearing, and “before, in front of,” a preposition introducing a spatial location.

16tn See the note on “Jeremiah” at the beginning of v. 17.

17tn Heb “today I have made you.” The Hebrew verb form here emphasizes the certainty of a yet future act; the LORD is promising to protect Jeremiah from any future attacks which may result from his faithfully carrying out his commission. See a similar use of the same Hebrew verb tense in v. 9, and see the translator’s note there.

18tn Heb “I make you a fortified city…against all the land….” The words “as strong as” and “so you will be able to stand against all the people of…” are given to clarify the meaning of the metaphor.
The Lord Recalls Israel's Earlier Faithfulness

1:2 The LORD spoke to me. He said: 2:2 “Go and declare in the hearing of the people of Jerusalem: 1 This is what the LORD says: “I have fond memories of you, 2 how devoted you were to me in your early years. I remember how you loved me like a new bride; you followed me through the wilderness, through a land that had never been planted. 2:3 Israel was set apart to the LORD; they were like the first fruits of a harvest to him. 4 All who tried to devour them were punished; disaster came upon them,” says the LORD.”

The Lord Reminds Them of the Unfaithfulness of Their Ancestors

2:4 Now listen to what the Lord has to say, you descendants of Jacob, all you family groups from the nation of Israel.

2:5 This is what the Lord says: "What fault could your ancestors have possibly found in me that they strayed so far from me? They paid allegiance to worthless idols, and so became worthless to me."

1 sn Map For location see Map 5 B1; Map 6 F3; Map 7 E2; Map 8 F2; Map 10 B3; JP 1 F4; JP 2 F4; JP 3 F4; JP 4 F4.

2 tn Heb “I remember to/for you.”

3 sn Heb “the loyallove of your youth.”

sn The Hebrew word translated “how devoted you were” (כֹּחַ, khesed) refers metaphorically to the devotion of a new bride to her husband. In typical Hebraic fashion, contemporary Israel is identified with early Israel after she first entered into covenant with (*= married) the LORD. The reference to her earlier devotion is not absolute but relative. Compared to her unfaithfulness in worshipping other gods after she got into the land, the murmuring and complaining in the wilderness are ignored.

4 sn Heb “the first fruits of his harvest.” Many commentators see the figure here as having theological significance for the calling of the Gentiles. It is likely, however, that in this context the metaphor – here rendered as a simile – is intended to bring out the special relationship and inviolability that Israel had with God. As the first fruits were the special possession of the LORD, to be eaten only by the priests and off limits to the common people, so Israel was God’s special possession and was not to be “eaten” by the nations.

5 tn Heb “house.”

6 tn Heb “house.”

7 tn Heb “fathers.”

8 sn Or “I did not wrong your ancestors in any way. Yet they went far astray from me.” Both translations are an attempt to render the rhetorical question which demands a negative answer.

9 tn Heb “They went/followed after.” This idiom is found most often in Deuteronomy or covenant contexts. It refers to loyalty to God and to his covenant or his commandments (e.g., 1 Kgs 14:8; 2 Chr 34:31) with the metaphor of a path or way underfoot (e.g. Deut 11:29; 28:14). To “follow other gods” was to abandon this way and this loyalty (i.e., to “abandon” or “forget” God, Judg 2:12; Hos 2:13) and to follow the customs or religious traditions of the pagan nations (e.g., 2 Kgs 17:15). The classic text on “following” God or another god is 1 Kgs 18:18, 21 where Elijah taunts the people with “halting between two opinions” whether the LORD was the true God or Baal was. The idiom is often found followed by “to serve and to worship” or “they served and worshiped” such and such a god or entity (see, e.g., Jer 8:2; 11:10; 13:10; 16:11; 25:6; 35:15).

10 tn The words “to me” are not in the Hebrew text but are implicit from the context: Heb “they followed after the worthless things and became worthless.” There is an obvious wordplay on the verb “became worthless” and the noun “worthless thing,” which is probably to be understood collectively and to refer to idols as it does in Jer 8:19; 10:8; 14:22; Jonah 2:8.

11 sn This word is erroneously rendered “shadow of death” in most older English versions; that translation is based on a faulty etymology. Contextual studies and comparative Semitic linguistics have demonstrated that the word is merely another word for darkness. It is confined to poetic texts and often carries connotations of danger and distress. It is associated with the darkness of poetic texts with the darkness of a prison (Ps 107:10, 14), a mine (Job 28:3), and a ravine (Ps 23:4). Here it is associated with the darkness of the wasteland and ravines of the Sinai desert.

12 sn The context suggests that the question is related to a lament where the people turn to God in their troubles, asking him for help and reminding him of his past benefactions. See for example Isa 63:11-19 and Ps 44. It is an implicit prayer for his intervention, cf. 2 Kgs 2:14.

13 sn Note how contemporary Israel is again identified with her early ancestors. See the study note on 2:2.

14 tn Heb “eat.”

15 sn i.e., made it ceremonially unclean. See Lev 18:19-30; Num 35:34; Deut 21:23.

16 sn Heb “my inheritance.” Or “the land [i.e., inheritance] I gave you,” reading the pronoun as indicating source rather than possession. The parallelism and the common use in Jeremiah of the term to refer to the land or people as the LORD’s (e.g., 12:7; 8, 9; 16:18; 50:11) make the possessive use more likely here.

17 sn The land belonged to the LORD; it was given to the Israelites in trust (or usufruct) as their heritage. See Lev 25:23.

18 sn See the study note on 2:6.

19 tn Heb “those who handle my law.”

20 sn The reference is likely to the priests and Levites who were responsible for teaching the law (so Jer 18:18; cf. Deut 33:10). According to Jer 8:8 it could possibly refer to the scribes who copied the law.

21 sn Or “were not committed to me.” The Hebrew verb rendered “know” refers to more than mere intellectual knowledge. It carries also the ideas of emotional and volitional commitment as well intimacy. See for example its use in contexts like Hos 4:1; 6:6.
Your prophets prophesied in the name of the god Baal. They all worshiped idols that could not help them.

The Lord Charges Contemporary Israel with Spiritual Adultery

2:9 “So, once more I will state my case against you,” says the LORD. “I will also state it against your children and grandchildren.

2:10 Go west across the sea to the coasts of Cyprus and see, Send someone east to Kedar and have them look carefully. See if such a thing as this has ever happened:

2:11 Has a nation ever changed its gods (even though they are not really gods at all)? But my people have exchanged me, their glorious God, for a god that cannot help them at all!

Israel’s Reliance on Foreign Alliances (not on God)

2:14 “Israel is not a slave, is he? He was not born into slavery, was he? If not, why then is he being carried off?

2:15 Like lions his enemies roar victoriously over him; they raise their voices in triumph. They have laid his land waste; his cities have been burned down and deserted.

2:16 Even the soldiers from Memphis and Tahpanes have cracked your skulls, people of Israel.

1 sn In earlier literature the heavens (and the earth) were called on to witness Israel’s commitment to the covenant (Deut 30:12) and were called to serve as witnesses to Israel’s fidelity or infidelity to it (Isa 1:2; Mic 6:1).

2 tn Heb “by Baal.”

3 tn Or “bring charges against you.”

4 sn The reference to the Arabian desert. See Gen 25:18 and Jer 49:38. See also the geographical orientation.

5 sn The Hebrew term translated Cyrus (“Kittim”) originally referred to the island of Cyprus but later was used for the lands in the west, including Macedonia (1 Macc 1:1; 8:5) and Rome (Dan 11:30). It is used here as part of a figure called pass over to the coasts of Kittim. The words “pass over across the sea” in this line and “east of” in the next are implicit in the text and are supplied in the translation to give geographical orientation.

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7 CO The term is the home of the bedouin tribes in the Syro-Arabian desert. See Gen 25:18 and Jer 49:38. See also the previous note for the significance of the reference here.

8 sn Heb “have exchanged their glory (that is, the God in whom they glory).” This is a case of a figure of speech where the attribute of a person or thing is put for the person or thing. Compare the common phrase in Isaiah, the Holy One of Israel, obviously referring to the God of Israel, obliquely referring to the God of Israel.

9 sn Heb “what cannot profit.” The verb is singular and the allusion is likely to Baal. See the translator’s note on 2:8 for the likely pun or wordplay.

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12 sn The reference to the Arabian desert. See Gen 25:18 and Jer 49:38. See also the geographical orientation.

13 sn The reference to lions is here a metaphor for the Assyrians (and later the Babylonians, see Jer 50:17). The statement about lions roaring over their prey implies that the prey has been vanquished.

14 sn Heb “without inhabitant.”

15 sn Heb “the land of...”

16 tc The translation follows the reading of the Syriac version. The Hebrew text reads “have grazed (that is, shaved) your skulls [as a sign of disgracing them].” Note that the reference shifts from third person, “him,” to second person, “you,” which is common in Hebrew style. The words “people of Israel” have been supplied in the translation to help identify the referent and ease the switch. The reading presupposes יָרָע (y’ra’; see BDB 949 s.v. יָרָע יָרָע) a Qal imperfect from the verb יָרַע (y’ra’a; see BDB 949 s.v. יָרַע יָרַע) a Qal perfect from the root יָרָע (y’ra’a; see BDB 949 s.v. יָרַע יָרַע) a Qal imperfect from the root יָרַע (y’ra’a; see BDB 949 s.v. יָרַע יָרַע). This usage of the verb in the MT is unparalleled in the sense suggested, but the resultant figure, if “graze” can mean “shave,” is paralleled in Jer 47:5; 48:37; Isa 7:20. The reading of the variant is accepted on the basis that it is the rarer root; the scribe would have been more familiar with the root “graze” even though it is unparalleled in the figurative nuance implied here. The
The Lord Expresses His Exasperation at Judah’s Persistent Idolatry

2:20 “Indeed, long ago you threw off my authority and refused to be subject to me. You said, ‘I will not serve you.’ Instead, you gave yourself to other gods on every high hill and under every green tree, like a prostitute sprawls out before her lovers.

2:21 I planted you in the land like a special vine of the very best stock. Why in the world have you turned into something like a wild vine that produces rotten, foul-smelling grapes?

noun “head/skull” is functioning as an accusative of further specification (see GKC 372 §117.4) and compare usage in Gen 3:8), i.e., “they crack you on the skull” or “they shave you on the skull.” The verb is a prefixed form and in this context is either a preterite without vav (°) consecutive or an iterative imperfect denoting repeated action. Some modern English versions render the verb in the future tense, “they will break on the skull.” The verb is a prefixed form and in this context is a special form of the Hebrew auxiliary verb that expresses the idea of breaking free from its master.

The metaphor is that of a recalcitrant ox or heifer which has refused to be subject to a master or leader. It is a common term of speech in the Bible to describe the disobedient people (Isa 13:14). This title is most commonly translated as “the King” (see, e.g., 51:17). If the title is preceded by the phrase “the God of,” it emphasizes his sovereignty as the king and creator, the lord of creation and of history, and the just judge who sees and knows all (11:20; 20:12) and judges each person and nation of his own people through the agency of the Babylonians (cf., e.g., 25:8-9). But it will also include the punishment of all nations, including Babylon itself (cf. Jer 25:17-26, 32-38), and will ultimately result in the restoration of his people and a new relation with them (30:8; 31:35-37).

The metaphor of a reformed vineyard is widespread in the Bible, for example, in the new beginning under the law (Isa 5:1-7) and the promised new covenant (Jer 31:28-34). It is also found in the NT (Rom 11:17-24), but in a different context, where it expresses the idea of God’s grace and mercy in bringing the Gentiles into the covenant (Rom 11:24-25).

The metaphor of a vineyard is also used in the NT to describe the church (1 Cor 3:9; Rev 12:11). In these passages, the vineyard is a symbol of the Jewish people, and the church is a new vineyard, which is grafted into the stock of Israel (Rom 11:17-24). The vineyard is also a symbol of the individual Christian, who is a part of the new covenant (Rom 11:24-25).
2:22 You can try to wash away your guilt with a strong detergent. You can use as much soap as you want. But the stain of your guilt is still there for me to see,"¹

says the Lord.

2:23 "How can you say, 'I have not made myself unclean. I have not paid allegiance to the gods called Baal.'

Just look at the way you have behaved in the Valley of Hinnom!²

Think about the things you have done there!

You are like a flighty, young female camel that rushes here and there, crisscrossing its path.³

2:24 You are like a wild female donkey brought up in the wilderness. In her lust she sniffs the wind to get the scent of a male.⁴

No one can hold her back when she is in heat.

None of the males need wear themselves out chasing after her.

At mating time she is easy to find.⁵

2:25 Do not chase after other gods until your shoes wear out and your throats become dry.⁶

But you say, "It is useless for you to try and stop me because I love those foreign gods and want to pursue them!"⁷

2:26 Just as a thief has to suffer dishonor when he is caught, so the people of Israel⁸ will suffer dishonor for what they have done.⁹

So will their kings and officials, their priests and their prophets.

2:27 They say to a wooden idol, 'You are my father.'¹⁰ They say to a stone image, 'You gave birth to me.'¹¹

Yes, they have turned away from me instead of turning to me.¹²

Yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!'

2:28 But where are the gods you made for yourselves?

Let them save you when you are in trouble.

The sad fact is that you have as many gods as you have towns, Judah.

2:29 "Why do you try to refute me?¹³ All of you have rebelled against me," says the LORD.

2:30 "It did no good for me to punish your people. They did not respond to such correction. You slaughtered your prophets like a voracious lion."¹⁴

2:31 You people of this generation, listen to what the Lord says.

"Have I been like a wilderness to you, Israel?

Have I been like a dark and dangerous land to you?¹⁵

Why then do you say, 'We are free to wander.'¹⁶

We will not come to you any more?'

2:32 Does a young woman forget to put on her bridal attire?

Does a bride forget to put on her bridal attire?

But my people have forgotten me for more days than can even be counted.

¹ tn Heb "Even if you wash with natron/lye, and use much soap, your sin is a stain before me."

² tn Heb "Lord Yahweh." For an explanation of this title see the study notes on 1:6.

³ tn Heb "I have not gone/followed after." See the translator's note on 2:5 for the meaning and usage of this idiom.

⁴ tn Heb "Look at your way in the valley." The valley is an obvious reference to the Valley of Hinnom where Baal and Molech were worshiped and child sacrifice was practiced.

⁵ sn The metaphor is intended to depict Israel's lack of clear direction and purpose without the Lord's control.

⁶ tn The words "to get the scent of a male" are implicit and are supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁷ sn The metaphor is intended to depict Israel's irrefrangible desire to worship other gods.

⁸ tn Heb "Refrain your feet from being bare and your throat from being dry/thirsty."

⁹ tn Heb "It is useless! No!" For this idiom, see Jer 18:12; NEB "No; I am desperate."

¹⁰ tn Heb "house of Israel."

¹¹ tn The words "for what they have done" are implicit in the comparison and are supplied in the translation for clarification.

¹² tn Heb "wood...stone..."

¹³ sn The reference to wood and stone is, of course, a pejorative reference to idols made by human hands. See the next verse where reference is made to "the gods you have made."

¹⁴ tn Heb "they have turned [their] backs to me, not [their] faces."

¹⁵ tn This is an attempt to render the Hebrew particle ע ('i, "for, indeed") contextually.

¹⁶ sn This is still part of the Lord's case against Israel. See 2:9 for the use of the same Hebrew verb. The Lord here denies their counter claims that they do not deserve to be punished.

¹⁷ tn Heb "Your sword devoured your prophets like a destroying lion." However, the reference to the sword in this and many similar idioms is merely idiomatic for death by violent means.

¹⁸ tn Heb "a land of the darkness of Yah [= thick or deep darkness]." The idea of danger is an added connotation of the word in this context.

¹⁹ tn Heb "my people."

²⁰ tn Or more freely, "free to do as we please." There is some debate about the meaning of this verb (נַדִּיר, nāḏārī) because its usage is rare and its meaning is debated in the few passages where it does occur. The key to its meaning may rest in the emended text (reading נַדִּיר [nāḏārī] for נַדִּיר [nāḏārī]) in Judg 11:37 where it refers to the roaming of Jephthah's daughter on the mountains of Israel.
2:33 "My how good you have become at chasing after your lovers! Why, you could even teach prostitutes a thing or two!" 
2:34 Even your clothes are stained with the lifeblood of the poor who had not done anything wrong; you did not catch them breaking into your homes. 
Yet, in spite of all these things you have done, 
2:35 you say, 'I have not done anything wrong, so the Lord cannot really be angry with me anymore.' 
But, watch out! I will bring down judgment on you because you say, 'I have not committed any sin.' 
2:36 Why do you constantly go about changing your political allegiances? 
You will get no help from Egypt just as you got no help from Assyria. 
2:37 Moreover, you will come away from Egypt with your hands covering your faces in sorrow and shame 
because the Lord will not allow your reliance on them to be successful and you will not gain any help from them. 

3:1 "If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and becomes another man's wife, he may not take her back again." 

1 tn Heb “How good you have made your ways to seek love.” 
2 tn Heb “so that even the wicked women you teach your ways.” 
3 tn The words “for example” are implicit and are supplied here see Deut 24:1-4. 
4 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
5 tn This is an attempt to render the Hebrew particle often translated “behind” (ַּזְלִי, innach) in a meaningful way in this context. See further the translator's note on the word “really” in 1:6. 
6 tn Heb “changing your way.” The translation follows the identification of the Hebrew verb here as a defective writing of a form (יִזְלָל [izli]) instead of הָזַל (izador) from a verb meaning “go/go about” (ְבָּזַל, buzal; cf. BDB 23 s.v. בזל). Most modern English versions, commentaries, and lexicons read it from a root meaning “to treat cheaply [or lightly]” (זרל) [ziral] from the root סָלַל (zalal); cf. HALOT 261 s.v. סל).; hence, “Why do you consider it such a small matter to...” 
7 tn Heb “You will be ashamed/disappointed by Egypt, just as you were ashamed/disappointed by Assyria.” 
8 tn Heb “with your hands on your head.” For the picture here see 2 Sam 3:19. 
9 tn Heb “The Lord has rejected those you trust in; you will not prosper by/from them.” 
10 tn Heb “May he go back to her again?” The question is rhetorical and expects a negative answer. 
11 sn For the legal background for the illustration that is used here see Deut 24:1-4. 
12 tn Heb “But you have played the prostitute with many lovers.” 
13 tn Heb “Returning to me.” The form is the bare infinitive which the KJV and ASV have interpreted as an imperative “Yet, return to me!” However, it is more likely that a question is intended, expressing surprise in the light of the law alluded to and the facts cited. For the use of the infinitive absolute in the place of a finite verb, cf. GKC 346 §113. 
14 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
15 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
16 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
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18 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
19 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35. 
20 sn KJV and ASV read this line with 2:34. The ASV makes little sense and the KJV again erroneously reads the archaic second person feminine singular perfect as first person common singular. All the modern English versions and commentaries take this line with 2:35.
That is what you say, but you continually do all the evil that you can.\footnote{tn} Jeremiah, you have no doubt seen what wayward Israel has done.\footnote{tn} You have seen how she went up to every high hill and under every green tree to give herself like a prostitute to other gods. 3:7 Yet even after she had done all that, I thought that she might come back to me.\footnote{tn} But she did not. Her sister, unfaithful Judah, saw what she did.\footnote{tn} She also saw\footnote{sn} that I gave wayward Israel her divorce papers and sent her away because of her adulterous worship of other gods.\footnote{tn} Even after her unfaithful sister Judah had seen this,\footnote{tn} she still was not afraid, and she too went and gave herself like a prostitute to other gods.\footnote{tn} Because she took her prostitution so lightly, she defiled the land\footnote{tn} through her adulterous worship of gods made of wood and stone.\footnote{tn} In spite of all this,\footnote{tn} Israel’s sister, unfaithful Judah, has not turned back to me with any sincerity; she has only pretended to do so.\footnote{tn} says the Lord. 3:11 Then the Lord said to me, “Under the circumstances, wayward Israel could even be considered less guilty than unfaithful Judah.\footnote{tn}

The Lord Calls on Israel and Judah to Repent

3:12 “Go and shout this message to my people in the countries in the north.\footnote{tn} Tell them, ‘Come back to me, wayward Israel,’ says the Lord. ‘I will not continue to look on you with displeasure.\footnote{tn} For I am merciful,’ says the Lord. ‘I will not be angry with you forever. 3:13 However, you must confess that you have done wrong,\footnote{tn} and that you have rebelled against the Lord your God. You must confess\footnote{tn} that you have given yourself to\footnote{tn} foreign gods under every green tree, and have not obeyed my commands,’ says the Lord.

3:14 “Come back to me, my wayward sons,” says the Lord, “for I am your true master.\footnote{tn} If you do, I will take one of you from each town and two of you from each family group, and I will bring you back to Zion. 3:15 I will give you leaders\footnote{tn} who will be faithful
to me. They will lead you with knowledge and insight. 3:16 In those days, your population will greatly increase in the land. At that time," says the LORD, "people will no longer talk about having the ark that contains the LORD's covenant with us. They will not call it to mind, remember it, or miss it. No, that will not be done any more! 3:17 At that time the city of Jerusalem will be called the LORD's throne. All nations will gather there in Jerusalem to honor the LORD's name. They will no longer follow the stubborn inclinations of their own evil hearts. 3:18 At that time the nation of Judah and the nation of Israel will be reunited. Together they will come back from a land in the north to the land that I gave to your ancestors as a permanent possession.

3:19 I thought to myself, "Oh what a joy it would be for me to treat you like a son! What a joy it would be for me to give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful piece of property there is in all the world! I thought you would call me, 'Father' and would never cease being loyal to me." 3:20 But, you have been unfaithful to me, nation of Israel.

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1 tn Heb "after/according to my [own] heart."
2 tn Heb "you will become numerous and fruitful."
3 tn Or "chest."
4 tn Heb "the ark of the covenant." It is called this because it contained the tables of the law which in abbreviated form constituted their covenant obligations to the LORD, cf. Exod 31:18; 32:15; 34:29.
5 or Or "Nor will another one be made"; Heb "one will not do/make it [?] again.
6 map For location see Map5-B1; Map5-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
7 tn Heb "will gather to the name of the LORD."
8 tn Heb "the stubbornness of their evil hearts."
9 tn Heb "In those days."
10 tn Heb "the house of Judah will walk together with the house of Israel."
11 tn Heb "the land that I gave your [fore]fathers as an inheritance."
12 tn Heb "I, myself, said." See note on "I thought that she might come back to me" in 3:7.
13 tn Heb "How I would place you among the sons."
14 sn The words "What a joy it would be for me to" are not in the Hebrew text but are implied in the parallel structure.
15 tn Heb "the most beautiful heritage among the nations."
16 tn Heb "my father."
17 tn Heb "turn back from [following] after me."
18 tn Heb "house of Israel."
19 tn Heb "a wife unfaithful from her husband."
20 tn Heb "A sound is heard on the hilltops, the weeping of the supplication of the children of Israel because [or indeed] they have perverted their way." At issue here is whether the supplication is made to Yahweh in repentance because of what they have done or whether it is supplication to the pagan gods which is evidence of their perverted ways. The reference in this verse to the hilltops where idolatry was practiced according to 3:2 and the reference to Israel's unfaithfulness in the preceding verse make the latter more likely. For the asseverative use of the Hebrew particle (here rendered "indeed") where the particle retains some of the explicative nuance; cf. BDB 472-73 s.v. "indeed and 3.c.
21 tn Heb "have forgotten the LORd their God," but in the view of the parallelism and the context, the word "forget" (like "know" and "remember") involves more than mere intellectual activity.
22 or Or "I will forgive your apostasies." Heb "I will [or want to] heal your apostasies." For the use of the verb "heal" (ןָעַר) to refer to spiritual healing and forgiveness see Hos 14:4.
23 or Or "They say." There is an obvious ellipsis of a verb of saying here since the preceding words are those of the LORD and the following are those of the people. However, there is debate about whether these are the response of the people to the LORD's invitation, a response which is said to be inadequate according to the continuation in 4:1-4, or whether these are the LORD's model for Israel's confession of repentance to which he adds further instructions about the proper heart attitude that should accompany it in 4:1-4. The former implies a dialogue with an unmarked twofold shift in speaker between 3:22b-25 and 4:1-4:4 while the latter assumes the same main speaker throughout with an unmarked instruction only in 3:22b-25. This disrupts the flow of the passage less and appears more likely.
24 tn Heb "Truly in vain from the hills the noise/commotion [and from] the mountains." The syntax of the Hebrew sentence is very elliptical here.
25 tn Heb "Truly in the LORD our God is deliverance for Israel."
26 tn Heb "From our youth the shameful thing has eaten up..." The shameful thing is specifically identified as Baal in Jer 11:13. Compare also the shift in certain names such as Ishbaal ("man of Baal") to Ishbosheth ("man of shame").
27 tn Heb "fathers" (also in v. 25).
3:25 Let us acknowledge our shame. Let us bear the disgrace that we deserve. For we have sinned against the Lord our God, both we and our ancestors. From earliest times to this very day we have not obeyed the Lord our God.’

4:1 “If you, Israel, want to come back,” says the Lord, “if you want to come back to me you must get those disgusting idols out of my sight and must no longer go astray.”

4:2 You must be truthful, honest and upright when you take an oath saying, ‘As surely as the Lord lives!’ If you do, the nations will pray to be as blessed by him as you are and will make him the object of their boasting.

4:3 Yes, the Lord has this to say to the people of Judah and Jerusalem: “Like a farmer breaking up hard unplowed ground, you must break your rebellious will and make a new beginning; just as a farmer must clear away thorns lest the seed is wasted, you must get rid of the sin that is ruining your lives.

4:4 Just as ritual circumcision cuts away the foreskin as an external symbol of dedicated covenant commitment, you must genuinely dedicate yourselves to the Lord.

Warning of Coming Judgment

4:5 The Lord said, “Announce this in Judah and proclaim it in Jerusalem. ‘Sound the trumpet throughout the land!’ Shout out loudly, ‘Gather together! Let us flee into the fortified cities!’

4:6 Raise a signal flag that tells people to go to Zion. Run for safety! Do not delay! For I am about to bring disaster out of the north. It will bring great destruction.

4:7 Like a lion that has come up from its lair, the one who destroys nations has set out from his home base. He is coming out to lay your land waste. Your cities will become ruins and lie un-inhabited.

4:8 So put on sackcloth! Mourn and wail, saying, ‘The fierce anger of the Lord and get rid of everything that hinders your commitment to me, people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. If you do not, my anger will blaze up like a flaming fire against you that no one will be able to extinguish. That will happen because of the evil you have done.’

1 tn Heb “Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and remove the foreskin of your heart.” The translation is again an attempt to bring out the meaning of a metaphor. The mention of the “foreskin of the heart” shows that the passage is obviously metaphorical and involves heart attitude, not an external rite.

2 tn Heb “Let us lie down in....”

3 tn Heb “Let us be covered with disgrace.”

4 tn Or “If you, Israel, want to turn [away from your shameful ways (those described in 3:23-25)]...then you must turn back to me.” Or perhaps, “Israel, you must turn back...Yes, you must turn back to me.”

5 tn Heb “disgusting things.”

6 tn Or possibly, “If you get those disgusting idols out of my sight, you will not need to flee.” This is less probable because the normal meaning of the last verb is “to wander,” “to stray.”

7 tn 4:1-2a consists of a number of “if” clauses, two of which are formally introduced by the Hebrew particle ה (’im) while the others are introduced by the conjunction “and,” followed by a conjunction (“and” = “then”) with a perfect in 4:2b which introduces the consequence. The translation “You must.... If you do,” was chosen to avoid a long and complicated sentence.

8 tn Heb “bless themselves in him and make their boast in him.”

9 tn The Hebrew particle is obviously asseverative here since a causal connection appears to make little sense.

10 tn Heb “Plow up your unplowed ground and do not sow among the thorns.” The translation is an attempt to bring out the force of a metaphor. The idea seems to be that they are to plow over the thorns and make the ground ready for the seeds which will produce a new crop where none had been produced before.

11 tn Heb “bless themselves in him and make their boast in him.”

12 tn Heb “lest.”

13 tn The words “The Lord said” are not in the text, but it is obvious from v. 6 and v. 9 that he is the speaker. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

14 tn It is unclear who the addressee of the masculine plural imperative are here. They may be the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah who are sounding the alarm to others. However, the first person reference to the Lord in v. 6 and Jeremiah’s response in v. 10 suggest that this is a word from the Lord that he is commanded to pass on to the citizens of Jerusalem and Judah. If the imperatives are not merely rhetorical plurals they may reflect the practice referred to in Jer 23:18, 22; Amos 3:7. A similar phenomenon also occurs in Jer 5:1 and also in Isa 40:1-2. This may also be the explanation for the plural imperatives in Jer 31:6. For further discussion see the translator’s note on Jer 5:1.

15 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

16 tn Heb “ram’s horn,” but the modern equivalent is “trumpet” and is more readily understandable.

17 tn Heb “Raise up a signal toward Zion.”

18 tn Heb “out of the north, even great destruction.”

19 tn Heb “A lion has left its lair.” The metaphor is turned into a simile for clarification. The word translated “lair” has also been understood to refer to a hiding place. However, it appears to be a cognate in meaning to the word translated “lair” in Ps 10:9; Jer 25:38, a word which also refers to the abode of the Lord in Ps 76:3.

20 tn Heb “his place.”
has not turned away from us!’”
4:9 “When this happens,” says the LORD, “the king and his officials will lose their courage. The priests will be struck with horror, and the prophets will be speechless in astonishment.”

4:10 In response to all this I said, “Ah, Lord God, you have surely allowed the people of Judah and Jerusalem to be deceived by those who say, ‘You will be safe!’ But in fact a sword is already at our throats.”

4:11 “At that time the people of Judah and Jerusalem will be told, ‘A scorching wind will sweep down from the hilltops in the desert on my dear people. It will not be a gentle breeze for winnowing the grain and blowing away the chaff.’

1 tn Or “wail because the fierce anger of the LORD has not turned away from us.” The translation does not need to assume a shift in speaker as the alternate reading does.
2 tn Heb “In that day.”
3 tn The words “In response to all this” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to clarify the connection.
4 tn Heb “Lord Yahweh.” The translation follows the ancient Jewish tradition of substituting the Hebrew word for God for the proper name Yahweh.
5 tn Or “You have deceived.” The Hiphil of נָשָׁא (nasha’, “to deceive”) is understood in a tolerative sense here: “to allow [someone] to be deceived.” IBHS 446 §27.5c notes that this function of the hiphil describes caused activity that is welcome to the undertaker, but unacceptable or disagreeable to a third party. Jerusalem and Judah welcomed the assurances of false prophets who deceived them. Although this was detestable to God, he allowed it.
6 tn Or “his people and Jerusalem.”
7 tn Heb “Jerusalem, saying, ‘you will have peace’”; or “you have deceived the people of Judah and Jerusalem, saying, ‘you will have peace.’” The words “you will be safe” are, of course, those of the false prophets (cf., Jer 6:14; 8:11; 14:13; 23:16-17). It is difficult to tell whether the charge here is meant literally as the emotional outburst of the prophet (compare for example, Jer 15:18) or whether it is to be understood as a figure of speech in which a verb of direct causation is to be understood as permissive or tolerative, i.e., God did not command the prophets to say this but allowed them to do so. While it is not beyond God to use false prophets to accomplish his will (cf., e.g., 1 Kgs 22:19-23), he elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah directly denies having sent the false prophets to say such things as this (cf., e.g., Jer 14:14-15; 23:21, 32). For examples of the use of this figure of speech, see E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 571, 823 and compare Ezek 20:25. The translation given attempts to resolve the issue.
8 tn Heb “touches the throat/soul.” For this use of the word usually translated “soul” or “life” cf. HALOT 672 s.v. נַפֶּשׁ 1, 2 and compare the use in Ps 105:18.
9 tn Heb “this people and Jerusalem.”
10 tn Heb “A scorching wind from the hilltops in the desert toward...”

sn The allusion is, of course, to the destructive forces of the enemy armies of Babylon compared above in 4:7 to a destructive lion and here to the destructive desert winds of the Near Eastern sirocco.
11 tn Heb “daughter of my people.” The term “daughter of” is appositional to “my people” and is supplied in the translation as a term of sympathy and endearment. Compare the common expression “daughter of Zion.”
12 tn Heb “not for winnowing and not for cleansing.” The words “it will not be a gentle breeze” are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation here for clarification.
13 tn The word “No” is not in the text but is carried over from the connection with the preceding line “not for...”
14 tn Heb “will speak judgments against them.”
15 tn Heb “he is coming up like clouds.” The words “The enemy” are supplied in the translation to identify the referent and the word “gathering” is supplied to try to convey the significance of the simile, i.e., that of quantity and of an approaching storm.
16 tn Heb “his chariots [are] like a whirlwind.” The words “roar” and “sound” are supplied in the translation to clarify the significance of the simile.
17 tn The words “I cry out” are not in the text, but the words that follow are obviously not the LXX’s. They are either those of the people or of Jeremiah. Taking them as Jeremiah’s parallels the interjection of Jeremiah’s response in 4:10 which is formally introduced.
18 tn Heb “Woe to us!” The words “woe to” are common in funeral laments and at the beginning of oracles of judgment. In many contexts they carry the connotation of hopelessness or apprehensiveness of inevitable doom.
19 tn Heb “Oh, Jerusalem, wash your heart from evil.”
20 tn Heb “For a voice declaring from Dan and making heard disaster from the hills of Ephraim...”
21 tn The words “They are saying” are not in the text but are implicit in the connection and are supplied in the translation for clarification.
22 tn The word “surrounding” is not in the text but is implicit and is supplied in the translation for clarification.
23 tn Or “Here they come!” Heb “Look!” or “Behold!” Or “Announce to the surrounding nations, indeed [or yes] proclaim to Jerusalem, ‘Besiegers...’” The text is very elliptical here. Some of the modern English versions appear to be emending the text from הָגָה (hazeh) to either הָהָה (hannah, “these things”; so NEB), or הָהָה (hazeh, “this”; so NIV). The solution proposed here is as old as the LXX which reads, “Behold, they have come.”
24 tn The words, “this message,” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to make the introduction of the quote easier.
“Those who besiege cities² are coming from a distant land. They are ready to raise the battle cry against³ the towns in Judah.”¹

4:17 They will surround Jerusalem⁴ like men guarding a field⁵ because they have rebelled against me,” says the Lord.

4:18 “The way you have lived and the things you have done⁶ will bring this on you. This is the punishment you deserve, and it will be painful indeed.⁶ The pain will be so bad it will pierce your heart.”⁷

4:19 I said,⁸ “Oh, the feeling in the pit of my stomach!⁹
I writhe in anguish. Oh, the pain in my heart!¹⁰
My heart pounds within me. I cannot keep silent.
For I hear the sound of the trumpet;¹¹ the sound of the battle cry pierces my soul!¹²

4:20 I see¹³ one destruction after another taking place,

¹ tn Heb “Besiegers.” For the use of this verb to refer to besieging a city compare Isa 1:8.
² tn Heb “They have raised their voices against.” The verb here, a vav (ו) consecutive with an imperfect, continues the nuance of the preceding participle “are coming.”
³ tn Heb “will surround her.” The antecedent is Jerusalem in the preceding verse. The referent is again made explicit in the translation to avoid any possible lack of clarity. The verb form here is a form of the verb that emphasizes the fact as being as good as done (i.e., it is a prophetic perfect).
⁴ sn There is some irony involved in the choice of the simile since the men guarding a field were there to keep thieves from getting in and stealing the crops. Here the besiegers are guarding the city to keep people from getting out.
⁵ tn Heb “Your way and your deeds.”
⁶ tn Heb “How bitter!”
⁷ tn Heb “Indeed, it reaches to your heart.” The subject must be the pain alluded to in the last half of the preceding line: the verb is in the masculine, agreeing with the adjective translated “painful.” The only other possible antecedent “punishment” is feminine.
⁸ tn The words “I said” are not in the text. They are used to mark the shift from the Lord’s promise of judgment to Jeremiah’s lament concerning it.
⁹ tn Heb “My bowels! My bowels!”
¹⁰ tn Heb “the walls of my heart!”
¹¹ tn Heb “the sound of the trumpet,” but the modern equivalent is “trumpet” and is more readily understandable.
¹² tc The translation reflects a different division of the last two lines than that suggested by the Masoretes. The written text (the Kethib) reads “for the sound of the ram’s horn I have heard [or “you have heard,” if the form is understood as the old second feminine singular perfect] my soul” followed by “the battle cry” in the last line. The translation is based on taking “my soul” with the last line and understanding an elliptical expression “the battle cry [to] my soul.” Such an elliptical expression is in keeping with the elliptical nature of the exclamations at the beginning of the verse (cf. the literal translations of the first two lines of the verse in the notes on the words “stomach” and “heart”).
¹³ tn This verse is not in the text here or at the beginning of the third line. They are supplied in the translation to show that this is Jeremiah’s vision of what will happen as a result of the invasion announced in 4:5-9, 11-17a.

¹⁴ tn Heb “my.” This is probably not a reference to Jeremiah’s own tents since he foresees the destruction of the whole land. Jeremiah so identifies with the plight of his people that he sees the destruction of their tents as though they were his very own. It would probably lead to confusion to translate literally and it is not uncommon in Hebrew laments for the community or its representative to speak of the community as an “I.” See for example the interchange between first singular and first plural pronouns in Ps 44:4-8.
¹⁵ tn Heb “my.”
¹⁶ tn It is not altogether clear what Jeremiah intends by the use of this metaphor. In all likelihood he means that the defenses of Israel’s cities and towns have offered no more resistance than nomads’ tents. However, in light of the fact that the word “tent” came to be used generically for a person’s home (cf. 1 Kgs 8:66; 12:16), it is possible that Jeremiah is here referring to the destruction of their homes and the resultant feeling of homelessness and loss of even elementary protection. Given the lack of certainty the present translation is rather literal here.
¹⁷ tn Heb “the sound of ram’s horns,” but the modern equivalent is “bugles” and is more readily understandable.
¹⁸ tn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to show clearly the shift in speaker. Jeremiah has been speaking; now the Lord answers, giving the reason for the devastation Jeremiah foresees.
¹⁹ tn Heb “For....” This gives the explanation for the destruction envisaged in 4:20 to which Jeremiah responds in 4:19, 21.
²⁰ tn Heb “They are senseless children.”
²¹ tn Heb “I looked at the land and beheld...” This indicates the visionary character of Jeremiah’s description of the future condition of the land of Israel.
²² tn Heb “formless and empty.” This is a case of hendiatris (two nouns joined by “and” both describe the same thing): one noun retains its full nominal force, the other functions as an adjective. The words ἄστρυ κατέκαλλον (kotu vankaal) allude to Gen 1:2, hyperbolically picturing a reversal of creation and return to the original precreation chaos.
²³ tn Heb “there was no man/human being.”
4:26 I looked and saw that the fruitful land had become a desert and that all of the cities had been laid in ruins. The LORD had brought this all about because of his blazing anger.  

4:27 All this will happen because the LORD said, “The whole land will be desolate; however, I will not completely destroy it. Because of this the land will mourn and the sky above will grow black. For I have made my purpose known and I will not relent or turn back from carrying it out.”  

4:29 At the sound of the approaching horsemen and archers the people of every town will flee. Some of them will hide in the thickets. Others will climb up among the rocks. All the cities will be deserted. No one will remain in them.  

4:30 And you, Zion, city doomed to destruction, you accomplish nothing by wearing a beautiful dress, decking yourself out in jewels of gold, and putting on eye shadow! You are making yourself beautiful for nothing. Your lovers spurn you. They want to kill you.  

4:31 In fact, I hear a cry like that of a woman in labor, a cry of anguish like that of a woman giving birth to her first baby. It is the cry of Daughter Zion gasping for breath, reaching out for help, saying, “I am done in!”

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4:13 for the usage of “Woe to...”

15 tn These words are not in the text, but since the words at the end are obviously those of the LORD, they are supplied in the translation here to mark the shift in speaker from 4:29-31 where Jeremiah is the obvious speaker.

16 tn It is not clear who is being addressed here. The verbs are plural so they are not addressed to Jeremiah per se. Since the passage is talking about the people of Jerusalem, it is unlikely they are addressed here except perhaps rhetorically. Some have suggested that the heavenly court is being addressed here as in Job 1:6-8; 2:1-3. It is clear from Jer 23:18; 22; Amos 3:7 that the prophets had access to this heavenly counsel through visions (cf. 1 Kgs 22:19-23), so Jeremiah could have been privy to this speech through that means. Though these are the most likely addressees, it is too presumptuous to supply such an explicit addressee without clearer indication in the text. The translation will just have to run the risk of the probable erroneous assumption by most English readers that the addressee is Jeremiah.

17 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

18 tn Heb “who does justice and seeks faithfulness.”

19 tn Heb “squares. If you can find...if there is one person...then I will...”

20 tn Heb “for your pardon.”

21 tn Heb “Though they say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives.’” The idea of “swear on oath” comes from the second line.

22 On the translation see the translation note on Jer 23:18; 22; Amos 3:7 on the translation of the phrase “As surely as the LORD lives.”

23 tn Heb “Surely.”

24 tn Heb “they swear falsely.”

25 tn Heb “O LORD, are your eyes not to faithfulness?” The question is rhetorical and expects a positive answer.

26 tn Commentaries and lexicons debate the meaning of the verb here. The MT is pointed as though from a verb meaning “to write in anguish or contrition” (םָלָה,šlah); see, e.g., BDB 297 s.v. בָּלָה 2.c), but some commentaries and lexicons repoint the text as though from a verb meaning “to be sick,” thus “to feel pain” (חָלָה, khalah); see, e.g., HALOT 304 s.v. חָלָה 3). The former appears more appropriate to the context.

27 tn Heb “They made their faces as hard as a rock.”

Judah is JustlyDeserving of Coming Judgment

5:1 The LORD said, “Go up and down through the streets of Jerusalem. Look around and see for yourselves. Search through its public squares. See if any of you can find a single person who deals honestly and tries to be truthful. If you can, then I will not punish this city.

5:2 These people make promises in the name of the LORD. But the fact is, what they swear to is really a lie.  

5:3 LORD, I know you look for faithfulness. But even when you punish these people, they feel no remorse. Even when you nearly destroy them, they refuse to be corrected. They have become as hardheaded as a rock.
They refuse to change their ways.¹

5:4 I thought, “Surely it is only the igno-
rant poor who act this way.”²
They act like fools because they do not
know what the LORD demands.³
They do not know what their God re-
quires of them.⁴

5:5 I will go to the leaders⁵
and speak with them.
Surely they know what the LORD de-
mands.⁶
Surely they know what their God requires
of them.⁷
Yet all of them, too, have rejected his
authority
and refuse to submit to him.⁸

5:6 So like a lion from the thicket their
enemies will kill them.
Like a wolf from the desert they will de-
stroy them.
Like a leopard they will lie in wait out
side their cities
and totally destroy anyone who ventures
out.⁹
For they have rebelled so much
and done so many unfaithful things.¹⁰

5:7 The LORD asked,¹¹
“How can I leave you unpunished, Jeru-
usalem?”¹²
Your people¹³ have rejected me
and have worshiped gods that are not
gods at all.¹⁴

Even though I supplied all their needs,¹⁵
they were like an unfaithful wife to
me.¹⁶
They went flocking¹⁷ to the houses of
prostitutes.¹⁸

5:8 They are like lusty, well-fed¹⁹ stal-
ions.
Each of them lusts after²⁰ his neighbor’s
wife.
5:9 I will surely punish them for doing
such things!”²¹ says the LORD.
“I will surely bring retribution on such a
nation as this!”²²

¹ tn Or “to repent”; Heb “to turn back.”
² tn Heb “Surely they are poor.” The translation is intended
to make clear the explicit contrasts and qualifications drawn
in this verse and the next.
³ tn Heb “the way of the LORD.”
⁴ tn Heb “the judgment [or ordinance] of their God.”
⁵ tn Or “people in power”; Heb “the great ones.”
⁶ tn Heb “the way of the LORD.”
⁷ tn Heb “the judgment [or ordinance] of their God.”
⁸ tn Heb “have broken the yoke and torn off the yoke
ropes.” Compare Jer 2:20 and the note there.
⁹ tn Heb “So a lion from the thicket will kill them. A wolf
from the desert will destroy them. A leopard will watch out
side their cities. Anyone who goes out from them will be torn
in pieces.” However, it is unlikely that, in the context of judg-
ment that Jeremiah has previously been describing, literal
lions are meant. The animals are metaphorical for their en-
¹⁰ tn Heb “their rebellions are so many and their unfaithful
acts so numerous.”
¹¹ tn These words are not in the text, but are supplied in the
translation to make clear who is speaking.
¹² tn Heb “How can I forgive [or pardon] you.” The pronoun
“you” is second feminine singular, referring to the city. See v.
1.
¹³ tn Heb “your children.”
¹⁴ tn Heb “and they have sworn [oaths] by not-gods.”
¹⁵ tn Heb “I satisfied them to the full.”
¹⁶ tn Heb “they committed adultery.” It is difficult to decide
whether literal adultery with other women or spiritual adultery
with other gods is meant. The word for adultery is used for
both in the book of Jeremiah. For examples of its use for spiri-
tual adultery see 3:8; 9:9.2. For examples of its use for liter-
al adultery see 7:9; 23:14. The context here could argue for ei-
er. The swearing by other gods and the implicit contradic-
tion in their actions in contrast to the expected gratitude for
supplying their needs argues for spiritual adultery. However,
the reference to prostitution in the next line and the reference
to chasing after their neighbor’s wives argues for literal adul-
tery. The translation opts for spiritual adultery because of the
contrast implicit in the concessive clause.
¹⁷ tn There is a great deal of debate about the meaning of
this word. Most of the modern English versions follow the lead
of lexicographers who relate this word to a noun meaning “troop”
and understand it to mean “they trooped together” (cf. BDB 151 s.v. יַנִּים Hithpo.2 and compare the usage in Mic
5:1 [4:14 HT]). A few of the modern English versions and com-
mentaries follow the reading of the Greek and read a word meaning “they lodged” (reading ἐκείνην [etkein] from ἤτοί
[etoi], cf. HALOT 177 s.v. Hithpo.2, and compare the usage in 1 Kgs 17:20) instead of יַנִּים [yanim]. W. L. Holladay (Jer-
emiah [Hermeneia], 1:180) sees a reference here to the cul-
tic practice of cutting oneself in supplication to pagan gods
(cf. BDB 151 s.v. יַנִּים Hithpo.1 and compare the usage in 1
Kgs 18:28). The houses of prostitutes would then be a refer-
ence to ritual prostitutions at the pagan shrines. The translation
follows BDB and the majority of modern English versions.
¹⁸ tn Heb “to a house of a prostitute.”
¹⁹ sn This could be a reference to cultic temple prostitution
connected with the pagan shrines. For allusion to this in the
OT, see, e.g., Deut 23:17 and 2 Kgs 23:7.
²⁰ tn The meanings of these two adjectives are uncertain.
The translation of the first adjective is based on assuming
that the word is a defectively written participle related to the
noun “testicle” (םָדַד Hiphil participle יִתְגָּדוּדֶד [yitgudad]) from a verb related to יִטְגָּדָד [yitgad]; Lev 21:20) and hence “having testicles” (cf. HALOT 1379 s.v. "lions")
instead of מָזוֹן [mazon] instead of מָזוֹן (mashkim) from a root מָזוֹן (mashkhim), which is otherwise unattested in either ver-
bal or nominal forms. The second adjective is best derived
from a verb root meaning “to feed” (a Hophal participle יָזַן [yazen] from the root יָזַן [yazen] reading יָזַן [yazen] [רַּעַן [raan] reading יָזַן [yazen]; cf. BDB 266 s.v. "rat") for which there is the cognate noun יָזֵן [yazen]; cf. 2
Ch 11:23)). This is more likely than the derivation from a root יָזַן [yazen] reading יָזַן [yazen], a Pual participle with the Qere) which is otherwise unattested in verbal or nominal forms
and whose meaning is dependent only on a supposed Arabic cognate (cf. HALOT 387 s.v. "rat").
²¹ tn Heb “neighs after.”
²² tn Heb “Should I not punish them?... Should I not bring
retribution?...” The rhetorical questions have the force of
strong declarations.
5:10 The Lord commanded the enemy, 1
"March through the vineyards of Israel and Judah and ruin them. 2
But do not destroy them completely. Strip off their branches for these people do not belong to the Lord. 3
5:11 For the nations of Israel and Judah 4
have been very unfaithful to me; " says the Lord.
5:12 "These people have denied what the Lord says. 5
They have said, ‘That is not so!’ 6
No harm will come to us. We will not experience war and famine. 7
5:13 The prophets will prove to be full of wind. 8
The Lord has not spoken through them. 9
So, let what they say happen to them." 10

5:14 Because of that, 11 the Lord, the God who rules over all, 11 said to me, 12

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1 tn These words to not appear in the Hebrew text but have been added in the translation for the sake of clarity to identify the inquired addressed.
2 tn Heb "through her vine rows and destroy." No object is given but "vines" must be implicit. The word for "vineyards" (or "vine rows") is a hapax legomenon and its derivation is debated. BDB 1004 s.v. והשָׁרְתֶּה (shuroteha) relates it to a Mishnaic Hebrew and Palestinian Aramaic word meaning "row." HALOT 1348 s.v. והשָׁרְתֶּה also repoints to והשָׁרְתֶּה and relates it to a noun meaning "word," preferring to see the reference here to the walled terraces on which the vineyards were planted. The difference in meaning is minimal.
3 tn In the light of the context and Jeremiah's identification of Israel as a vine (cf., e.g., 2:21) and a vineyard (cf., e.g., 12:10), it is likely that this verse has a totally metaphorical significance. The enemy is to go through the vineyard that is Israel and Judah and destroy all those who have been unfaithful to the Lord. It is not impossible, however, that the verse has a double meaning, a literal one and a figurative one: the enemy is not only to destroy Israel and Judah's vines but to destroy Israel and Judah, lopping off the wicked Israelites who, because of their covenant unfaithfulness, the Lord has disowned. If the verse is totally metaphorical one might translate: "Pass through my vineyard, Israel and Judah, and wreaking destruction. But do not destroy all of the people. Cut down like branches those unfaithful people because they no longer belong to the Lord."
4 tn Heb "the house of Israel and the house of Judah."
5 tn Heb "have denied the Lord." The words "What...says" are implicit in what follows.
6 tn Or "he will do nothing"; Heb "Not he [or it]!"
7 tn Heb "we will not see the sword and famine."
8 tn Heb "will be wind."
9 tn There is a wordplay on the Hebrew word translated "wind" (שָׁרְתֶּה, shurote) which also means "spirit." The prophets spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord (cf., e.g., 2 Chr 20:14); hence the prophet was sometimes called "the man of the spirit" (cf. Hos 9:7). The people were claiming that the prophets were speaking lies and hence were full of wind, not the Spirit.
10 tn Heb "Therefore."
11 tn Heb "The Lord God of armies." See the translator's note at 2:19.
12 tn The words, "to me" are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for clarification.
13 tn Heb "you have spoken." The text here דַּבֶּרֶכֶם, (dabberem, "you have spoken") is either a case of a scribal error for דַּבֶּרָם (dabberam, "they have spoken") or an example of the rapid shift in addressee which is common in Jeremiah.
14 tn Heb "this word."
15 tn Heb "like wood and it [i.e., the fire I put in your mouth] will consume them."
16 tn Heb "oracle of the Lord."
17 tn Heb "Behold!"
18 tn Heb "house of Israel."
19 tn Heb "All of them are mighty warriors."
20 tn Heb "his quiver [is] an open grave." The order of the lines has been reversed to make the transition from "nation" to "their arrows" easier.
21 tn Heb "eat up."
22 tn Or "eat up your grapes and figs"; Heb "eat up your vines and your fig trees."
23 sn It was typical for an army in time of war in the ancient Near East not only to eat up the crops but to destroy the means of further production.
24 tn Heb "in those days."
Jeremiah, when your people ask, ‘Why has the Lord our God done all this to us?’ tell them, ‘It is because you rejected me and served foreign gods in your own land. So you must serve foreigners in a land that does not belong to you.’

5:20 “Proclaim this message among the descendants of Jacob. Make it known throughout Judah.

5:21 Tell them: ‘Hear this, you foolish people who have no understanding, who have eyes but do not discern, who have ears but do not perceive:

5:22 “You should fear me!” says the Lord. “You should tremble in awe before me! I made the sand to be a boundary for the sea, a permanent barrier that it can never cross. Its waves may roll, but they can never prevail. They may roar, but they can never cross beyond that boundary.’

5:23 But these people have stubborn and rebellious hearts. They have turned aside and gone their own way.

5:24 They do not say to themselves, “Let us revere the Lord our God. It is he who gives us the autumn rains and the spring rains at the proper time. It is he who assures us of the regular weeks of harvest.”

5:25 Your misdeeds have stopped these things from coming. Your sins have deprived you of my bounty.

5:26 “Indeed, there are wicked scoundrels among my people. They lie in wait like bird catchers hiding in ambush. They set deadly traps to catch people.

5:27 Like a cage filled with the birds that have been caught, their houses are filled with the gains of their fraud and deceit. That is how they have gotten so rich and powerful.

5:28 That is how they have grown fat and sleek. There is no limit to the evil things they do.

They do not plead the cause of the fatherless in such a way as to win it. They do not defend the rights of the poor.

5:29 I will certainly punish them for doing such things!” says the Lord. “I will certainly bring retribution on such a nation as this.”

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1 tn The word, “Jeremiah,” is not in the text but the second person address in the second half of the verse is obviously to him. The word is supplied in the translation here for clarity.
2 tn The MT reads the second masculine plural; this is probably a case of attraction to the second masculine plural pronoun in the preceding line. An alternative would be to understand a shift from speaking first to the people in the first half of the verse and then speaking to Jeremiah in the second half where the verb is second masculine singular. E.g., “When you [people] say, ‘Why…?’ then you, Jeremiah, tell them…”
3 tn Heb “As you left me and... so you will...” The translation was chosen so as to break up a rather long and complex sentence.
4 sn This is probably a case of deliberate ambiguity (double entendre). The adjective “foreigners” is used for both foreign people (so Jer 30:8; 51:51) and foreign gods (so Jer 2:25; 3:13). See also Jer 16:13 for the idea of having to serve other gods in the lands of exile.
5 sn The verbs are second plural here. Jeremiah, speaking for the Lord, addresses his people, calling on them to make the message further known.
6 tn Heb “in the house of Jacob.”
7 tn Heb “they have eyes but they do not see, they have ears but they do not hear.”
8 tn Heb “Should you not fear me? Should you not tremble in awe before me?” The rhetorical questions expect the answer explicit in the translation.
9 tn Heb “it.” The referent is made explicit to avoid any possible confusion.
10 sn These words, “their own way” are not in the text but are implicit and are supplied in the translation for clarity.
11 tn Heb “say in their hearts.”
12 tn Heb “who keeps for us the weeks appointed for harvest.”
13 tn Heb “have turned these things away.”
14 tn Heb “have withheld the good from you.”
15 tn The meaning of the last three words is uncertain. The pointing and meaning of the Hebrew word rendered “hiding in ambush” is debated. BDDB relates the form (בַּקְשָׁק, bkesakh) to a root בקשׁ (shakkakh), which elsewhere means “decrease, abate” (cf. BDDB 1013 s.v. bkesakh), and notes that this is usually understood as “like the crouching of fowlers,” but they say this meaning is dubious. HALOT 1345 s.v. בקשׁ questions the validity of the text and offers three proposals; the second appears to create the least textual modification, i.e., reading בקשׁ (kesakh, “as in the hiding place of (bird catchers)”; for the word בקשׁ (sakkh) see HALOT 1236 s.v. בקש 4 and compare Lam 2:6 for usage. The versions do not help. The Greek does not translate the first two words of the line. The proposal given in HALOT is accepted with some hesitancy.
16 tn Heb “a destroying thing.”
17 tn The words, “that have been caught” are not in the text but are implicit in the comparison.
18 tn Heb “are filled with deceit.” The translation assumes a figure of speech of cause for effect (metonymy). Compare the same word in the same figure in Zeph 1:9.
19 tn Heb “therefore they have gotten great and rich.”
20 tn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to show that this line is parallel with the preceding.
21 tn The meaning of this word is uncertain. This verb occurs only here. The lexicons generally relate it to the word translated “plate” in Song 5:14 and understand it to mean “smooth, shiny” (so BDDB 799 s.v. לַעֲשָׂר) or “fat” (so HALOT 850 s.v. לעשא). The word in Song 5:14 more likely means “smooth” than “plate” (so TEV). So “sleek” is most likely here.
22 tn Heb “they cross over/transgress with respect to matters of evil.”
23 tn Heb “Should I not punish...? Should I not bring retribution...?” The rhetorical questions function as emphatic declarations.
5:30 “Something horrible and shocking is going on in the land of Judah.
5:31 The prophets prophesy lies. The priests exercise power by their own authority. And my people love to have it this way. But they will not be able to help you when the time of judgment comes!

The Destruction of Jerusalem Depicted

6:1 “Run for safety, people of Benjamin! Get out of Jerusalem!
Sound the trumpet in Tekoa!
Light the signal fires at Beth Hakkerem!
For disaster lurks out of the north; it will bring great destruction.
6:2 I will destroy Daughter Zion, who is as delicate and defenseless as a young maiden.

1 sn Compare and contrast Jer 4:6. There people in the outlying areas were warned to seek safety in the fortified city of Jerusalem. Here they are told to flee it because it was about to be destroyed.
2 sn Compare and contrast Jer 6:5. The parallel usage of the verb in Hos 4:5 argues for the meaning “destroy.”
3 sn There is a wordplay involving “sound…in Tekoa” mentioned in the study note on “destruction” in v. 1. The Hebrew verb “they will pitch” is from the same root as the word translated “sound” (iq’tu [תִּקְעוּ] here and iq’tu [תִּקְעוּ] in v. 1). The translation of this verse attempts to clarify the point of this extended metaphor.
4 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
5 sn These are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
6 sn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity. Some commentaries and English versions see these not as the words of the enemy but as those of the Israelites expressing their fear that the enemy will launch a night attack against them and further destroy them. The Israelites expressing their fear that the enemy will launch a night attack against them and further destroy them. The translation of this verse attempts to clarify the point of this extended metaphor.
7 sn These words are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
8 sn Jerusalem is personified as a young maiden who is helpless in the hands of her enemies.
9 sn Jerusalem is personified as a young maiden who is helpless in the hands of her enemies.
10 sn Compare and contrast Jer 4:6. There people in the outlying areas were warned to seek safety in the fortified city of Jerusalem. Here they are told to flee it because it was about to be destroyed.
11 sn For disaster lurks out of the north; it will bring great destruction.
12 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
13 sn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity. Some commentaries and English versions see these not as the words of the enemy but as those of the Israelites expressing their fear that the enemy will launch a night attack against them and further destroy them.
14 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
15 sn These words are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
16 sn This passage is emotionally charged. There are two expressions of assonance or wordplay in the verse: “sound” (Heb tiq’u, “blow”), which has the same consonants as “Tekoa” (Heb w’tiq’u), and “signal fire,” which comes from the same root as “light” (Heb s’u mas’et, “lift up”). There is also an example of personification where disaster is said to “lurk” (Heb “looks down on”) out of the north. This gives a sense of urgency and concern for the coming destruction.
17 sn The verb here is another example of the Hebrew verb form that indicates the action is as good as done (a Hebrew prophetic perfect).
18 sn The beautiful and delicate one I will destroy, the daughter of Zion. The English versions and commentaries are divided over the rendering of this verse because (1) there are two verbs with these same consonants, one meaning “to be like” and the other meaning “to be destroyed” (transitive) or “to destroy” (transitive), and (2) the word rendered “beautiful” (nu’uvaḥ) can be understood as a noun meaning “pasture” or as a defective writing of an adjective meaning “beautiful, lovely” (nu’uvaḥ). Hence some render “Fair Zion, you are like a lovely pasture,” reading the verb form as an example of the old second feminine singular perfect. Although this may fit the imagery of the next verse, that rendering ignores the absence of a preposition (ה or ה, כ or ע, both of which can be translated “to”) that normally goes with the verb “be like” and drops the conjunction in front of the adjective “delicate.” The parallel usage of the verb in Hos 4:5 argues for the meaning “destroy.”
19 sn This passage is emotionally charged. There are two expressions of assonance or wordplay in the verse: “sound” (Heb tiq’u, “blow”), which has the same consonants as “Tekoa” (Heb w’tiq’u), and “signal fire,” which comes from the same root as “light” (Heb s’u mas’et, “lift up”). There is also an example of personification where disaster is said to “lurk” (Heb “looks down on”) out of the north. This gives a sense of urgency and concern for the coming destruction.
20 sn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity. Some commentaries and English versions see these not as the words of the enemy but as those of the Israelites expressing their fear that the enemy will launch a night attack against them and further destroy them. The connection with the next verse, however, fits better with them if they are the words of the enemy.
21 sn For the usage of the verb “graze” to mean “strip” or “devastate” see BDB 945 s.v. הַנֲאוֹת 2.c. For a similar use of the word normally meaning “hand” to mean portion compare 2 Sam 19:43 (19:44 HT).
22 sn There is a wordplay involving “sound…in Tekoa” mentioned in the study note on “destruction” in v. 1. The Hebrew verb “they will pitch” is from the same root as the word translated “sound” (iq’tu [תִּקְעוּ] here and iq’tu [תִּקְעוּ] in v. 1).
23 sn These words are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
24 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
25 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
26 sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
27 sn For an explanation of the significance of this title see the study note on 2:19.
28 sn For an explanation of the significance of this title see the study note on 2:19.
and build up a siege ramp against its walls. This is the city which is to be punished. Nothing but oppression happens in it.  
6:7 As a well continually pours out fresh water so it continually pours out wicked deeds. Sounds of violence and destruction echo throughout it. All I see are sick and wounded people.  
6:8 So take warning, Jerusalem, or I will abandon you in disgust and make you desolate, a place where no one can live.”

6:9 This is what the LORD who rules over all said to me: “Those who remain in Israel will be like the grapes thoroughly gleaned from a vine. So go over them again, as though you were a grape harvester passing your hand over the branches one last time.”

6:10 I answered, “Who would listen if I spoke to them and warned them? Their ears are so closed that they cannot hear! Indeed, what the LORD says is offensive to them. They do not like it at all.  
6:11 I am as full of anger as you are, LORD. I am tired of trying to hold it in.”

The LORD answered, “Vent it, then, on the children who play in the street and on the young men who are gathered together. Husbands and wives are to be included as well as the old and those who are advanced in years.  
6:12 Their houses will be turned over to others as will their fields and their wives. For I will unleash my power against those who live in this land,” says the LORD.  
6:13 “That is because, from the least important to the most important of them, all of them are greedy for dishonest gain. Prophets and priests alike, all of them practice deceit.”

6:14 They offer only superficial help for the harm my people have suffered.

1 tn Heb “Cut down its trees and build up a siege ramp against Jerusalem.” The referent has been moved forward from the second line for clarity.  
2 tn Or “must be punished.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. The LXX reads, “Woe, city of falsehood!” The MT presents two anomalous forms: a masculine singular verb with a feminine singular subject in a verbal stem (Hophal) that elsewhere does not have the meaning “is to be punished.” Hence many follow the Greek which presupposes (hoy’irhasheper) instead of (beqerim qere). For the Hophal perfect (hippokad) should be revocalized as a Niphal infinitive absolute (hipqad). The Greek is the easier reading in light of the parallelism, and it would be hard to explain how the MT arose from it. KBL suggests reading a noun meaning “licentiousness” which occurs elsewhere only in Mishnaic Hebrew, hence “this is the city, the licentious one” (attributive apposition; cf. KBL 775 s.v. qre). Perhaps the Hophal perfect (hippokad) was used by the Hebrew writer to solve both anomalies in the MT since the Niphal is used in this nuance and the infinitive absolute can function in place of a finite verb (cf. GKC 346 §113.ee and ff). This, however, is mere speculation and is supported by no Hebrew MS.

3 tn Heb “All of it oppression in its midst.”

4 tc Hebrew “As a well makes cool/fresh its water, she makes cool/fresh her wickedness.” The translation follows the reading proposed by the Masoretes (Qere) which reads a rare form of the word “well” (הָיָר hayar) for נָכָר (nakar) in place of the form written in the text (Kethib, nacar), which means “citizen.” The latter noun is masculine and the pronoun “its” is feminine. If indeed הָיָר (hayir) is a byform of נָכָר (nakar), which is feminine, it would agree in gender with the pronoun. It also forms a more appropriate comparison since cisterns do not hold fresh water.

5 tn Heb “Violence and destruction are heard in it.”

6 tn Heb “Sickness and wound are continually before my face.”

7 tn This word is not in the text but is supplied in the translation. Jeremiah uses a figure of speech (enallage) where the speaker turns from talking about someone to address him/her directly.

8 tn Heb “lend my soul [=I] becomes disgusted with you.”

9 sn The playword begun with “sound…in Tekoa” in v. 1 and continued with “they will pitch” in v. 3 is concluded here with “turn away” (רְמֶנֵכְהוּ remenakah) in v. 1, רְמֶנֶקִיו remenike (“removal” here) in v. 3 and רְמֶנֶקִי remeneki (here).

10 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”

11 sn For an explanation of the significance of this title see the study note on 2:19.

12 tn Heb “Pass your hand back over the branches like a grape harvester.” The translation is intended to clarify the metaphor that Jeremiah should try to rescue some from the coming destruction.

13 tn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity.

14 tn Or “To whom shall I speak? To whom shall I give warning? Who will listen?” Heb “Unto whom shall I speak and give warning that they may listen?”

15 tn Heb “are uncircumcised.”

16 tn Heb “Behold!”

17 tn Heb “They do not take pleasure in it.”

18 tn Heb “I am full of the wrath of the LORD.”

19 tn These words are not in the text but are implicit from the words that follow. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

20 tn Heb “Pour it out.”

21 tn Heb “are to be captured.”

22 tn Heb “I will reach out my hand.” This figure involves both comparing God to a person (anthropomorphism) and substitution (metonymy) where hand is put for the actions or exertions of the hand. A common use of “hand” is for the exertion of power or strength (cf. Deut 29:9 s.v. מַעֲלָה 2 and 299-90 s.v. מַעֲלָה 1.e(2)); cf. Deut 34:12; Ps 78:42; Jer 16:21.

23 tn Heb “They heal [=bandage] the wound of my people lightly”; TEV “They act as if my people’s wounds were only scratches.”
They say, ‘Everything will be all right!’ But everything is not all right!

6:15 Are they ashamed because they have done such shameful things? No, they are not at all ashamed. They do not even know how to blush! So they will die, just like others have died. They will be brought to ruin when I punish them,” says the LORD.

6:16 The LORD said to his people:

“You are standing at the crossroads. So consider your path. Ask where the old, reliable paths are. Ask where the path is that leads to blessing and follow it. If you do, you will find rest for your souls.” But they said, “We will not follow it!”

6:17 The LORD said,

“I appointed prophets as watchmen to warn you, saying: ‘Pay attention to the warning sound of the trumpet!’” But they said, “We will not pay attention!”

6:18 So the LORD said,

“Hear, you nations! Be witnesses and take note of what will happen to these people.

6:19 Hear this, you peoples of the earth:

1 tn Heb “They say, ‘Peace! Peace!’ and there is no peace!”
2 tn Heb “They will fall among the fallen.”
3 tn The words, “to his people” are not in the text but are implicit in the interchange of pronouns in the Hebrew of vv. 16-17. They are supplied in the translation here for clarity.
4 tn Heb “Stand at the crossroads and look.”
5 tn Heb “the ancient path,” i.e., the path the LORD set out in ancient times (cf. Deut 32:7).
6 tn Heb “the way of/to the good.”
7 tn These words are not in the text but are implicit in the interchange of pronouns in the Hebrew of vv. 16-17. They are supplied in the translation here for clarity.
8 tn Heb “I appointed watchmen over you.”
9 tn Heb “Pay attention to the sound of the trumpet.” The word “warning” is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied.
10 tn These words are not in the text but are implicit from the flow of the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
11 tn Heb “Know, congregation [or witness], what in [or against] them.” The meaning of this line is somewhat uncertain. The meaning of the noun of address in the second line (“witness,” rendered as an imperative in the translation, “Be witnesses”) is greatly debated. It is often taken as “congregation” but the lexicons and commentaries generally question the validity of reading that word since it is nowhere else applied to the nations. BDB 417 s.v. עֵדָה 3 says that the text is dubious. HALOT 747 s.v. עלמה 4 emends the text to עֵדָה (卻來). Several modern English versions (e.g., NIV, NCV, God’s Word) take it as the feminine singular noun “witness” (cf. BDB 729 s.v. עלמה) and understand it as a collective. This solution is also proposed by J. A. Thompson (Jeremiah [NLCOT], 259, n. 3) and appears to make the best sense in the context. The end of the line is very elliptical but is generally taken as either, “what I will do with/to them,” or “what is coming against them” (= “what will happen to them”) on the basis of the following context.
12 tn Heb “earth.”

‘Take note! I am about to bring disaster on these people. It will come as punishment for their scheming.’

For they have paid no attention to what I have said and they have rejected my law.

6:20 I take no delight when they offer up to me frankincense that comes from Sheba or sweet-smelling cane imported from a faraway land. I cannot accept the burnt offerings they bring me. I get no pleasure from the sacrifices they offer to me.

6:21 So, this is what the LORD says: ‘I will assuredly make these people stumble to their doom. Parents and children will stumble and fall to their destruction.

Friends and neighbors will die.’

6:22 “This is what the LORD says: ‘Beware! An army is coming from a land in the north. A mighty nation is stirring into action in faraway parts of the earth. Its soldiers are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride forth on their horses. Lined up in formation like men going into battle to attack you, Daughter Zion.’

6:24 The people cry out, “We have heard reports about them!”

13 tn Heb “Behold!”
14 tn Heb “disaster on these people, the fruit of their schemes.”
15 tn Heb “my word.”
16 tn Heb “To what purpose is it to me?” The question is rhetorical and expects a negative answer.
17 tn The words “when they offer up to me” are not in the text but are implicit from the following context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
18 tn Heb “Your burnt offerings are not acceptable and your sacrifices are not pleasing to me.” The shift from “your” to “their” is an example of the figure of speech (apostrophe) where the speaker turns from talking about someone to addressing him/her directly. Though common in Hebrew style, it is not common in English. The shift to the third person in the translation is an accommodation to English style.
19 tn This is an attempt to render the Hebrew particle rendered “behold” joined to the first person pronoun.
20 tn Heb “I will put stumbling blocks in front of these people.” In this context the stumbling blocks are the invading armies.
21 tn The words “and fall to their destruction” are implicit in the metaphor and are supplied in the translation for clarity.
22 tn Heb “people.”
23 sn Jerusalem is personified as a young maiden helpless before enemy attackers.
24 tn These words are not in the text, but, from the context, someone other than God is speaking and is speaking for and to the people (either Jeremiah or the people themselves). These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.
We have become helpless with fear!\(^1\) Anguish grips us, agony like that of a woman giving birth to a baby!

6:25 Do not go out into the countryside. Do not travel on the roads. For the enemy is there with sword in hand.\(^2\) They are spreading terror everywhere.\(^3\)

6:26 So I said,\(^4\) “Oh, my dear people,\(^5\) put on sackcloth and roll in ashes. Mourn with painful sobs as though you had lost your only child. For any moment now\(^6\) that destructive army\(^7\) will come against us.”

6:27 The Lord said to me,\(^8\) “I have made you like a metal assayer to test my people like ore.\(^9\) You are to observe them and evaluate how they behave.”\(^10\)

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\(^1\) tn Or “We have lost our strength to do battle”; Heb “Our hands hang limp [or helpless at our sides].” According to BDB 951 s.v. מִבְצָר Qal.2, this idiom is used figuratively for losing heart or energy. The best example of its figurative use of loss of strength or the feeling of helplessness is in Ezek 21:12 where it appears in the context of the heart (courage) melting, the spirit sinking, and the knees becoming like water. For other examples compare 2 Sam 4:1; Zeph 3:16. In Neh 6:9 it is used literally of the builders “dropping their hands from the work” out of fear. The words “with fear” are supplied in the translation because they are implicit in the context.

\(^2\) tn Heb “For the enemy has a sword.”

\(^3\) tn Heb “Fear is all around!”

\(^4\) tn These words are not in the text but are implicit from the context.

\(^5\) tn Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the translator’s note there.

\(^6\) tn Heb “suddenly.”

\(^7\) tn Heb “the destroyer.”

\(^8\) tn These words are not in the text but are implicit in the context.

\(^9\) tn Heb “I have made you an assayer of my people, a test[er]?” The meaning of the words translated “assayer” (בָּחוֹן bakhon) and “tester” (מֵאֶשׁ תַּם mivtsar) is uncertain. The word בָּחוֹן (bakhon) can mean “tower” (cf. BDB 103 s.v. בָּחוֹן) or “assayer” (cf. BDB 103 s.v. בָּחוֹן). The latter would be the more expected nuance because of the other uses of nouns and verbs from this root. The word מֵאֶשׁ תַּם (mivtsar) normally means “fortress” (cf. BDB 131 s.v. מִי-םֵאשׁ תַּם), but most modern commentaries and lexicons deem that nuance inappropriate here. HALOT follows a proposal that the word is to be reinterpreted as מֵאֶשׁ תַּם מֵאשׁ תַּם (mivtsar) and derived from a root מַחֲטַר (machtar) meaning “to test” (cf. HALOT 143 s.v. IV מַחֲטַר). That proposal makes the most sense in the context, but the root appears nowhere else in the OT.

\(^10\) tn Heb “test their way.”

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\(^11\) tn These words are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity. Some takes these words to be the continuation of the Lord’s commission of Jeremiah to the task of testing them. However, since this is the evaluation, the task appears to be complete. The words are better to be taken as Jeremiah’s report after he has completed the task.

\(^12\) tn Or “arch rebels,” or “hardened rebels.” Literally “rebels of rebels.”

\(^13\) tn Heb “The bellows blow fiercely; the lead is consumed by the fire.” The translation tries to clarify a metaphor involving ancient metallurgy. In the ancient refining process lead was added as a flux to remove impurities from silver ore in the process of oxidizing the lead. Jeremiah says that the lead has been used up and the impurities have not been removed. The translation is based on the recognition of an otherwise unused verb root meaning “blow” (נָקָחָר nakhar); cf. BDB 1123 s.v. נָקָחָר and HALOT 651 s.v. רָפָה) and the Masoretes’ suggestion that the consonants מֵאֶשׁ תַּם (me’eshtam) rather than מֵאֶשׁ תַּם (me’eshtam, “from their fire”) from an otherwise unattested noun מֵאֶשׁ תַּם (mivtsar) for ‘rejected silver from the fire’.

\(^14\) tn Heb “The refiner refines them in vain.”

\(^15\) tn This translation is intended to reflect the wordplay in the Hebrew text where the same root word is repeated in the two lines.

\(^16\) tn Heb “The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord.”

\(^17\) tn Heb “Proclaim there…” The adverb is unnecessary in English style.

\(^18\) sn That is, all those who have passed through the gates of the outer court and are standing in the courtyard of the temple.

\(^19\) tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.”

\(^20\) Or “Make good your ways and your actions.” J. Bright’s translation (“Reform the whole pattern of your conduct”); Jeremiah (AB), 52 is excellent.
continue to live in this land.\textsuperscript{1} 7:4 Stop putting your confidence in the false belief that says,\textsuperscript{2} "We are safe!\textsuperscript{3} The temple of the LORD is here! The temple of the LORD is here! The temple of the LORD is here!"\textsuperscript{4} 7:5 You must change\textsuperscript{5} the way you have been living and do what is right. You must treat one another fairly.\textsuperscript{6} 7:6 Stop oppressing foreigners who live in your land, children who have lost their fathers, and women who have lost their husbands.\textsuperscript{7} Stop killing innocent people\textsuperscript{8} in this land. Stop paying allegiance to\textsuperscript{9} other gods. That will only bring about your ruin.\textsuperscript{10} 7:7 If you stop doing these things,\textsuperscript{11} I will allow you to continue to live in this land\textsuperscript{12} which I gave to your ancestors as a lasting possession.\textsuperscript{13} 7:8 "But just look at you!\textsuperscript{14} You are putting your confidence in a false belief\textsuperscript{15} that will not deliver you.\textsuperscript{16} 7:9 You steal.\textsuperscript{17} You murder. You commit adultery. You lie when you swear on oath. You sacrifice to the god Baal. You pay allegiance to\textsuperscript{18} other gods whom you have not previously known. 7:10 Then you come and stand in my presence in this temple I have claimed as my own\textsuperscript{19} and say, "We are safe!\textsuperscript{20} You think you are so safe that you go on doing all those hateful sins!\textsuperscript{21} Do you think this temple I have claimed as my own?\textsuperscript{22} Is to be a hideout for robbers?\textsuperscript{23} You had better take note!\textsuperscript{24} I have seen for myself what you have done! says the LORD. 7:12 So, go to the place in Shiloh where I allowed myself to be worshiped\textsuperscript{25} in the early days. See what I did to it\textsuperscript{26} because of the wicked things my people Israel did. 7:13 You also have done all these things, says the LORD, and I have spoken to you over and over again.\textsuperscript{27} But you have not listened! You have refused to respond when I called you to repent!\textsuperscript{28} 7:14 So I will destroy this temple which I have claimed as my own,\textsuperscript{29} this temple that you are trusting to protect you. I will destroy this place that I gave to you and your ancestors, just like I...

\textsuperscript{1} In Heb “place” but this might be misunderstood to refer to the temple.

\textsuperscript{2} In Heb “Stop trusting in lying words which say.”

\textsuperscript{3} The words “We are safe!” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\textsuperscript{4} In Heb “The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these (i.e., these buildings).” Elsewhere triple repetition seems to mark a kind of emphasis (cf. Isa 6:3; Jer 22:29; Ezek 21:27 [32 HT]). The triple repetition that follows seems to be Jeremiah’s way of mocking the (false) sense of security that people had in the invincibility of Jerusalem because God dwelt in the temple. They appeared to be treating the temple as some kind of magical charm.

\textsuperscript{5} The words “We are safe!” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\textsuperscript{6} In Heb “you must do justice between a person and his fellow/neighbor.” The infinitive absolute precedes the finite verb for emphasis.

\textsuperscript{7} In Heb “Stop oppressing foreigner, orphan, and widow.”

\textsuperscript{8} In Heb “Stop shedding innocent blood.”

\textsuperscript{9} In Heb “going/following after.” See the translator’s note at 1 Sam 4:3, 11, 21-22.

\textsuperscript{10} In Heb “over which my name is called.” For this nuance of this idiom cf. HALOT Hiph.2.d(4) and see the usage in 2 Sam 12:28.

\textsuperscript{11} In Or “‘We are safe!’ – safe, you think, to go on doing all those hateful things.” Verses 9-10 are all one long sentence in the Hebrew text. It has been broken up for English stylistic reasons. Somewhat literally it reads “Will you steal…then say, ‘We are safe’?”’ (cf. Isa 6:3; Jer 22:29; Ezek 21:27 [32 HT]). The triple repetition that follows seems to mark a kind of emphasis. Cf. Exod 20:25; Deut 16:2; 6, 11.

\textsuperscript{12} In Heb “Is this house…a den/cave of robbers in your eyes?”

\textsuperscript{13} In Heb “Behold!”

\textsuperscript{14} In Heb “where I caused my name to dwell.” The translation does not adequately represent the theology of the LORD’s deliberate identification with a place where he chose to manifest his presence and desired to be worshiped (cf. Exod 20:25; Deut 16:2; 6, 11).

\textsuperscript{15} In Heb “over which my name is called.”

\textsuperscript{16} In Heb “over which my name is called.”

\textsuperscript{17} In Heb “you are trusting in lying words.” See the similar phrase in v. 4 and the note there.

\textsuperscript{18} In Heb “not profit [you].”

\textsuperscript{19} In Heb “will you steal…then say, ‘We are safe?’” Verses 9-10 are one long sentence in the Hebrew text.

\textsuperscript{20} In Heb “you go/follow after.” See the translator’s note at 2:5 for an explanation of the idiom involved here.
destroyed Shiloh.\(^1\) 7:15 And I will drive you out of my sight just like I drove out your relatives, the people of Israel."\(^2\)

7:16 Then the Lord said,\(^3\) "As for you, Jeremiah,\(^4\) do not pray for these people! Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf! Do not plead with me to save them,\(^5\) because I will not listen to you.

7:17 Do you see\(^6\) what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?\(^7\) 7:18 Children are gathering firewood, fathers are building fires with it, and women are mixing dough to bake cakes to offer to the goddess they call the Queen of Heaven.\(^8\) They are also pouring out drink offerings to other gods. They seem to do all this just\(^9\) to trouble me. 7:19 But I am not really the one being troubled!\(^10\)" says the Lord. "Rather they are bringing trouble on themselves to their own shame!\(^11\)

7:20 So," the Lord God\(^12\) says, "my raging fury will be poured out on this land.\(^13\) It will be poured out on human beings and animals, on trees and crops.\(^14\) And it will burn like a fire which cannot be extinguished."

7:21 The Lord said to the people of Judah,\(^15\) "The Lord God of Israel who rules over all\(^16\) says: ‘You might as well go ahead and add the meat of your burnt offerings to that of the other sacrifices and eat it, too!’\(^17\) 7:22 Consider this: When I spoke to your ancestors after I brought them out of Egypt, I did not merely give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices. 7:23 I also explicitly commanded them: \(^18\) ‘Obey me. If you do,\(^19\) will be your God and you will be my people. Live exactly the way I tell you\(^20\) and things will go well with you.’ 7:24 But they did not listen to me or pay any attention to me. They followed the stubborn inclinations of their own wicked hearts. They acted worse and worse instead of better.\(^21\)

7:25 From the time your an-
places of worship were essentially open air. For this use of the perfect see GKC 312 §106.

23; 3:2, 3; 6:26) than to introduce a new entity, Jerusalem.

ruption in the flow of the context to see the nation as a whole (vv. 27-28a) to second feminine singular. It causes less dis

text. Many English versions supply, “Jerusalem.” The address

which was involved in mourning.

“Cut your hair and throw it away.”

this verse. The words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

son plural pronouns in vv. 21-26 and the second singular in

text but are implicit in the shift from the second and third per

cient versions and modern English versions have done.

i.e., reading שָיִן (šāyin, “daily”).

Or “But your predecessors…” Heb “But they…. There is a confusing interchange in the pronouns in v. 25-26 which has led to some leveling in the ancient versions and the modern English versions. What is involved here are four levels of referents, the “you” of the present generation (vv. 21-22a), the ancestors who were delivered from Egypt (i.e., the “they” of vv. 22b-24), the “you” of v. 25 which involves all the Israelites from the Exodus to the time of speaking, and the “they” of v. 26 which cannot be the ancestors of v. 22-24 (since they cannot be more wicked than themselves) but must be an indefinite entity which is a part of the “you” of v. 25, i.e., the more immediate ancestors of the present generation. If this is in mind, there is no need to level the pronouns to “they” and “them” or to “you” and “your” as some of the ancient versions and modern English versions have done.

6 tn Heb “hardened [or made stiff] their neck.”

6 tn The words, “Then the Lord said to me” are not in the text but are implicit in the shift from the second and third person plural pronouns in vv. 21-26 and the second singular in this verse. The words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

7 tn Heb “Faithfulness has vanished. It is cut off from their lips.”

sn For the need for faithfulness see 5:1, 3.

8 tn The word “mourn” is not in the text. It is supplied in the translation for clarity to explain the significance of the words “Cut your hair and throw it away.”

sn Cf. Mic 1:16; Job 1:20 for other examples of this practice which was involved in mourning.

9 tn The words, “you people of this nation” are not in the text. Many English versions supply, “Jerusalem.” The address shifts from second masculine singular addressing Jeremiah (vv. 27-28a) to second feminine singular. It causes less disruption in the flow of the context to see the nation as a whole addressed here as a feminine singular entity (as, e.g., in 2:19, 23). See for a new entity, Jerusalem.

10 tn The verbs here are the Hebrew scheduling perfects. For this use of the perfect see GKC 312 §106.

11 tn Heb “the generation of his wrath.”

12 tn The words “I have rejected them” are not in the Hebrew text, which merely says “because.” These words are supplied in the translation to show more clearly the connection to the preceding.

13 tn Heb “have done the evil in my eyes.”

14 sn Compare, e.g., 2 Kgs 21:3, 5, 7; 23:4, 6; Ezek 8:3, 5, 10-12; 16. Manasseh had desecrated the temple by building altars, cult symbols, and idols in it. Josiah had purged the temple of these pagan elements. But it is obvious from both Jeremiah and Ezekiel that they had been replaced shortly after Josiah’s death. They were a primary cause of Judah’s guilt and punishment (see beside this passage, 19:5; 32:34-35).

15 tn Heb “the house which is called by my name.” Cf. 7:10, 11, 14 and see the translator’s note 7:10 for the explanation for this rendering.

16 tn Heb “high places.”

17 sn These places of worship were essentially open air shrines often located on hills or wooded heights. They were generally connected with pagan worship and equipped with altars of sacrifice and of incense and cult objects such as wooden poles and stone pillars which were symbols of the god and/or goddess worshiped at the site. The Israelites were commanded to tear down these Canaanite places of worship (Num 33:52) but they did not do so, often taking over the site for the worship of Yahweh but even then incorporating some of the pagan cult objects and ritual into their worship of Yahweh (1 Kgs 12:31, 32; 14:23). The prophets were especially opposed to these places and to this kind of syncretism (Hos 10:8; Amos 7:9) and to the pagan worship that was often practiced at them (Jer 7:31; 19:5; 32:35).

17 tn Heb “the high places of [or in] Topheth.”

18 sn The noun Topheth is generally explained as an artificial formation of a word related to the Aramaic word for “cooking stove” combined with the vowels for the word for “shame.” Hence, Jewish piety viewed it as a very shameful act, one that was contrary to the law (see Lev 18:21; 20:2-6). Child sacrifice was practiced during the reigns of the wicked kings Ahaz and Manasseh and apparently during Jeremiah’s day (cf. 2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6; Jer 32:35).

18 tn Heb “It never entered my heart.” The words “to command such a thing” do not appear in the Hebrew but are added for the sake of clarity.

19 tn Heb “Therefore, behold!”

20 tn Heb “it will no longer be said Topheth” or “the Valley of Ben Hinnom” but “the valley of slaughter.”

21 tn Heb “And they will bury in Topheth so there is not room.”

22 tn Heb “Their dead bodies will be food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth.”
glad celebration of brides and grooms throughout the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. For the whole land will become a desolate wasteland.”

8:1 The Lord says, “When that time comes, the bones of the kings of Judah and its leaders, the bones of the priests and prophets and of all the other people who lived in Jerusalem will be dug up from their graves. 8:2 They will be spread out and exposed to the sun, the moon and the stars. These are things they adored and served, things to which they paid allegiance, from which they sought guidance, and worshiped. The bones of these people will never be regathered and reburied. They will be like manure used to fertilize the ground. 8:3 However, I will leave some of these wicked people alive and banish them to other places. But wherever these people who survive may go, they will wish they had died rather than lived,” says the Lord who rules over all.

Willful Disregard of God Will Lead to Destruction

8:4 The Lord said to me, “Tell them, ‘The Lord says, Do people not get back up when they fall down? Do they not turn around when they go the wrong way?’

8:5 Why, then, do these people of Jerusalem recognize the normal times for their migration. But my people pay no attention continually turn away from me in apostasy? They hold fast to their deception. They refuse to turn back to me. I have listened to them very carefully, but they do not speak honestly. None of them regrets the evil he has done. None of them says, ‘I have done wrong!’

All of them persist in their own wayward course like a horse charging recklessly into battle.

8:7 Even the stork knows when it is time to move on. The turtledove, swallow, and crane recognize the normal times for their migration. But my people pay no attention people,” an apposition which GKC 425 §131.k calls “permutation.” In this case the verb could be attracted to the appositional noun and there would be no reason to emend the text. The MT is undoubtedly the harder reading and is for that reason to be preferred.

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

12 tn Or “to their allegiance to false gods,” or “to their false professions of loyalty”; “to dect.” Either “to their mistaken beliefs” or “to their allegiance to false gods” would fit the preceding context. The former is more comprehensive than the latter and was chosen for that reason.

13 sn There is a continuing play on the same root word used in the preceding verse. Here the words “turn away from me,” “apostasy,” and “turn back to me” are all forms from the root that was translated “go the wrong way” and “turn around” in v. 4. The intended effect is to contrast Judah’s recalcitrant apostasy with the usual tendency to try and correct one’s mistakes.

14 tn Heb “I have paid attention and I have listened.” This is another case of two concepts being joined by “and” where one expresses the main idea and the other acts as an adverbial or adjectival modifier (a figure called henidiays).

15 tn Heb “What have I done?” The addition of the word “wrong” is implicit in the context and is supplied in the translation for clarity. The rhetorical question does not function as a denial of wrongdoing, but rather as contrite shock at one’s own wrongdoing. It is translated as a declaration for the sake of clarity.

16 tn Heb “each one of them turns aside into their own running course.”

17 sn The wordplay begun in v. 4 is continued here. The word translated “turns aside” in the literal translation and “wayward” in the translation is from the same root as “go the wrong way” “turn around,” “turn away from me,” “apostasy,” “turn back to me.” What God hoped for were confessions of repentance and change of behavior; what he got was denial of wrongdoing and continued turning away from him.

18 tn Heb “its appointed time.” The translation is contextually motivated to avoid lack of clarity.

19 sn There is debate in the commentaries and lexicons about the identification of some of these birds, particularly regarding the identification of the “swallow” which is more likely the “swift” and the “crane” which some identify with the “thrush.” For a discussion see the Bible encyclopedias and the UBS handbook Fauna and Flora of the Bible. The identity of the individual birds makes little difference to the point being made and “swallow” is more easily identifiable to the average reader than the “swift.”
They will be brought to ruin when I punish them, says the Lord.

8:13 I will take away their harvests, says the Lord. There will be no grapes on their vines. There will be no figs on their fig trees. Even the leaves on their trees will wither. The crops that I gave them will be taken away.  

Jeremiah Laments over the Coming Destruction

8:14 The people say. 

“Why are we just sitting here? Let us gather together inside the fortified cities. Let us at least die there fighting.”

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1 tn Heb “do not know.” But here as elsewhere the word “know” is more than an intellectual matter. It is intended here to summarize both “know” and “follow” (Heb “observe”) in the preceding lines.

2 tn Heb “the ordinance/requirement of the Lord.”

3 tn Heb “Surely, behold!”

4 tn Heb “the scribes.”

5 tn Heb “The lying pen of the scribes has made [it] into a lie.” The translation is an attempt to make the most common interpretation of this passage understandable for the average reader. This is, however, a difficult passage whose interpretation is greatly debated and whose syntax is capable of other interpretations. The interpretation of the NJPS, “Assuredly, for nothing has the pen labored, for nothing the scribes,” surely deserves consideration within the context; i.e. it hasn’t done any good for the scribes to produce a reliable copy of the law, which the people have refused to follow. That interpretation has the advantage of explaining the absence of an object for the verb “make” or “labored” but creates a very unbalanced poetic couplet.

6 tn Heb “be trapped.” However, the word “trapped” generally carries with it the connotation of divine judgment. See BDB 540 s.v. מָסַף Niph.2, and compare usage in Jer 6:11 for support. The verbs in the first two lines are again the form of the Hebrew verb that emphasizes that the action is as good as done (Hebrew prophetic perfects).

7 sn See Jer 6:12-15 for parallels to 8:10-12. The words of Jeremiah to the people may have been repeated on more than one occasion or have been found appropriate to more than one of his collection of messages in written and edited form. See Jer 36:4 and Jer 36:28 for reference to at least two of these collections.

8 tn Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

9 tn Heb “They heal the wound of my people lightly.”

10 tn Heb “They say, ‘Peace! Peace!’ and there is no peace!”

11 tn Heb “They will fall among the fallen.”

12 tn Or “I will completely destroy them.” The translation which is adopted is based on the recalculation of the MT which appears to mean literally “gathering I will sweep them away,” a rather improbable grammatical combination. It follows the suggestion found in HALOT 705 s.v. נָשַׁף (Hiph) of reading נָשַׁף נָשַׁף (cones, a first singular Qal imperfect of נָשַׁף [’asaf] followed by a noun נָשַׁף [’asaf] with possessive suffix) instead of the MT’s נָשַׁף נָשַׁף (’asaf’ asafem, a Qal infinitive absolute of נָשַׁף [’asaf] followed by the Hiphil infinitive absolute of נָשַׁף [’asaf]) of the Hiphil infinitive absolute נָשַׁף [’asaf] would be expected) chosen for assonance with the following form. This suggestion would gain more credence if the MT is to be retained in Zech 12:12 where parallel forms are found. However, see that text too has been questioned on lexical and grammatical grounds. The translation adopted fits the following context better than the alternate one and is based on less questionable lexical and grammatical parallels. The Greek translation which reads “they shall gather their fruits” supports the translation chosen.

13 sn The meaning of this line is very uncertain. A possible alternate translation is: “They have broken the laws that I gave them.” The line reads rather literally “And I gave them they passed over them.” The translation adopted treats the first expression as a noun clause (cf. GKC 488-89 §155.η) which is the subject of the following verb, i.e., “the things I gave them [contextually, the grapes, etc.] passed over from them.” The alternate translation treats the expression as a dangling object (a Hebrew casus pendens) resumed by the pronoun “them” and understands “the things that I gave them” to be the law or some related entity which is often the object of this verb (see BDB 717 s.v. נָשַׁף Qal.1.i). Neither of these translations is without its weakness. The weakness of the translation which has been adopted is the unusual use it assigns to the object suffix of the verb translated “pass over.” The weakness of the alternate translation is the rather abrupt and opaque introduction of a new topic of reference (i.e., the laws) into the context. On the whole the latter weakness would appear to outweigh the former. This line is missing from the Greek version and J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB]) and J. A. Thompson (Jeremiah [NICOT]) despair of giving a translation. For other possible suggestions see, W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:285-86.

14 tn The words “the people say” are not in the text but are implicit in the shift of speakers between vv. 4-13 and vv. 14-16. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

15 tn Heb “Gather together and let us enter into the fortified cities.”

16 tn Heb “Let us die there.” The words “at least” and “fighting” are intended to bring out the contrast of passive surrender to death in the open country and active resistance to the death implicit in the context.
since the Lord our God has condemned us to die.
He has condemned us to drink the poison waters of judgment because we have sinned against him.
8:15 We hoped for good fortune, but nothing good has come of it. We hoped for a time of relief, but instead we experience terror.
8:16 The snorting of the enemy’s horses is already being heard in the city of Dan. The sound of the neighing of their stallions causes the whole land to tremble with fear. They are coming to destroy the land and everything in it! They are coming to destroy the cities and everyone who lives in them!”

8:17 The Lord says, “Yes indeed, I am sending an enemy against you that will be like poisonous snakes which cannot be charmed away. And they will inflict fatal wounds on you.”

8:18 Then I said, “There is no cure for my grief!

I am sick at heart! I hear my dear people crying out throughout the length and breadth of the land. They are crying, ‘Is the Lord no longer in Zion?’ Is her divine King no longer there?’”

The Lord answers, “Why then do they provoke me to anger with their images, with their worthless foreign idols?”

8:20 “They cry, ‘Harvest time has come and gone, and the summer is over, and still we have not been delivered.’

8:21 My heart is crushed because my dear people are being crushed.

I go about crying and grieving. I am overwhelmed with dismay.

8:22 There is still medicinal ointment available in Gilead! There is still a physician there!”

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1 tn The words “of judgment” are not in the text but are intended to show that “poison water” is not literal but figurative of judgment at the hands of God through the agency of the enemy mentioned in v. 16.

2 tn Heb “against the Lord.” The switch is for the sake of smoothness in English.

3 tn Heb “[We hoped] for a time of healing but behold terror.”

4 tn Heb “his stallions.”

5 tn The words “They are coming to destroy” are not in the text. They are inserted to break up a long sentence in conformity with contemporary English style.

6 tn These words which are at the end of the Hebrew verse are brought forward to show at the outset the shift in speaker.

7 tn Heb “Indeed [or For] behold!” The translation is intended to convey some of the connection that is suggested by the Hebrew particle הִנֵּה (hiynâ) at the beginning of the verse.

8 tn Heb “I am sending against you snakes, poisonous ones which cannot be charmed.” In the light of the context literal snakes are scarcely meant. So the metaphor is turned into a simile to prevent possible confusion. For a similar metaphorical use of animals for enemies see 5:6.

9 tn Heb “they will bite you.” There does not appear to be any way to avoid the possible confusion that literal snakes are meant here except to paraphrase. Possibly one could say “And they will attack you and ‘bite you,’” but the enclosing of the word “bite” in quotations might lead to even further confusion.

10 tn The words, “Then I said” are not in the text but there is a general consensus that the words of vv. 18-19a are the words of Jeremiah. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

11 tn The meaning of this word is uncertain. The translation is based on the redivision and repointing of a word that occurs only here in the MT and whose pattern of formation is unparalleled in the Hebrew Bible. The MT reads מַבְלִי גְּהֹת (mibbÿli gÿhot) which is a Qal infinitive from a verb meaning “to heal” preceded by a compound negative “for lack of, to be at a loss for” (cf., e.g., HALOT 514 s.v. הביביל meaning “to heal,” and 174 s.v. גהות). This reading is supported by the Greek text which has an adjective meaning “incurable,” which is, however, connected with the preceding verse, i.e., “they will bite you incurably.”

12 tn Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

13 tn Heb “Behold the voice of the crying of the daughter of my people.”


15 tn Heb “her King” but this might be misunderstood by some to refer to the Davidic ruler even with the capitalization.

16 tn The words, “The Lord would answer” are not in the text but are implicit from the words that follow. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. Another option would be to add “And I can just hear the Lord reply.”

17 sn The people’s cry and the Lord’s interruption reflect the same argument that was set forth in the preceding chapter. They have misguided confidence that the Lord is with them regardless of their actions and he responds that his actions have provoked him to the point of judging them. See especially 7:4 and 7:30.

18 tn The words “They say” are not in the text; they are supplied in the translation to make clear that the lament of the people begun in v. 19b is continued here after the interruption of the Lord’s words in v. 19c.

19 tn Heb “Harvest time has passed, the summer is over.”

20 sn This appears to be a proverbial statement for “time marches on.” The people appear to be expressing their frustration that the Lord has not gone about his business of rescuing them as they expected. For a similar misguided feeling based on the offering of shallow repentance see Hos 6:1-3 (and note the Lord’s reply in 6:4-6).

21 tn Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

22 tn Heb “Because of the crushing of the daughter of my people I am crushed.”

23 tn Heb “I go about in black [i.e., mourning clothes]. Dismay has seized me.”

24 sn This medicinal ointment (Heb “balm”) consisted of the gum or resin from a tree of uncertain identification thought to have medicinal value (see also Jer 46:11).

24 tn Heb “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician
The Lord Laments That He Has No Choice But to Judge Them

9:3 The LORD says,

“These people are like soldiers who have readied their bows. Their tongues are always ready to shoot out lies. They have become powerful in the land, but they have not done so by honest means. Indeed, they do one evil thing after another.”

there?” In this context the questions are rhetorical and expect a positive answer, which is made explicit in the translation. The prophet means by this metaphor that there are still means available for healing the spiritual ills of his people, mainly repentance, obedience to the law, and sole allegiance to God, and still people available who will apply this medicine to them, namely prophets like himself.

sn Beginning with 9:1, the verse numbers through 9:26 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 9:1 ET = 9:23 HT, 9:2 ET = 9:1 HT, 9:3 ET = 9:2 HT, etc., through 9:26 ET = 9:25 HT. Beginning with 10:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

sn In Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

sn Or more clearly, “restored to spiritual health”; Heb “Why then has healing not come to my dear people?”

sn Jeremiah is lamenting that though there is a remedy available for the recovery of his people they have not availed themselves of it.

1 sn Beginning with 9:1, the verse numbers through 9:26 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 9:1 ET = 9:23 HT, 9:2 ET = 9:1 HT, 9:3 ET = 9:2 HT, etc., through 9:26 ET = 9:25 HT. Beginning with 10:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

2 sn In Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

3 sn In Heb “I wish that my head were water.”

4 sn In Heb “daughter of my people.” For the translation given here see 4:11 and the note on the phrase “dear people” there.

5 sn In Heb “I wish I had in the desert a lodging place [inn, or place to spend the night] for travelers.”

6 sn In Heb “Blessing,” but this loses the irony; the word is used for the solemn assemblies at the religious feasts.

7 sn In Heb “they are all adulterers, a congregation of unfaithful people.” However, spiritual adultery is, of course, meant, not literal adultery. So the literal translation would be misleading.

8 sn The words “The LORD says” have been moved up from the end of the verse to make clear that a change in speaker has occurred.

9 sn In Heb “They have readied [or strung] their tongue as their bow for lies.”

10 sn In Heb “but not through honesty.”

11 sn In Heb “they go from evil to evil.”

12 sn Or “do not acknowledge me”; Heb “do not know me.” But “knowing” in Hebrew thought often involves more than intellectual knowledge; it involves emotional and volitional commitment as well. For יזק meaning “acknowledge” see 1 Chr 28:9; Isa 29:21; Hos 2:20; Prov 3:6. This word is also found in ancient Near Eastern treaty contexts where it has the idea of a vassal king acknowledging the sovereignty of a greater king (cf. H. Huffman, The Treaty Background of Hebrew yada, BASOR 181 [1966]: 31-37).

13 sn In Heb “Be on your guard...Do not trust.” The verbs are second masculine plural of direct address and there seems no way to translate literally and not give the mistaken impresssion that Jeremiah is being addressed. This is another example of the tendency in Hebrew style to turn from description to direct address (a figure of speech called apostrophe).

14 sn In Heb “cheating, each of them will cheat.”

15 sn There is perhaps an intentional pun and allusion here to Gen 27:36 and the wordplay on the name Jacob there. The text here reads קָבַּק יַעֲקֹב (qak yakqob).

16 sn In Heb “their tongues.” However, this is probably not a natural idiom in contemporary English and the tongue may stand as a part for the whole anyway.

17 sn Or “Juan”. The English Bible has an alternate reading for vv. 5d-6b: “They wear themselves out doing wrong. Jeremiah, you live in the midst of deceitful people. They deceitfully refuse to take any thought of/ acknowledge me.” The translation which has been adopted is based on a redversion of the lines, a redversion of some of the words, and a recoversion of some of the consonants. The MT reads literally “doing wrong they weary themselves. Year sitting in the midst of deceit; in deceit they refuse to know me” (Jer 9:6, 4:10 = “Be on your guard...Do not trust.”). The Greek version reads literally “they do wrong and they do not cease to turn themselves around. Usury upon usury and deceit upon deceit. They do not want to know me.” This suggests that one should read the Hebrew text as if Hebrew “The God of deceit himself was healing them.” which translated literally yields “doing evil = “they do evil” using the Hiphil infinitive absolute as a finite verb (cf. GKC 346 §113.f)) they are not able [cf. KBL 468 s.v. יָדַע הָעְשָׂה תֹּךְ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ כֹּל בָּנָי לְחוֹזֹת וְלְתַכְּלִל נִלֵּכָה מִרְמָה׃ תֹּךְ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה בְּמִרְמָה מֵאֲנוּ דַעַת־אותִי הַעֲוֵה נִלְאוּ׃ שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּת...
They refuse to pay attention to me,” says the Lord.

9:7 Therefore the Lord who rules over all says, “I will now purify them in the fires of affliction and test them. The wickedness of my dear people has left me no choice. What else can I do? Their tongues are like deadly arrows. They are always telling lies. Friendly words for their neighbors come from their mouths. But their minds are thinking up ways to trap them.

9:9 I will certainly punish them for doing such things!” says the Lord. “I will certainly bring retribution on such a nation as this!”

The Coming Destruction Calls For Mourning

9:10 I said, “I will weep and mourn for the grasslands on the mountains, I will sing a mournful song for the pastures in the wilderness because they are so scorched no one travels through them. The sound of livestock is no longer heard there. Even the birds in the sky and the wild animals in the fields have fled and are gone.”

9:11 The Lord said, “I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. I will destroy the towns of Judah so that no one will be able to live in them.”

9:12 I said, “Who is wise enough to understand why this has happened? Who has a word from the Lord that can explain it? Why does the land lie in ruins? Why is it as scorched as a desert through which no one travels?”

9:13 The Lord answered, “This has happened because these people have rejected my laws which I gave them. They have not obeyed me or followed those laws. Instead they have followed the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts. They have paid allegiance to the stubborn inclinations of the king of Egypt and to the god of Assyria. They have not followed the Lord, who was their God. He has been their Deliverer from their distresses.

1 tn Or “do not acknowledge me”; Heb “do not know me.” See the note on the phrase “do not take any thought of me” in 9:3.

2 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”

3 sn For the significance of this title see the notes at 2:19 and 7:3.

4 tn Heb “I will refine/purify them.” The words “in the fires of affliction” are supplied in the translation to give clarity to the metaphor.

5 sn This reading follows the Masoretic consonants (the Ketib, a Qal active participle from שָׁחַט, shakhat). The Masoretes preferred to read “a sharpened arrow” (the Qere, a Qal passive participle from the same root or a homonym, meaning “hammered, beaten”). See HALOT 1354 s.v. II שָׁחַט for discussion. The exact meaning of the word makes little difference to the meaning of the metaphor itself.

6 tn Heb “They speak deceit.”

7 sn See 5:9, 29. This is somewhat of a refrain at the end of a catalog of Judah’s sins.

8 tn “a heap of ruins, a haunt for jackals.”

9 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

10 tn The words “I said” are not in the text, but there is general agreement that Jeremiah is the speaker. Cf. the lament in 8:18-9:1. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity. Some English versions follow the Greek text which reads a plural imperative here. Since this reading would make the transition between 9:10 and 9:11 easier it is probably not original but a translator’s way of smoothing over a difficulty.

11 tn Heb “I will lift up weeping and mourning.”

12 tn Heb “for the mountains.” However, the context makes clear that it is the grasslands or pastures on the mountains that are meant. The words “for the grasslands” are supplied in the translation for clarity.

13 tn The words “the Lord said” are not in the text, but it is obvious from the content that he is the speaker. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

14 tn The words “I said” are not in the text. It is not clear that a shift in speaker has taken place. However, the words of the verse are very unlikely to be a continuation of the Lord’s threat. It is generally assumed that these are the words of Jeremiah and that a dialogue is going on between him and the Lord in vv. 9-14. That assumption is accepted here.

15 tn Heb “Who is the wise man that he may understand this?”

16 tn The words, “I said” are not in the text. It is not clear that a shift in speaker has taken place. However, the words of the verse are very unlikely to be a continuation of the Lord’s threat. It is generally assumed that these are the words of Jeremiah and that a dialogue is going on between him and the Lord in vv. 9-14. That assumption is accepted here.

17 sn See the note on the phrase “do not take any thought of me” in 2:5 for the idiom.
9:17 The Lord who rules over all\(^9\) told me to say to this people,\(^{10}\)

"Take note of what I say.\(^{11}\) Call for the women who mourn for the dead!
Summon those who are the most skilled at it!"\(^{12}\)

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\(^{1}\) tn Heb “the Baals,” referring either to the pagan gods called “Baals” or the images of Baal (so NLT).

\(^{2}\) tn Or “forefathers,” or “ancestors.” Here the referent could be the immediate parents or, by example, more distant ancestors.

\(^{3}\) sn See the study notes on 2:9 and 7:3.

\(^{4}\) tn Heb “Therefore, thus says the Lord...” The person is shifted from third to first to better conform with English style.

\(^{5}\) tn Heb “I will feed this people wormwood and make them drink poison water of judgment.” “Wormwood” and “poison water” are not to be understood literally here but are symbolic of judgment and suffering. See, e.g., BDB 542 s.v. יָעָר.

\(^{6}\) tn Heb “fathers.”

\(^{7}\) tn Heb “I will send the sword after them.” The sword here is probably not completely literal but refers to death by violent means, including death by the sword.

\(^{8}\) sn He will destroy them but not completely. See Jer 5:18; 30:11; 46:28.

\(^{9}\) sn For the significance of this title see the notes on 2:19 and 7:3.

\(^{10}\) tn Heb “Thus says Yahweh of armies.” However, without some addition it is not clear to whom the command is addressed. The words are supplied in the translation for clarity and to help resolve a rather confusing issue of who is speaking throughout vv. 16-21. As has been evident throughout the translation, the speaker is not always indicated. Sometimes it is not even clear who the speaker is. In general the translation and the notes have reflected the general consensus in identifying who it is. Here, however, there is a good deal of confusion about who is speaking in vv. 18, 20-21. The Greek translation has the Lord speaking throughout with second plural pronouns in v. 18, 21 and the absence of the first line in v. 22. It would be hard to explain how the MT arose if it were the original text. Critical commentators such as J. Bright, W. Holladay, and W. McKane resolve the issue by dropping out the introductory formula in v. 17 and the first line of v. 22 and assigning the whole lament to Jeremiah. It seems obvious from the first plural pronouns and the content of v. 18 (and probably v. 21 as well) and the fact that the Lord is referred to in other than the first person in v. 20 that he is not the speaker of those verses. The translation attempts to resolve the issue by having Jeremiah report the Lord’s command in v. 17 and have the rest of the speech be essentially that of Jeremiah. It should be admitted, however, that the issue is far from resolved. Most English versions simply ignore the problem. The GNB (= TEV) is a rare exception.

\(^{11}\) tn Heb “Consider!”

\(^{12}\) sn Here Death is personified (treated as though it were a person). Some have seen as possible background to this lament an allusion to Mesopotamian mythology where the demon Lamastu climbs in through the windows of houses and over their walls to kill children and babies.

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9:18 I said, “Indeed,\(^{13}\) let them come quickly and sing a song of mourning for us.
Let them wail loudly until tears stream from our own eyes and our eyelids overflow with water.
9:19 For the sound of wailing is soon to be heard in Zion.
They will wail,\(^{14}\) “We are utterly ruined!\(^{15}\) We are completely disgraced!
For our houses have been torn down and we must leave our land.”\(^{16}\)

9:20 I said,\(^{17}\)

“So now,\(^{18}\) you wailing women, hear what the Lord says.\(^{19}\)
Open your ears to the words from his mouth.
Teach your daughters this mournful song, and each of you teach your neighbor;\(^{20}\) this lament.
9:21 ‘Death has climbed in\(^{21}\) through our windows.
It has entered into our fortified houses.
It has taken away our children who play in the streets.
It has taken away our young men who gather in the city squares.

\(^{13}\) tn The words “And I said, ‘Indeed’ are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to try and help clarify who the speaker is who identifies with the lament of the people.

\(^{14}\) tn The words “They will wail” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation to make clear that this is the wailing that will be heard.

\(^{15}\) sn The destruction is still in the future, but it is presented graphically as though it had already taken place.

\(^{16}\) tn Heb “How are we ruined!”

\(^{17}\) tn The order of these two lines has been reversed for English stylistic reasons. The text reads in Hebrew “because we have left our land because they have thrown down our dwellings.” The two clauses offer parallel reasons for the cries “How ruined we are! [How] we are greatly disgraced!” But the first line must contain a prophetic perfect (because the lament comes from Jerusalem) and the second a perfect referring to a destruction that is itself future. This seems the only way to render the verse that would not be misleading.

\(^{18}\) tn The words “I said” are not in the text. The text merely has “indeed, yes.” The words are supplied in the translation to indicate that the speaker is still Jeremiah though he now is not talking about the mourning woman but is talking to them. See the notes on 9:17-18 for further explanation.

\(^{19}\) tn In this context the “word of the Lord” that they are to listen for is the word of the lament that they are to teach their daughters and neighbors.

\(^{20}\) tn Heb “Teach...mournful song, and each woman her neighbor lady...”

\(^{21}\) sn Here Death is personified (treated as though it were a person). Some have seen as possible background to this lament an allusion to Mesopotamian mythology where the demon Lamastu climbs in through the windows of houses and over their walls to kill children and babies.
9:22 Tell your daughters and neighbors, '

said the LORD.

9:25 The LORD says, "Watch out!" The time is soon coming when I will punish all those who are circumcised only in the flesh. 9:26 That is, I will punish the Egyptians, the Judeans, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and all the desert people who cut their hair short at the temples. I will do so because none of the people of those nations are really circumcised in the LORD's sight. Moreover, none of the people of Israel are circumcised when it comes to their hearts."

The Lord, not Idols, is the Only Worthy Object of Worship

10:1 You people of Israel, listen to what the LORD has to say to you.

10:2 The LORD says, "Do not start following pagan religious practices. Do not be in awe of signs that occur in particle דַּבֵּר (ki) before the clause "I delight in these things" is parallel to the דַּבֵּר introducing the clause "that I, the LORD, act..." or causal giving the grounds for the Lord acting the way he does. In the light of the contrasts in the passage and the emphasis that Jeremiah has placed on obedience to the covenant and ethical conduct in conjunction with real allegiance to the Lord, not mere lip service, it is probable that the clauses are parallel. For the use of דַּבֵּר to introduce clauses of further definition after a direct object as here see GKC 365 §117.7 and see BDB 393 s.v. דַּבֵּר Qal.1.a. For parallels to the idea of Yahweh requiring these characteristics in people see Hos 6:6, Mic 6:8.

 tn Heb "Behold!"

 tn Heb "punish all who are circumcised in the flesh." The translation is contextually motivated to better bring out the contrast that follows.

 tn Heb "all those who are cut off on the side of the head who live in the desert." KJV and some other English versions (e.g., NIV "who live in the desert in distant places"); NLT "who live in distant places" have followed the interpretation that this is a biform of an expression meaning "end or remote parts of the [far] corners [of the earth]." This interpretation is generally abandoned by the more recent commentaries and translations (see, e.g., EV 802 s.v., "desert"); HALOT 858 s.v. Derekh 1.b). It occurs also in 25:33; 49:32.

 tn Heb "For all of these nations are uncircumcised." The words "I will do so" are supplied in the translation to indicate the connection with the preceding statement.

 tn A contrast is drawn here between circumcision as a mere external cutting of the flesh and a sign of commitment to the covenant and the God of the covenant. The people of these nations practiced circumcision but not as a sign of the covenant. The people of Israel engaged in it as a religious practice but without any obedience to the covenant that it was a sign of or any real commitment to the Lord.

 tn Heb "house of Israel.

 tn Heb "And all the house of Israel is uncircumcised of heart.

 tn Heb "house of Israel.

 tn Heb "Do not learn the way of the nations." For this use of the word "ways" (דַּרְקֹה, derekh) compare for example Jer 12:16 and Isa 2:6.

 tn Heb "signs." The words "that occur" are supplied in the translation for clarity.

 sn The Hebrew word translated here "things that go on in the sky" (יָרֵא, 'awr) refers both to unusual disturbances such as eclipses, comets, meteors, etc., but also to such things as the changes in the position of the sun, moon, and stars in conjunction with the changes in seasons (cf. Gen 1:14). The...
people of Assyria and Babylonia worshiped the sun, moon, and stars, thinking that these heavenly bodies had some hold over them.

4. For the religion of these people is worthless. They cut down a tree in the forest, and a craftsman makes it into an idol with his tools. He decorates it with overlays of silver and gold. He uses hammer and nails to fasten it together so that it will not fall over. Such idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field. They cannot talk. They must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them because they cannot hurt you. And they do not have any power to help you.”

4. I said, “There is no one like you, Lord. You are great. And you are renowned for your power.

7. Everyone should revere you, O King of all nations,

because you deserve to be revered. For there is no one like you among any of the wise people of the nations nor among any of their kings.

8. The people of those nations are both stupid and foolish. Instruction from a wooden idol is worthless!

9. Hammered-out silver is brought from Tarshish and gold is brought from Ufaz to cover those idols. They are the handiwork of carpenters and goldsmiths. They are clothed in blue and purple clothes. They are all made by skillful workers.

10. The Lord is the only true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King. When he shows his anger the earth shakes. None of the nations can stand up to his fury.

9. tn Heb “For it is fitting to you.”

10. tn "their royalty/dominion." This is a case of substitution of the abstract for the concrete "royalty, royal power" for "kings" who exercise it.

11. Or "Those wise people and kings are..." It is unclear whether the subject is the "they" of the nations in the preceding verse, or the wise people and kings referred to. The text merely has "they."
10:11 You people of Israel should tell those nations this: “These gods did not make heaven and earth. They will disappear from the earth and from under the heavens.”

10:12 The Lord is the one who by his wisdom established the world.

And by his understanding he spread out the skies.

10:13 When his voice thunders, the heavenly ocean roars.

He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons.

He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of the rain.

He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.

10:14 All these idolaters will prove to be stupid and ignorant.

Every goldsmith will be disgraced by the idol he made.

For the image he forges is merely a sham.

There is no breath in any of those idols.

10:15 They are worthless, mere objects to be mocked.

When the time comes to punish them, they will be destroyed.

10:16 The Lord, who is the inheritance of Jacob’s descendants, is not like them. He is the one who created everything. And the people of Israel are those he claims as his own.

He is known as the Lord who rules over all.”

Jeremiah Laments for and Prays for the Soon-to-be-Judged People

10:17 Gather your belongings together and prepare to leave the land, you people of Jerusalem who are being besieged.

10:18 For the Lord says, “I will now throw out those who live in this land. I will bring so much trouble on them that they will actually feel it.”

5 tn Aram “The gods who did not make...earth will disappear...” The sentence is broken up in the translation to avoid a long, complex English sentence in conformity with contemporary English style.

6 tn This verse is in Aramaic. It is the only Aramaic sentence in Jeremiah. Scholars debate the appropriateness of this verse in this context. Many see it as a gloss added by a postexilic scribe which was later incorporated into the text. Both R. E. Clendenen (“Discourse Strategies in Jeremiah 10,” JBL 106 [1987]: 401-8) and W. L. Holladay (Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 1:324-25, 334-35) have given detailed arguments that the passage is not only original but the climax and center of the contrast between the Lord and idols in vv. 2-16. Holladay shows that the passage is a very carefully constructed chiasm (see accompanying study note) which argues that “these” at the end of the subject of the verb “will disappear” is not the referent intended to contrast the Lord. He also makes a very good case that the verse is poetry and not prose as it is rendered in the majority of modern English versions.

7 sn This passage is carefully structured and placed to contrast the Lord who is living and eternal (v. 10) and made the heavens and earth (v. 12) with the idols who did not and will not disappear. It also has a very careful concentric structure in the original text where “the gods” is balanced by “these,” “heavens” is balanced by “from under the heavens,” “the earth” is balanced by “from the earth,” and “did not make” is balanced and contrasted in the very center by “will disappear.” The structure is further reinforced by the sound play/wordplay between “did not make” (Aram יְבָדֵד [la’avadad]) and “will disappear” (Aram יָבְדֵד [pe’vadad]). This is the rhetorical climax of Jeremiah’s sarcastic attack on the folly of idolatry.

8 tn Heb “The Portion of Jacob.” “Descendants” is implied, and is supplied in the translation for clarity.

9 tn Heb “And Israel is the tribe of his possession.”

10 tn Or “objects of mockery.”

11 tn The words “The Lord who is” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. For the significance of the words that follow them see the study note that follows.

12 tn Heb “The Portion of Jacob.” “Descendants” is implied, and is supplied in the translation for clarity.

13 tn Heb “And Israel is the tribe of his possession.”

14 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies is his name.”

15 sn For this rendering of the name for God and its significance see 2:19 and the study note there.

16 tn Map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

17 sn The meaning of this last line is somewhat uncertain: Heb “I will cause them distress in order that [or with the result that] they will find.” The presence of an object for the verb “find” has led to conjecture that the text is wrong. Some commentators follow the lead of the Greek and Latin versions which read the verb as a passive: ”they will be found,” i.e., be caught and captured. Others follow a suggestion by G. R. Driver (“Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah,” JQR 28
10:19 And I cried out, 1 “We are doomed! 2 Our wound is severe! We once thought, ‘This is only an illness. And we will be able to bear it!’ 3
10:20 But our tents have been destroyed. The ropes that held them in place have been ripped apart. 4 Our children are gone and are not coming back. 5

[1937-38]; 107] that the verb be read not as “they will find” (יִמְצָה [yimtsa‘] from יָמַש [yamash]) but “they will be squeezed/drawn” (יִמָּצָה [yimtsah] from יָמָש [yamash]). The translation ad- dressed by the Editorial Note is an example of the ellipsis of the object supplied from the context (cf. E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 8-12). For a similar nuance for the verb “find” = “feel/experience” see BDZ 592 s.v. קָל, 1.1 and compare the usage in Ps 116:3.

1 tn The words, “And I cried out” are not in the text. It is not altogether clear who the speaker is in vv. 19-25. The words of vv. 19-20 would best be assigned to a personified Jerusalem who laments the destruction of her city (under the figure of a tent) and the exile of her children (under the figure of children). However, the words of v. 21 which assign responsibility to the rulers do not fit well in the mouth of the people but do fit Jeremiah. The words of v. 22 are very appropriate to Jeremiah being similar to the report in 4:19-20. Likewise the words of v. 23 which appear to express man’s incapacity to control his own destiny and his resignation to the fate which awaits him in the light of v. 24 seem more appropriate to Jeremiah than to the people. There has been no indication elsewhere that the people have shown any indication of being resigned to their fate or wishing to accept their punishment. Though the issue is far from resolved a majority of commentators see Jeremiah as the speaker so identifying himself with their fate that he speaks as though he were this personified figure. It is not altogether out of the question, however, that the speaker throughout is personified Jerusalem though no known commentator takes that view. For those who are interested, the most thorough discussion of the issue is probably to be found in W. McKane, Jeremiah (ICC), 1:230-35, especially 233-35.

2 tn Heb “Woe to me on account of my wound.” The words “woe to” in many contexts carry the connotation of hopelessness and of inevitable doom (cf. 1 Sam 4:7, 8; Isa 6:5), hence a “deadly blow.” See also the usage in 4:13, 31:6:4 and the note on the rendering of the phrase as “Where is our” here and in the verses to follow see the preceding note.

3 tn Some interpret this as a resignation to the punishment inflicted and translate “But I said, ‘This is my punishment and I will just need to bear it.’” This is unlikely given the meaning and usage of the word rendered “sickness” (חֳלִי, khali), the absence of the pronoun “my,” and the likelihood that the particle הִיו (ḥiyy) means “only” not “indeed” (cf. BDZ s.v. הִיו 2.1 and compare its usage in v. 24).

4 sn What is being referred to here is the feeling that was encouraged by the false prophets that the ill fortunes of the nation were just temporary setbacks and everything would soon get better (cf. 6:14; 8:11).

5 tn Heb “My tent has been destroyed and my tent cords have been ripped apart.” For a very similar identification of Jeremiah’s plight with the plight of the personified community see 4:20 and the notes there.

6 sn Heb “my children have gone from me and are no more.”

7 sn What is being referred to is the exile of the people of the land. This passage could refer to the exiles of 605 b.c., 597 b.c., or more probably be anticipatory of the exile of 586 b.c. since the “tent,” (i.e., the city) is pictured as torn down. The picture of devastation and desolation here should be contrasted with that in Isa 54:2-3.

There is no survivor to put our tents back up, no one left to hang their tent curtains in place.

10:21 For our leaders 8 are stupid. They have not sought the Lord’s advice. 7 So they do not act wisely, and the people they are responsible for 6 have all been scattered.

10:22 Listen! News is coming even now. 9 The rumble of a great army is heard approaching 10 from a land in the north. 11 It is coming to turn the towns of Judah into rubble, places where only jackals live.

10:23 LORD, we know that people do not control their own destiny. 12 It is not in their power to determine what will happen to them. 13

10:24 Correct us, LORD, but only in due measure. 14 Do not punish us in anger or you will reduce us to nothing. 15

10:25 Vent your anger on the nations that do not acknowledge you. 16 Vent it on the peoples 17 who do not worship you. 18

8 tn Heb “the shepherds.”
9 tn Heb “They have not sought the Lord.”
10 sn The idiom translated sought the Lord’s advice quite commonly refers to inquiring for the Lord’s guidance through a prophet. See for example Exod 18:15; 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Kgs 22:8. It would not exclude consulting the law.
11 sn This verse uses the figure of rulers as shepherds and the people they ruled as sheep. It is a common figure in the Bible. See Ezek 34 for an extended development of this metaphor.
12 tn Heb “the sound of a report, behold, it is coming.”
13 tn Heb “coming, even a great quaking.”
14 tn Heb “to a man the walking and the establishing of his step.”
15 tn Heb “not to a man the way, or the way things turn out” for the Hebrew word “way” see Hag 1:5; Isa 40:27 and probably Ps 49:13 (cf. KBL 218 s.v. יָד יָד). For the idea of “control” or “hold in one’s power” for the preposition “to” see Ps 3:8 (cf. BDZ 513 s.v. יָד b[a]).
16 tn Heb “not to a man the walking and the establishing of his step.”
17 tn Heb “with justice.”
18 tn The words, “to almost nothing” are not in the text. They are implicit from the general context and are supplied by almost all English versions.
For they have destroyed the people of Jacob. They have completely destroyed them and left their homeland in utter ruin.

The People Have Violated Their Covenant with God

11:1 The Lord said to Jeremiah: "Hear the terms of the covenant I made with Israel and pass them on to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. 11:3 Tell them that the Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'Anyone who does not keep the terms of the covenant will be under a curse.' 11:4 Those are the terms that I charged your ancestors to keep when I brought them out of Egypt, that place which was like an iron-smelting furnace. 11:5 I said at that time, 'Obey me and carry out the terms of the agreement exactly as I commanded you. If you do, you will be my people and I will be your God.' Then I will keep the promise I swore on oath to your ancestors to give them a land flowing with milk and honey.' That is the very chosen is more appropriate to modern idiom.

tn Or "those living in Jerusalem"; Heb "inhabitants of." map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

tn He said to Jeremiah: "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying." The proposed translation is more in keeping with contemporary English idiom. Cf. 1:2 and 7:1 and footnotes there.
	n The form is a second masculine plural which is followed in the MT of v. 2:3 by second masculine singular. This plus the fact that the word "the terms of this covenant" is nearly repeated at the end of v. 3 has led many modern scholars to delete the whole clause (cf., e.g. W. McKane, Jeremiah [ICC], 1:1-26). However, this only leads to further adjustments in the rest of the verse which are difficult to justify.

tn The covenant I made with Israel. Apart from the legal profession and Jewish and Christian tradition the term "covenant" may not be too familiar. There were essentially three kinds of "covenants" that were referred to under the Hebrew term נאום (na'om). The first type of "covenant" consists of an imperative followed by a consequent sentence. The referent is made specific by an added equivalent in kind the ancient Near Eastern suzerain-vassal treaties. These treaties typically contained the following elements: (1) a preamble identifying the great king (cf. Exod 20:2a; Deut 1:14); (2) a historical prologue summarizing the great king's past benefactions as motivation for future loyalty (cf. Exod 20:2b; Deut 1:5-4:43); (3) the primary stipulation of absolute and unconditional loyalty (cf. Exod 20:3-8; Deut 5:1-11); (4) specific stipulations governing future relations between the vassal and the great king and the vassal's relation to other vassals (cf. Exod 20:22-23:33; Deut 12:1-26:15); (5) the invoking of curses on the vassal for disloyalty; the pronouncing of blessing on him for loyalty (cf. Lev 26; Deut 27:28); (6) the invoking of witnesses to the covenant, often the great king's and the vassal's gods (cf. Deut 30:15; 31:28 where the reference is to the "heavens and the earth" as enduring witnesses). It is also generally agreed that the majority of the threats of punishment by the prophets refer to the invocation of these covenant curses for disloyalty to the basic stipulation, that of absolute loyalty.

tn He said: "This covenant." The referent of "this" is left dangling until it is further defined in vv. 3-4. Leaving it undefined in the translation may lead to confusion here, but the anticipatory nature of the demonstration is spelled out explicitly in the translation.

tn He "and speak/tell them." However, the translation is more appropriate to modern idiom.
land that you still live in today."14 And I responded, "Amen! Let it be so,2 Lord!"

11:6 The Lord said to me, “Announce all the following words in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: ‘Listen to the terms of my covenant with you3 and carry them out! 11:7 For I solemnly warned your ancestors to obey me.4 I warned them again and again,5 ever since I delivered them out of Egypt until this very day. 11:8 But they did not listen to me or pay any attention to me! Each one of them followed the stubborn inclinations of his own wicked heart. So I brought on them all the punishments threatened in the covenant because they did not carry out its terms as I commanded them to do."6

11:9 The Lord said to me, “The people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have plotted rebellion against me!” 11:10 They have gone back to the evil ways8 of their ancestors of old who refused to obey what I told them. They, too, have paid allegiance to9 other gods and worshiped them. Both the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah10 have violated the covenant I made with their ancestors. 11:11 So I, the Lord,
say this:11 ‘I will soon bring disaster on them which they will not be able to escape! When they cry out to me for help, I will not listen to them. 11:12 Then those living in the towns of Judah and in Jerusalem will12 go and cry out for help to the gods to whom they have been sacrificing. However, those gods will by no means13 be able to save them when disaster strikes them. 11:13 This is in spite of the fact that14 the people of Judah have as many gods as they have towns15 and the citizens of Jerusalem have set up as many altars to sacrifice to that disgusting god, Baal, as they have streets in the city!”16 11:14 So, Jeremiah,17 do not pray for these people. Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf. Do not plead with me to save them.18 For I will not listen to them when they call out to me for help when disaster strikes them.”19

14 tn Heb “Therefore, thus, says the Lord.” The person has been shifted in the translation in accordance with the difference between Hebrew and English style.
15 tn Heb “Then the towns of Judah and those living in Jerusalem will...”
16 tn The Hebrew construction is emphatic involving the use of an infinitive of the verb before the verb itself (Heb “saving they will not save”). For this construction to give emphasis to an antithesis, cf. GKC 343 §113.p.
17 tn This is again an attempt to render the Hebrew particle כ (ki) contextually. The nuance is a little hard to establish due to the nature of the rhetoric of the passage which utilizes the figure of apostrophe where the Lord turns from talking about Judah to addressing him/her directly, probably in condemnatory tones. Something like “the very idea that you should...” might best represent the mood. The כ is probably asserative or intensive (cf. BDAG 472 s.v. כ 1.e).
19 tn Heb “For [or Indeed] the number of your [sing.] cities are your [sing.] gods, Judah, and the number of the streets of Jerusalem [or perhaps (your) streets, Jerusalem] you [plur.] have set up altars to the shameful thing, altars to sacrifice to Baal.” This passage involves a figure of speech where the speaker turns from describing something about someone to addressing him/her directly (a figure called apostrophe). This figure is not common in contemporary English literature or conversation and translating literally would lead to confusion on the part of some readers. Hence, the translation retains the third person in addressing him/her. The shift from singular “your cities” to plural “you have set up” is interpreted contextually to refer to a shift in addressing Judah to addressing the citizens of Jerusalem whose streets are being talked about. The appositional clause, “altars to sacrifice to Baal” has been collapsed with the preceding clause to better identify what the shameful thing is and to eliminate a complex construction. The length of this sentence runs contrary to the usual practice of breaking up long complex sentences in Hebrew into shorter equivalent ones in English. However, breaking up this sentence and possibly losing the connecting link with the preceding used to introduce it might lead to misunderstanding.
20 tn The words “to save them” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
21 sn Cf. Jer 7:16 where this same command is addressed to Jeremiah.
22 tc The rendering “when disaster strikes them” is based on reading “at the time of” (כְּעָתָם, b’et) with a number of Hebrew mss and the versions instead of “on account of” (כְּעָתָם, b’ad). W. L. Holladay (Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 1:347) is probably right in assuming that the MT has been influenced by “for them” ( difficere, va’adam) earlier in the verse.
11:15 The Lord says to the people of Judah,²
“What right do you have to be in my temple, my beloved people?²
Many of you have done wicked things.³
Can your acts of treachery be so easily canceled by sacred offerings⁴
that you take joy in doing evil even while you make them?⁴
11:16 I, the Lord, once called you a thriving olive tree,

² tn The words “The Lord says to the people of Judah” are not in the text. It is, however, clear from the words that follow that it is the Lord who is speaking and Judah the addressee. The words are supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity.
³ tn Heb “What to my beloved [being] in my house?” The text has been restructured to avoid possible confusion by the shift from third person in the first two lines to second person in the last two lines and the lines of the following verse. The reference to Judah as his “beloved” is certainly ironic and perhaps even sarcastic.
⁴ tn The meaning of this line is uncertain. The text reads somewhat literally either “her doing the wicked thing the many” or “doing it, the wicked thing, the many.” The text, relationship between words, and meaning of this whole verse have been greatly debated. Wholesale emendation based on the ancient versions is common in both the commentaries and the modern English versions. Many follow the lead of the Greek version which offers a more natural and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text edition follows the suggestion in D. Barthélemy, ed., Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project, 4:209, that it is the subject of the infinitive construct “from upon” is purely speculative.
⁵ tn Heb “for [or when] your wickedness then you rejoice.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. The Greek version, which reads “or do you find delight in doing evil,” is closer in script to the MT and would be more likely original. Because there is no ancient support for it and the reading of the noun “take away” is purely speculative.
⁶ tn Heb “The Lord once called you....” This is another example of the rapid shift in person that is common to Hebrew style which is not common in English and could lead to confusion for some readers. Here, just as in the previous verse, the person has been shifted to first person for consistency in English.
one that produced beautiful fruit. But I will set you on fire, fire that will blaze with a mighty roar. Then all your branches will be good for nothing.  

11:17 For though I, the Lord who rules over all, planted you in the land, I now decree that disaster will come on you because the nations of Israel and Judah have done evil and have made me angry by offering sacrifices to the god Baal.

A Plot Against Jeremiah is Revealed and He Complains of Injustice

11:18 The Lord gave me knowledge, that I might have understanding. Then he showed me what the people were doing.

11:19 Before this I had been like a docile lamb ready to be led to the slaughter. I did not know they were making plans to kill me. I did not know they were saying, “Let’s destroy the tree along with its fruit.” Let’s remove Jeremiah from the world of the living so people will not even be reminded of him any more.”

11:20 So I said to the Lord, “O Lord who rules over all, you are a just judge! You examine people’s hearts and minds. I want to see you pay them back for what they have done because I trust you to vindicate my cause.”

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1 tn The verb form used here is another example of a verb expressing that the action is as good as done (the Hebrew prophetic perfect).
2 tn In Heb “At the sound of a mighty roar he will set fire to it.” For the shift from third person “he” to the first person “I” see the preceding note. The Hebrew use of the pronouns in vv. 16-17 for the olive tree and the people that it represents is likely to cause confusion if retained. In v. 16 the people are “you” and the olive tree is “it.” The people are again “you” in v. 17 but part of the metaphor is carried over, i.e., “he ‘planted’ you.” It creates less confusion in the flow of the passage if the metaphorical identification is carried out throughout by addressing the people/plant as “you.”
3 tn The verb here has most commonly been derived from a root meaning “to be broken” (cf. BDB 949 s.v. II רָעַע) which fits poorly with the metaphor of setting the plant on fire. Another common option is to emend it to a verb meaning “to be burned up” (רָעַע, ba‘ar). However, it is better to follow the lead of the Greek version which translates “the good for nothing” (τὸ εὐλογοῦν τῆς ἀρετῆς) and derive the verb from רָעַע (ra‘) meaning “be bad/evil” (cf. BDB 949 and compare the nuance of the adjective from this verb in BDB 948 s.v. II 5).
4 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”
5 sn For the significance of the term see the notes at 2:19 and 7:3.
6 tn The words “in the land” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to clarify the meaning of the metaphor.
7 tn Heb “For Yahweh of armies who planted you speaks directly to addressing him.
8 tn Heb “caused me to know that I might know.” Many English versions supply an unstated object “their plots” which is referred to later in the context (cf. v. 19). The presupposition of this kind of absolute ellipsis is difficult to justify and would create the need for understanding an ellipsis of “it” also after “I knew.” It is better to see a bipolar use of the verb “know” here. For the second use of the verb “know” meaning “have understanding” see BDB 394 s.v. 27: Qal 5.
9 tn Heb “Then you showed me what their deeds.” This is another example of the rapid shift in person which is common in Jeremiah. As elsewhere, it has been resolved for the sake of avoiding confusion for the English reader by leveling the referent to the same person throughout. The text again involves an apostrophe, talking about the Lord to addressing him.
10 tn Heb “against me.” The words “to kill me” are implicit from the context and are supplied in the translation for clarity.
11 tn The words “I did not know that they were saying” are not in the text. The quote is without formal introduction in the original. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.
12 tn This word and its pronoun (לָחוֹם, lekho, “its bread”) is often emended to read “in/with its sap” = “in its prime” (either לֶחֶם, lēkho or לָּחוֹם, lēkho‘mo); the latter would be more likely and the לֶחֶם (lev) could be explained as a rare use of the old poetic third plural suffix for the third singular; cf. GKC 258 §9.1 for general use and Ps 11:7 and Job 27:23 for third singular use. Though this fits the context nicely the emendation is probably unnecessary since the word “bread” is sometimes used of other foodstuffs than grain or its products (cf. BDB 537 s.v. לֶחֶם 2.a).
13 sn The word fruit refers contextually here to the prophecies that Jeremiah was giving, not (as some suppose) his progeny. Jeremiah was not married and had no children.
14 tn Heb “cut it [or him] off.” The metaphor of the tree may be continued, though the verb “cut off” is used also of killing people. The rendering clarifies the meaning of the metaphor.
15 tn Heb “so that his name will not be remembered any more.”
16 tn The words “So I said to the Lord” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show the shift in address.
17 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”
18 sn For the significance of the term see the notes at 2:19 and 7:3.
19 tn Heb “Lord of armies, just judge, tester of kidneys and heart, the sentence has been broken up to avoid a long and complex English sentence. The translation is more in keeping with contemporary English style. In Hebrew “the kidneys” were thought of as the seat of the emotions and passions and the “heart” was viewed as the seat of intellect, conscience, and will. The “heart” and the “kidneys” are often used figuratively for the thoughts, emotions, motives, and drives that are thought to be seated in them.
20 tn Heb “Let me see your retribution [i.e., see you exact retribution] from them because I reveal my cause [i.e., plea for justice] to you."
11:21 Then the LORD told me about some men from Anathoth who were threatening to kill me. They had threatened,4 “Stop prophesying in the name of the LORD or we will kill you!” 11:22 So the LORD who rules over all said, “I will surely punish them! Their young men will be killed in battle.8 Their sons and daughters will die of starvation. 11:23 Not one of them will survive.9 I will bring disaster on those men from Anathoth who threatened you.10 A day of reckoning is coming for them.” 11:24

12:1 LORD, you have always been fair whenever I have complained to you.12 However, I would like to speak with you about the disposition of justice.13 Why are wicked people successful?14 Why do all dishonest people have such easy lives? 12:2 You plant them like trees and they put down their roots.15 They grow prosperous and are very fruitful.16 They always talk about you, but they really care nothing about you.17

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1. **Heb** “Therefore thus says the LORD.” This phrase is anticipatory of the same phrase at the beginning of v. 22 and is introductory to what the LORD says about them. The translation seeks to show the connection of the “therefore” which is sometimes rather loose (cf. BDB 487 s.v. 3. 3d[b]) with the actual response which is not given until v. 22.
2. **Heb** “the men of Anathoth.” However, this does not involve all of the people, only the conspirators. The literal might lead to confusion later since v. 21 mentions that there will not be any of them left alive. However, it is known from Ezra 2:23 that there were survivors.
3. The MT reads the 2nd person masculine singular suffix “your life,” but LXX reflects an alternative reading of the 1st person common singular suffix “my life.”
4. **Heb** “who were seeking my life, saying...” The sentence is broken up in conformity with contemporary English style.
5. **Heb** “or you will die by our hand.”
6. **Heb** “Yahweh of armies.”
7. For the significance of the term see the notes at 2:19 and 7:3.
8. **Heb** “Behold I will.” For the function of this particle see the translator’s note on v. 26.
9. **Heb** “will die by the sword.” Here “sword” stands contextually for “battle” while “starvation” stands for death by starvation during siege.
10. **Heb** “there will be no survivors for/among them.”
11. **Heb** “the men of Anathoth.” For the rationale for adding this word as he is. The wicked who are prospering should be experiencing punishment.
12. **Heb** “because of the wickedness of those who live in it.”
13. **Heb** “he.” The referent is usually identified as God and is supplied here for clarity. Some identify the referent with Jeremiah. If that is the case, then he returns to his complaint about the conspirators. It is more likely, however, that it refers to God and Jeremiah’s complaint is that the people live their lives apart from concern about God.
14. Or reading with the Greek version, “God does not see what we are doing.” In place of “what will happen to us (אֵלקֵינוּ, ‘orkhotenu, “our end”),” the Greek version understands a Hebrew text which reads “our ways” (אֲהַלַּתְנוּ, ‘arkhotenu), which is graphically very close to the MT. The Masoretic is supported by the Latin and is retained here on the basis of external evidence. Further text makes good sense in the context. Some identify the “he” with Jeremiah and understand the text to be saying “that the conspirators are certain that they will succeed and he will not live to see his prophecies fulfilled.
15. The words here may be an outright rejection of the LORD’s words in Deut 32:20, which is part of a song that was to be taught to Israel in the light of their predicted rejection of the LORD.
16. The words “The LORD answered” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
17. Some commentaries and English versions follow the suggestion given in HALOT 116 s.v. II בַּטַח that a homonym meaning “to stumble, fall down” is involved here and in Prov 14:16. The evidence for this homonym is questionable because both passages can be explained on other grounds with the usual root.
18. **Heb** “a land of tranquility.” The expression involves a phrase ‘אֲחַלַתְנוּ, ‘orkhotenu,” which is graphically very close to the MT. The Masoretic is supported by the Latin and is retained here on the basis of external evidence. Further text makes good sense in the context. Some identify the “he” with Jeremiah and understand the text to be saying “that the conspirators are certain that they will succeed and he will not live to see his prophecies fulfilled.
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how will you manage in the thick undergrowth along the Jordan River?

12:6 As a matter of fact, even your own brothers and the members of your own family have betrayed you too. Even they have plotted to do away with you.

So do not trust them even when they say kind things to you.

12:7 "I will abandon my nation. I will forsake the people I call my own. I will turn my beloved people over to the power of their enemies.

The figure of substitution where the feeling engendered is substituted for the conditions that engender it. For the idea see Isa 32:18. The translation both here and in the following line is intended to bring out the contrast implicit in the emotive connotations connected with "peaceful country" and "thick along the Jordan."

The thick undergrowth along the Jordan River refers to the thick woods and underbrush alongside the Jordan where lions, leopards, and wild beasts are found. Since the area was considered dangerous. See Jer 49:19: 50:44. The Lxx here seems to be telling Jeremiah that the situation will only get worse. If he has trouble contradicting with the plot from his fellow townsmen, what will he do when the whole country sets up a cry against him?

This is an attempt to give some contextual sense to the participial phrase "for indecent." sn This is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

If the truth be known, Jeremiah wasn't safe even in the thick undergrowth along the Jordan River. If other birds of prey are all around this place it is because the place is considered dangerous. Jeremiah himself was considered a dangerous individual by his fellow townsmen. The townsmen were part of the conspiracy to have him killed.

In the Hebrew text "after" could be translated by the noun "in" (ts, k). sn If the truth be known, Jeremiah wasn't safe even in the context of his own family. They were apparently part of the plot by the people of Anathoth to kill him.

In the Hebrew text "after" could be translated by the noun "in" (ts, k) or "with." sn This is intended to bring out the contrast implicit in the emotive connotations connected with "peaceful country" and "thick along the Jordan.

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They will trample all over my chosen land. They will turn my beautiful land into a desolate wasteland. 12:11 They will lay it waste. It will lie parched and empty before me. The whole land will be laid waste. But no one living in it will pay any heed. 3 12:12 A destructive army will come marching over the hilltops in the desert. For the Lord will use them as his destructive weapon against everyone from one end of the land to the other. No one will be safe. 7 12:13 My people will sow wheat, but will harvest weeds. They will work until they are exhausted, but will get nothing from it. They will be disappointed in their harvests. 9

The vineyard is found several times in the Bible. The best known of these is the extended metaphor in Isa 5:1-7. This figure also appears in Jer 2:20. 1

tn Heb “my portion.” 2

tn For the use of this verb see the notes on 12:4. Some understand the homonym here meaning “it [the desolated land] will mourn to me.” However, the only other use of the preposition ב (‘al) with this root means “to mourn over” not “to” (cf. Hos 10:5). For the use of the preposition here see BDB 753 s.v. ב II.1.b and compare the use in Gen 48:7. 3

tn In Hebrew there is no man laying it, it to heart. For the idiom here see BDB 525 s.v. ל II.3.d and compare the usage in Isa 42:25; 47:7.

sn There is a very interesting play on words and sounds in this verse that paints a picture of desolation and the pain it evokes. Part of this is reflected in the translation. The same Hebrew word referring to a desolation or a waste (נשמא, nashmaḥ) is repeated three times at the end of three successive lines and the related verb is found at the beginning of the fourth (נשמא, nashmaḥ). A similar sounding word is found in the second of the three successive lines (נשמא, nashmaḥ = “the [they] will make it”). This latter word is part of a further play because it is repeated in a different form in the last line (נשמא, nashmaḥ = “laying”); they lay it waste but no one lays it to heart. There is also an interesting contrast between the sorrow the Lord feels and the inattention of the people.

tn Heb “destroyers.” 4

tn Heb “It is the Lord’s consuming sword.” 5

tn Heb “For a sword of the Lord will devour.” The sword is often symbolic for destructive forces of all kinds. Here and in Isa 34:6; Jer 47:6 it is symbolic of the enemy armies that the Lord uses to carry out destructive punishment against his enemies, hence the translation “his destructive weapon.” A similar figure is used in Isa 10:5 where the figure is more clearly identified; Assyria is the rod/club that the Lord will use to discipline unfaithful Israel.

tn Heb “There is no peace to all flesh.” 7

sn Invading armies lived off the land, using up all the produce and destroying everything they could not consume. 8

tn These pronouns here are actually second plural: Heb “Be ashamed/disconcerted because of your harvests.” Because the verb form (וָשָׁם, voshaʿ) can either be Qal perfect third plural or Qal imperative masculine plural many emend the pronoun on the noun to third plural (see, e.g., BHS). However, this is the easier reading and is not supported by either the Latin or the Greek which have second plural. This is probably another case of the shift from direct to indirect address that has been met with several times already in Jeremiah (the figure of speech called apostrophe; for other examples see, e.g., 9:4; 11:13). As in other cases the translation has been leveled to third plural to avoid confusion for the contemporary English reader. For the meaning of the verb here see BDB 101 s.v. ב. וּנָא Qal and compare the usage in Jer 48:13.

tn Heb “be disappointed in their harvests from the fierce anger of the Lord.” The translation makes explicit what is implicit in the elliptical poetry of the Hebrew original.

tn Heb “Thus says the Lord concerning....” This structure has been adopted to prevent a long dangling introduction to what the Lord has to say that does not begin until the middle of the verse in Hebrew. The first person address was adopted because the speaker is still the Lord as in vv. 7-13.

tn Heb “my wicked neighbors.”

tn Heb “touched.” For the nuance of this verb here see BDB 619 s.v. הטל and compare the usage in 1 Chr 16:22 where it is parallel to “do harm to” and Zech 2:8 where it is parallel to “plundered.”

tn Heb “the inheritance which I caused my people Israel to inherit.” Compare 3:18.

tn Heb “I will uproot the house of Judah from their midst.”

sn There appears to be an interesting play on the Hebrew word translated “uproot” in this verse. In the first instance it refers to “uprooting the nations from upon their lands,” i.e., to exiling them, in the second instance it refers to “uprooting the Judeans from the midst of them,” i.e., to rescue them.

tn For the use of the verb “turn” (לֵב, lev) in this sense, see BDB s.v. ל Lev 6:5 and compare the usage in Ps 90:13; 6:4; Joel 2:14. It does not simply mean “again” as several of the English versions render it.

tn The Lord is sovereign over the nations and has allotted each of them their lands. See Deut 2:5 (Edom), Deut 2:9 (Moab), Deut 2:19 (Ammon). He promised to restore not only his own people Israel to their land (Jer 32:37) but also Moab (Jer 48:47) and Ammon (Jer 49:5).

tn Heb “the ways of my people.” For this nuance of the word “ways” compare 10:2 and the notes there.

tn Heb “taught my people to swear by Baal.”

tn The words “I swear” are not in the text but are implicit to the oath formula. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

tn The words “if they do this” are not in the text. They are part of an attempt to break up a Hebrew sentence which is long and complex into equivalent shorter sentences consistent with contemporary English style. Verse 16 in Hebrew is all one sentence with a long complex conditional clause followed by a short consequence: “if they carefully learn the ways of my people to swear by name, ‘By the life of the Lord,’ as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up in the midst of my people.” The translation strives to create the same contingencies and modifications by breaking up the sentence into shorter sentences in accord with con-
An Object Lesson from Ruined Linen Shorts

13:1 The LORD said to me, “Go and buy some linen shorts3 and put them on.4 Do not put them in water.”5 13:2 So I bought the shorts as

the LORD had told me to do6 and put them on.7 13:3 Then the LORD spoke to me again and said,8 13:4 “Take the shorts that you bought and are wearing9 and go and set them at Perath.10 Bury the shorts there12 as the LORD had ordered me to do. 13:6 Many days later the LORD said to me, “Go at once to Perath and get14 the shorts I ordered you to bury there.” 13:7 So I went to Perath and dug up15 the shorts from the place where I had buried them. I found16 that they were ruined; they were good for nothing.

3 sn The linen shorts (Heb “loincloth”) were representative of Israel and the wearing of them was to illustrate the Lord’s close relation to his people (v. 11). Since the priests’ garments were to be made wholly of linen (cf. Exod 28: Ezek 44:17-18), the fact that the shorts were to be made of linen probably was to symbolize the nature of Israel’s calling: they were to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exod 19:5-6). Just as the linen garments of the priest were to give him special honor and glory (Exod 28:40), so the linen garment was to give to the king special honor and glory to the Lord (v. 11).
4 tn Heb “upon your loins.” The “loins” were the midriff of the body from the waist to the knees. For a further discussion including the figurative uses see, IDB, “Loins,” 3:149-50.
5 tn Heb “The word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying.”
6 tn Heb “which are upon your loins.” See further the notes on v. 1.
7 tn Heb “Get up and go.” The first verb is not literal but is idiomatic for the initiation of an action.
8 tn There has been a great deal of debate about whether the place referred to here is a place (Parah = Perath) mentioned in Josh 18:23, modern Khirbet Farah, near a spring (‘ain Farah) about three and a half miles from Anathoth which was Jeremiah’s home town or the Euphrates River. Elsewhere the word “Perath” always refers to the Euphrates but it is either preceded by the word “river of” or there is contextual indication that the Euphrates is being referred to. Because a journey to the Euphrates and back would involve a journey of more than 700 miles (1,100 km) and take some months, scholars both ancient and modern have questioned whether “Perath” refers to the Euphrates here and if it does whether a real journey was involved. Most of the attempts to identify the place where the Euphrates involves misguided assumptions that this action was a symbolic message to Israel about exile or the corrupting influence of Assyria and Babylon. However, unlike the other symbolic acts in Jeremiah (and in Isaiah and Ezekiel) the symbolism is not part of a message to the people but to Jeremiah; the message is explained to him (vv. 9-11) not the people. In keeping with some of the wordplays that are somewhat common in Jeremiah it is likely that the reference here is to a place, Parah, which was near Jeremiah’s hometown, but whose name would naturally suggest to Jeremiah later in the Loe’s explanation in vv. 9-11 Assyria-Babylon as a place connected with Judah’s corruption (see the notes on vv. 9-10). For further discussion the reader should consult the commentaries, especially W. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:396 and W. McKane, Jeremiah (ICC), 1:285-92 who take opposite positions on this issue.
9 sn The significance of this act is explained in vv. 9-10. See the notes there for explanation.
10 sn The translation reads מְנַשֶּׁה (menahesh) with 4QJer as noted in W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:393 instead of מְנַשֶּׁה (menasheh) in the MT.
11 sn Heb “Get from there.” The words “from there” are not necessary to the English sentence. They would lead to a redundancy later in the verse, i.e., “from there…bury there.”
12 sn Heb “dug and took.”
13:8 Then the Lord said to me;[1] 13:9 “I, the Lord, say;[2] This shows how[3] I will ruin the highly exalted position[4] in which Judah and Jerusalem[5] take pride. 13:10 These wicked people refuse to obey what I have said.[6] They follow the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts and pay allegiance[7] to other gods by worshiping and serving them. So[8] they will become just like these linen shorts which are good for nothing. 13:11 For,” I say,[9] “just as shorts cling tightly to a person’s body, so I bind the whole nation of Israel and the whole nation of Judah[10] tightly,[11] to me. I intended for them to be my special people and to bring me fame, honor, and praise.[12] But they would not obey me.

13:12 “So tell them,[13] ‘The Lord, the God of Israel, says, “Every wine jar is made to be filled with wine.” ’[14] And they will probably say to you, ‘Do you not think we know,[15] that every wine jar is supposed to be filled with wine?’ ” 13:13 Then[16] tell them, ‘The Lord says, “I will soon fill all the people who live in this land with stupor.” ’[17] I will also fill the kings from David’s dynasty,[18] the priests, the prophets, and the citizens of Jerusalem with stupor.[19] 13:14 And I will smash them like wine bottles against one another, children and parents

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[1] tn Heb “Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying.”
[2] tn Heb “Thus says the Lord.”
[3] In a sense this phrase which is literally “according to thus” or simply “thus” points both backward and forward: backward to the acted out parable and forward to the explanation which follows.
[4] Many of the English versions have errored in rendering this word “pride” or “arrogance” with the resultant implication that the Lord is going to destroy Israel’s pride, i.e., humble them through the punishment of exile. However, BDB 144-45 s.v. הַיִּהְיָא 1 is more probably correct when they classify this passage among those that deal with the “majesty, excellence” of nations, their wealth, power, magnificence of buildings….
[5] The closest parallels to the usage here are in Zech 10:11 (parallel to scepter of Egypt); Ps 47:4 (47:5 HT; parallel to “our heritage” = “our land”); Isa 14:11; and Amos 8:7. The term is further defined in v. 11 where it refers to their special relationship and calling. To translate it “pride” or “arrogance” also ruins the play on “pride” or “arrogance” which would nor serve the parallel structure of the construction that was thrust tightly with English style.
[6] tn Scholars and ancient and modern are divided over the significance of the statement I will ruin the highly exalted position in which Judah and Jerusalem take pride (Heb “I will ruin the pride of Judah and Jerusalem”). Some feel that it refers to the corrupting influence of Assyria and Babylon and others feel that it refers to the threat of Babylonian exile. However, F. B. Huey (Jeremiah, Lamentations [NAC], 144) is correct in observing that the Babylonian exile did not lead to the rottenness of Judah, the corrupting influence of the foreign idea did. In Jeremiah’s day these came through the age-old influences of the Canaanite worship of Baal but also the astral worship introduced by Ahaz and Manasseh. For an example of the corrupting influence of Assyria on Judah through Ahaz’s political alliances see 2 Kgs 16 and also compare the allegory of the two bowls inJer 25:11-14. It was while the exiles were off Jeremiah’s body and buried in the rocks that the linen shorts were ruined. So the Lord “ruined” the privileged status that resulted from Israel’s close relationship to him (cf. v. 11). For the “problem” created by the Lord ruining Israel through corrupting influence compare the notes on Jer 4:10 and compare also passages like Isa 63:17 and Isa 6:10.
[7] map For location see Maps B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
[8] tn Heb “Thus says the Lord.”
[9] map See Maps B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
[10] tn Heb “Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying.”
[11] tn It would be somewhat unnatural in English to render the play on the word translated here “cling tightly” and “bound tightly” in a literal way. They are from the same root word in Hebrew (נָשָׁק, nebal), a word that emphasizes the closest of personal relationships and the loyalty connected with them. It is used, for example, of the relationship of a husband and a wife and the loyalty expected of them (cf. Gen 2:24; for other similar uses see Ruth 1:14; 2 Sam 20:2; Deut 11:22).
[12] tn Heb “I found them…in order that they might be to me a special people to bring me fame, honor, and praise.”
[13] In a sense this phrase which is literally “according to thus” or simply “thus” points both backward and forward: backward to the acted out parable and forward to the explanation which follows.
[14] tn It is going to destroy Israel’s pride, i.e., humble them through the punishment of exile. However, BDB 144-45 s.v. הַיִּהְיָא 1 is more probably correct when they classify this passage among those that deal with the “majesty, excellence” of nations, their wealth, power, magnificence of buildings….
[15] tn Scholars and ancient and modern are divided over the significance of the statement I will ruin the highly exalted position in which Judah and Jerusalem take pride (Heb “I will ruin the pride of Judah and Jerusalem”). Some feel that it refers to the corrupting influence of Assyria and Babylon and others feel that it refers to the threat of Babylonian exile. However, F. B. Huey (Jeremiah, Lamentations [NAC], 144) is correct in observing that the Babylonian exile did not lead to the rottenness of Judah, the corrupting influence of the foreign idea did. In Jeremiah’s day these came through the age-old influences of the Canaanite worship of Baal but also the astral worship introduced by Ahaz and Manasseh. For an example of the corrupting influence of Assyria on Judah through Ahaz’s political alliances see 2 Kgs 16 and also compare the allegory of the two bowls inJer 25:11-14. It was while the exiles were off Jeremiah’s body and buried in the rocks that the linen shorts were ruined. So the Lord “ruined” the privileged status that resulted from Israel’s close relationship to him (cf. v. 11). For the “problem” created by the Lord ruining Israel through corrupting influence compare the notes on Jer 4:10 and compare also passages like Isa 63:17 and Isa 6:10.
[16] map For location see Maps B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
[17] tn Heb “This says the Lord.”
[18] map See Maps B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
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[22] map For location see Maps B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
13:15 Then I said to the people of Judah, "Listen and pay attention! Do not be arrogant!

13:16 Show the Lord your God the respect that is due him. Do it before he brings the darkness of disaster. Do it before you stumble into distress like a traveler on the mountains at twilight. Do it before he turns the light of deliverance you hope for into the darkness and gloom of exile. But if you will not pay attention to this warning, I will weep alone because of your arrogant pride. I will weep bitterly and my eyes will overflow with tears because you, the Lord’s flock, will be carried into exile."

13:18 The Lord told me, “Tell the king and the queen mother, ‘Surrender your thrones, for your glorious crowns will be removed from your heads. The gates of the towns in southern Judah will be shut tight. No one will be able to go in or out of them. All Judah will be carried off into exile. They will be completely carried off into exile.’”

13:20 Then I said, “Look up, Jerusalem, and see is supplied in the translation to avoid the shift in English from the second person address at the beginning to the third person affirmation at the end. It also helps explain the metaphor of the people of Israel as God’s flock for some readers who may be unfamiliar with that metaphor.

14:3 The verb is once again in the form of “as good as done” (the Hebrew prophetic perfect).

15:28 The words “The Lord told me” are not in the text but are implicit in the shift from second plural pronouns in vv. 15-17 to second singular in the Hebrew text of this verse. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

16 tn Or “You will come down from your thrones”; Heb “Make low! Sit!” This is a case of a construction where two forms in the same case, mood, or tense are joined in such a way that one (usually the first) is intended as an adverbial or adjectival modifier of the other (a figure called hendiadys). This is also probably a case where the imperative is used to express a distinct assurance or promise. See GKC 324 §110. b There are many of the leading people of Jerusalem in 597 b.c. See Jer 22:26; 29:2; 2 Kgs 24:14-16. c tn Heb “have come down.” The verb here and those in the following verses are further examples of the “as good as done” form of the Hebrew verb (the prophetic perfect).

17 The translation follows the common emendation of a word normally meaning “place at the head” ([מַרְאֲשׁוֹת] merašḥot) plus pronoun = נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם נְפֶשׁוֹת] nefesh ha’adam nefeshot) to “from your heads” (נֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם נְפֶשׁוֹת] nefesh ha’adam nefeshot) following the ancient versions. The meaning “tara” is nowhere else attested for this word.

18 tn Heb “The towns of the Negev will be shut.”

19 tn Heb “There is no one to open them.” The translation is based on the parallel in Josh 6:1 where the very expression in the translation is used. Opening the city would have permitted entrance (of relief forces) as well as exit (of fugitives).

20 tn The words “Then I said” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation to show the shift in speaker from vv. 18-19 where the Lord is speaking to Jeremiah. 21 tn The phrase “Jerusalem” is not in the Hebrew text. It is added in the Greek text and is generally considered to be the object of address because of the second feminine singular verbs here and throughout the following verses. The translation follows the consonantal text (Kethib) and the Greek text in reading the second feminine singular here. The verbs and pronouns in vv. 20-22 are all second feminine singular with the exception of the suffix on the word “eyes” which is not reflected in the translation here (“Look up” = Lift up your eyes”) and the verb and pronoun in v. 23. The text may reflect the same kind of alternation between singular and plural that
13:21 What will you say when the Lord appoints as rulers over you those allies that you, yourself, had actually prepared as such? Then anguish and agony will grip you like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.

13:22 You will probably ask yourself, ‘Why have these things happened to me? Why have I been treated like a disgraced adulteress whose skirt has been torn off and her limbs exposed?’ It is because you have sinned so much.

13:23 But there is little hope for you ever doing good, you who are so accustomed to doing evil. Can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin? Can a leopard remove its spots?

13:24 ‘The Lord says, ‘That is why I will scatter your people like chaff that is blown away by a desert wind.

13:25 This is your fate,
A Lament over the Ravages of Drought

14:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah about the drought.

14:2 “The people of Judah are in mourning. The people in her cities are pining away. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem. The leading men of the cities send their servants for water. They return empty. Disappointed and dismayed, they bury their faces in their hands.

14:4 They are dismayed because the ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land. The farmers, too, are dismayed and bury their faces in their hands.

14:5 Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field.

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14:5 Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field.
because there is no grass.

14:6 Wild donkeys stand on the hilltops and pant for breath like jackals. Their eyes are strained looking for food, because there is none to be found.\(^1\)

14:7 Then I said,\(^2\)

"O LORD, intervene for the honor of your name\(^3\) even though our sins speak out against us.\(^4\)

Indeed,\(^5\) we have turned away from you many times.

We have sinned against you.

14:8 You have been the object of Israel’s hopes.

You have saved them when they were in trouble.

Why have you become like a resident foreigner\(^6\) in the land?

Why have you become like a traveler who only stops in to spend the night?

14:9 Why should you be like someone who is helpless,\(^7\) like a champion\(^8\) who cannot save anyone?

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\(^1\) tn Heb “their eyes are strained because there is no verdure.”

\(^2\) tn The words “Then I said” are not in the text. However, it cannot be a continuation of the LORD’s speech and the people have consistently refused to acknowledge their sin. The fact that the prayer here and in vv. 19-22 are followed by an address from God to Jeremiah regarding prayer (cf. 4:11) and the other information about the relationship between God and Jeremiah and Israel (1:1) also argues that the speaker is Jeremiah. He is again identifying with his people (cf. 8:18-9:2). Here he takes up the petition part of the lament which often contains elements of confession of sin and statements of trust. In 14:1-6 God portrays to Jeremiah the people’s lamentable plight instead of describing it to him. Here Jeremiah prays what they should pray. The people are strangely silent throughout.

\(^3\) tn Heb “Act for the sake of your name.” The usage of “act” in this absolute, unqualified sense cf. BDB 794 s.v. בָּהַם Qal. I.r and compare the usage, e.g., in 1 Kgs 8:32 and 39. For the nuance of “for the sake of your name” compare the usage in Isa 48:9 and Ezek 20:9, 14.

\(^4\) tn Or “bear witness against us,” or “can be used as evidence against us,” to keep the legal metaphor. Heb “testify against.”

\(^5\) tn The Hebrew particle כִּי (ki) can scarcely be causal here; it is either intensive (BDB 472 s.v. כִּי 1.e) or concessive (BDB 473 s.v. כִּי 2.c). The parallel usage in Gen 18:20 argues for the intensive force as does the fact that the concessive has already been expressed by כְּ (kim).

\(^6\) tn It would be a mistake to translate this word as “stranger.” This word (הָרָה, har) refers to a resident alien or resident foreigner who stays in a country not his own. He is accorded the privilege of protection through the common rights of hospitality but he does not have the rights of the native born or citizen.

The simile here is particularly effective. The land was the LORD’s land; they were but resident foreigners and tenants on it (Lev 25:23). Jeremiah’s complaint here is particularly bold. For further information on the status of “resident foreigners” see BDDB 4:397-99 s.v. “Sojourner.”

\(^7\) tn This is the only time this word occurs in the Hebrew Bible. The lexicons generally take it to mean “confused” or “surprised” (cf., e.g., BDB 187 s.v. מְלָדֵה). However, the word has been found in a letter from the seventh century in a passage where it must mean something like “be helpless”; see W.L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:433, for discussion and bibliography of an article where this letter is dealt with.

\(^8\) tn Heb “mighty man, warrior.” For this nuance see 1 Sam 17:51 where it parallels a technical term used of Goliath used earlier in 17:4, 23.

\(^9\) tn Heb “in our midst.”

\(^10\) tn Heb “Your name is called upon us.” See Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30 for this idiom with respect to the temple and see the notes on Jer 7:10.

\(^11\) tn Heb “Thus said the LORD concerning this people.”

\(^12\) sn The LORD answers indirectly, speaking neither to Jeremiah directly nor to the people. Instead of an oracle of deliverance which was hoped for (cf. 2 Chr 20:14-17; Pss 12:5 [12:6]; Hb 666 §39.3.4e) states that when there is no specific comparative clause preceding a general comparison is intended. They point to Judg 5:31 as a parallel. Ps 127:2 may also be an example if כִּי (ki) is not to be read (cf. BHS fn). “Truly” seemed the best way to render this idea in contemporary English.

\(^13\) tn Heb “They do not restrain their feet.” The idea of “away from me” is implicit in the context and is supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^14\) tn Heb “remember.”

\(^15\) tn Heb “their iniquities.”

\(^16\) tn Heb “on behalf of these people for benefit.”

\(^17\) sn See 6:16-20 for parallels.

\(^18\) tn Heb “through sword, starvation, and plague.”

\(^19\) tn Heb “Lord Yahweh.” The translation follows the ancient Jewish tradition of substituting the Hebrew word for God for the proper name Yahweh.

\(^20\) tn Heb “Behold.” See the translator’s note on usage of this particle in 1:6.

\(^21\) tn The words “that you said” are not in the text but are implicit from the first person in the affirmation that follows. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^22\) tn Heb “You will not see sword and you will not have starvation [or hunger].”
I will give you lasting peace and prosperity in this land."

14:14 Then the Lord said to me, “Those prophets are prophesying lies while claiming my authority! I did not send them. I did not commission them. I did not speak to them. They are prophesying to these people false visions, worthless predictions, and the delusions of their own mind. 14:15 I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name. They may be saying, ‘No war or famine will happen in this land.’ But I, the Lord, say this to them: ‘War and starvation will kill those prophets.’

14:16 The people to whom they are prophesying will die through war and famine. Their bodies will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and there will be no one to bury them. This will happen to the men and their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out on them the destruction they deserve.”

Lament over Present Destruction and Threat of More to Come

14:17 “Tell these people this, Jeremiah: ‘My eyes overflow with tears day and night without ceasing. For my people, my dear children, have suffered a crushing blow. They have suffered a serious wound.

14:18 If I go out into the countryside, I see those who have been killed in battle. If I go into the city, I see those who are sick because of starvation.

For both prophet and priest go about their own business.

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1 tnt Heb “I will give you unfailing peace in this place.” The translation opts for “peace and prosperity” here for the word פָּנִית (shalom) because in the context it refers both to peace from war and security from famine and plagues. The word translated “lasting” (גָּם, emet) is a difficult one to render here because it has broad uses: “truth, reliability, stability, steadfastness,” etc. “Guaranteed” or “lasting” seem to fit the context the best.

2 tnt Heb “Falsehood those prophets are prophesying in my name.” In the OT, the “name” reflected the person’s character and a sense of responsibility. In Genesis 27:36 (1 Sam 25:25) or his reputation (Gen 12:4; 2 Sam 8:13). To speak in someone’s name was to act as his representative or carry his authority (1 Sam 25:9: 1 Kgs 21:8).

3 tnt Heb “I did not command them.” Compare 1 Chr 22:12 for usage.

4 tnt Heb “divination and worthlessness.” The noun “worthlessness” stands as a qualifying “of” phrase (= to an adjective; an attributive genitive in Hebrew) after a noun in Zech 11:17; Job 13:4. This is an example of hendiadys where two nouns are joined by “and” with one serving as the qualifier of the other.

5 sn The word translated “predictions” here is really the word “divination.” Divination was prohibited in Israel (cf. Deut 18:10, 14). The practice of divination involved various mechanical means to try to predict the future. The word was used here for its negative connotations in a statement that is rhythmically structured to emphasize the falseness of the promises of the false prophets. It would be unnatural to contemporary English style to try to capture this emphasis in English. In the Hebrew text the last sentence reads: “False vision, divination, and worthlessness and the deceitfulness of their heart they are prophesying to them.” For the emphasis in the preceding sentence see the note there.

6 tnt Heb “Thus says the Lord about.” The first person construction has been used in the translation for better English style.

7 sn The rhetoric of the passage is again sustained by an emphatic word order which contrasts what they say will not happen to the land, “war and famine,” with the punishment that the Lord will inflict on them, i.e., “war and starvation [or famine].”

8 tn Heb “And the people to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and there will not be anyone to bury them, their wives, and their sons and their daughters.” This sentence has been restructured to break up a long Hebrew sentence and to avoid some awkwardness due to differences in the ancient Hebrew and contemporary English styles.

9 tn Heb “They say to those about.” Hebrew words often include within them a polarity of cause and effect. Thus the word for “evil” includes both the concept of wickedness and the punishment for it. Other words that function this way are “iniquity” = “guilt [of iniquity]” = “punishment [for iniquity].” Context determines which nuance is proper.

10 sn The word “Jeremiah” is not in the text but the address is to a second person singular and is a continuation of 14:14 where the quote starts. The word is supplied in the translation for clarity.

11 sn Many of the English versions and commentaries render this an indirect or third person imperative, “Let my eyes overflow...” because of the particle הָיוּ (hayyō) which introduces the phrase translated “without ceasing” (יִגְדַּל, yitgal). However, this is undoubtedly an example where the particle introduces an affirmation that something cannot be done (cf. GKC 322 §109.e). Clear examples of this are found in Pss 41:2 (41:3 HT); 50:3; Job 40:32 HT (41:8 ET). God here is describing again a lamentable situation and giving his response to it. See 14:1-6 above.

12 sn Once again it is the Lord lamenting the plight of the people, now directed to them, not the people lamenting their grief. The “Lord’s lament” is both a prayer and a study note on the introduction to this section and on 14:7.

13 tn Heb “virgin daughter, my people.” The last noun here is appositive to the first two (genitive of apposition). Hence it is not literally “virgin daughter of my people.”

14 sn This is a metaphor which occurs several times with regard to Israel, Judah, Zion, and even Sidon and Babylon. It is the poetic personification of the people, the city, or the land. Like other metaphors the quality of the comparison being alluded to must be elicited from the context. This is easy in Isa 14:21 (41:3 HT); 50:3; Job 40:32 HT (41:8 ET). God here is describing again a lamentable situation and giving his response to it. See 14:1-6 above.

15 tn This is a poetic personification. To translate with the plural “serious wounds” might mislead some into thinking of literal wounds.

16 sn Compare Jer 10:19 for a similar use of this metaphor.

17 tn The word “starvation” has been translated “famine” elsewhere in this passage. It is the word which refers to hunger. The “starvation” here may be war induced and not simply that which comes from famine per se. “Starvation” will cover both.
We confess that our ancestors have done wrong. 6

3 tn The meaning of these last two lines is somewhat uncertain. The meaning of these two lines is debated because of the uncertainty of the meaning of the verb rendered "confess" (םכש, sakhar) and the last phrase translated here "without any real understanding." The verb in question most commonly occurs as a participle meaning "trader" or "merchant" (cf., e.g., Ezek 27:21, 36; Prov 31:14). It occurs as a finite verb elsewhere only in Gen 34:10, 21; 42:34 and there in a literal sense of "trading," "doing business." While the nuance is metaphorical here it need not extend to "journeying into" (cf., e.g., BDB 695 s.v. סכז Qal.1) and be seen as a reference to exile as is sometimes assumed. That seems at variance with the causal particle which introduces this clause, the tense of the verb, and the surrounding context. People are dying in the land (vv. 17-18a) not because prophet and priest have gone (the verb is the Hebrew perfect or past) into exile but because the prophet and priest have gone (the verb is the Hebrew perfect or past) into exile. Therefore, this is probably wrong. The Hebrew text reads: "Do not treat with contempt for the sake of your name; do not treat with disdain your glorious throne." This is a case of poetic parallelism where the object is left hanging until the second line. For an example of this see Prov 13:1 where the object is Jerusalem (as in 3:17). From the beginning of the prayer in v. 19 where a similar kind of verb has been used with respect to Zion/Jerusalem it would appear that the contextual referent is Jerusalem. The absence of an object from the first line makes it possible to retain part of the metaphor in the translation and still convey some meaning.

4 tn Heb "does your soul despise." Here as in many places the word "soul" stands as part for whole for the person himself emphasizing emotional and volitional aspects of the person. However, in contemporary English one does not regularly use the word "soul" in contexts such as this but of the person.

5 sn For the "business" of the prophets and priest see 2:8; 5:13; 6:13; 8:10. In the context it refers to the prophets prophesying lies (see vv. 13-15).

6 tn The words, "Then I said," "LORD," are not in the Hebrew text. It is obvious from the context that the LORD is addressee. The question of the identity of the speaker is the same as that raised in vv. 7-9 and the arguments set forth there are applicable here. Jeremiah is here identifying with the people and doing what they refuse to do, i.e., confess their sins and express their trust in him.

7 tn This is another example of the intensive use of ל (li). See BDB 472 s.v. ל 1.e.

8 tn Heb "For the sake of your name."

9 map For location see Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

10 tn English versions quite commonly supply "us" as an object for the verb in the first line. This is probably wrong. The Hebrew text reads: "Do not treat with contempt for the sake of your name; do not treat with disdain your glorious throne." This is a case of poetic parallelism where the object is left hanging until the second line. For an example of this see Prov 13:1 in the original and consult E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 103-4. There has also been some disagreement whether "your glorious throne" refers to the temple (as in 17:12) or Jerusalem (as in 3:17). From the beginning of the prayer in v. 19 where a similar kind of verb has been used with respect to Zion/Jerusalem it would appear that the contextual referent is Jerusalem. The absence of an object from the first line makes it possible to retain part of the metaphor in the translation and still convey some meaning.

11 sn The place where God's glorious throne was first of all the ark of the covenant where God was said to be enthroned between the cherubim, then the temple that housed it, then the city itself. See 2 Kgs 19:14-15 in the context of Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem.

12 tn Heb "Remember, do not break your covenant with us." The word תְּנֵֽא (teneh), often translated "vanities", is a common pejorative epithet for idols or false gods. See already in 8:19 and 10:8.

13 tn Heb "Is it not you, O LORD our God?" The words "who does" are supplied in the translation for English style.

14 tn The rhetorical negatives are balanced by a rhetorical positive.

15 tn The words "pleading for" have been supplied in the translation to explain the idiom (a metonymy). For parallel usage see BDB 763 s.v. פָּלַג Qal.1.a and compare usage in Gen 19:27, Deut 4:10.

16 sn Moses and Samuel were well-known for their successful intercession on behalf of Israel. See Ps 99:6-8 and see, e.g., Exod 32:11-14, 30-34; 1 Sam 7:5-9. The LORD is here rejecting Jeremiah's intercession on behalf of the people (14:19-22)."
15:2 If they ask you, ‘Where should we go?’ tell them the Lord says this: “Those who are destined to die of disease will go to death by disease. Those who are destined to die in war will go to death in war. Those who are destined to die of starvation will go to death by starvation. Those who are destined to go into exile will go into exile.”

15:3 “I will punish them in four different ways: I will have war kill them. I will have dogs drag off their dead bodies. I will have birds and wild beasts devour and destroy their corpses. I will make all the people in all the kingdoms of the world horrified at what has happened to them because of what Hezekiah’s son Manasseh, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.”

15:4 The Lord says this: “Who will grieve over you? Who will stop long enough to inquire about how you are doing? You who have deserted me! You keep turning your back on me. So I have unleashed my power against you and have begun to destroy you. I have grown tired of feeling sorry for you!”

15:5 The Lord continued: “In every town in the land I will purge them like straw blown away by the wind.”

15:6 The words “The Lord cried out” are not in the text. However, they are necessary to show the shift in address between speaking to Jeremiah in vv. 1-4 about the people and addressing Jerusalem in vv. 5-6 and the shift back to the address to Jeremiah in vv. 7-9. The words “oracle of the Lord” are, moreover, found at the beginning of vv. 6.

15:7 The words “In the world” are not in the text but are the translator’s way of trying to indicate that this rhetorical question expects a negative answer.
15:8 Their widows will become in my sight more numerous than the grains of sand on the seashores. At noon time I will bring a destroyer against the mothers of their young men. I will cause anguish and terror to fall suddenly upon them.  

15:9 The mother who had seven children will grow faint. All the breath will go out of her. Her pride and joy will be taken from her in the prime of their life. It will seem as if the sun had set while it was still day.  

1 sn The sun was the source of light and hence has associations with life, prosperity, health, and blessing. The premature setting of the sun which brought these seems apropos as metaphor for the loss of her children which were not only a source of joy, help, and honor. Two references where “sun” is used figuratively, Ps 84:11 (84:12 HT) and Mal 4:2, may be helpful here.  

9 sn She has lost her position of honor and the source of her pride. For the concepts here see 1 Sam 2:5.  

10 tn Heb “I will deliver those of them that survive to the sword before their enemies.” The referent of “them” is ambiguous. Does it refer to the line itself or the women (msv “mothers”) or “I will bring against them – ….” In this case “mothers” and “young men” are treated by most as collectives. It would be tempting to translate these two lines “In broad daylight I have brought destroyers against the mothers of her fallen young men.” But this may be too interpretive. In the light of 6:4, noon time was a good time to attack. The Hebrew text says the destruction of the people and the killing off of the children. Perhaps it was meant to include both. Verse seven spoke of the destruction of the people and the killing off of the children.  

11 tn The words “I said” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to mark a shift in the speaker.  

12 tn Heb “Woe to me, my mother.” See the comments on 4:13 and 10:19.  

13 tn Heb “A man of strife and a man of contention with all the land.” The “of” relationship (Hebrew and Greek genitive) can convey either subjective or objective relationships, i.e., he instigates strife and contention or he is the object of it. A study of usage elsewhere, e.g., Isa 41:11; Job 31:35; Prov 12:19; 25:24; 26:21; 27:15, is convincing that it is subjective. In his role as God’s covenant messenger charging people with wrongdoing he has, no doubt, instigated some quarrels and stirred about strife and contention against him.  

14 tc The translation follows the almost universally agreed upon correction of the MT. Instead of reading מָזַר וָאָלָמָי (kulloh m’tqallavni, “all of him is cursing me”) as the Masoretic proposes (Qere) one should read מִזָּר וַעֲלָמָי (gilhuni) with the written text (Kethib) and rediveide and rejoint the suggestion in BHS מזַר וָעָלָמָי. “I have cursed them,” all of them are cursing me”),  

15 tn The word “Jerusalem” is not in the text. It is supplied in the translation for clarity to identify the referent of “you.” A comparison of three or four English versions will show how difficult this verse is to interpret. The primary difficulty is with the meaning of the verb rendered here as “I will surely send you out” (קֶנֶס וְנַעֲלֵיכֶם, “all of him is cursing me”) as the Masoretic proposes (Qere) one should read מִזָּר וַעֲלָמָי (gilhuni) with the written text (Kethib) and rediveide and rejoint the suggestion in BHS מזַר וָעָלָמָי. “I have cursed them,” all of them are cursing me”).  

16 tn The use of this verb in the Hebrew text is feminine referring to the mothers.  

17 sn To have seven children was considered a blessing and a source of pride and honor (Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam 2:5).  

18 sn To have seven children was considered a blessing and a source of pride and honor (Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam 2:5). However, as several commentators have noted (e.g., W. McKane, Jeremiah [ICC], 1:341; J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 109) it makes little sense to talk about her suffering shame and embarrassment if she has breathed her last. Both the Greek and Latin versions understand “soul” not as the object but as the subject and the idea being one of fainting under despair. This idea seems likely in light of the parallelism. Bright suggests the phrase means either “she gasped her last breath” or “her throat gasped.” The former is more likely. One might also render “she fainted dead away,” but that idiom might not be familiar to all readers.  

19 tn Or “did not repent of their wicked ways”; Heb “They did not turn back from their ways.” There is no casual particle here (either ז [kî], which is more formally causal, or י [vî]), which sometimes introduces casual circumstantial clauses). The causal idea is furnished by the connection of ideas. If the verbs throughout this section are treated as pasts and this section seen as a lament, then the clause could be sequential: “but they did not turn back from them…”  

20 sn Heb “to me.” BDB 513 s.v. מָזַר (mazyar), which is more formally casual, or מַעֲלָה (ma’alah), which is more formally causal, or מַעֲלָה (ma’alah), which is more formally casual, or מַעֲלָה (ma’alah), which is more formally casual, or מַעֲלָה (ma’alah). Both nouns “mothers” and “young men” are treated by most as collectives. It would be tempting here. The present translation follows BDB though the emphasis on God’s agency has been strong in the passage.  

sn This is a good time to attack. NJPS has “I will bring against them – ….” In this case “mother” and “young men” would be a case of asyndetic coordination.  

sn The former is more likely. One might also render “she fainted dead away,” but that idiom might not be familiar to all readers.  

sn Such as her mothers and her young men. The former is more likely. Or “did not repent of their wicked ways”; Heb “They did not turn back from their ways.” There is no casual particle here (either ז [kî], which is more formally causal, or י [vî]), which sometimes introduces casual circumstantial clauses). The causal idea is furnished by the connection of ideas. If the verbs throughout this section are treated as pasts and this section seen as a lament, then the clause could be sequential: “but they did not turn back from them…”  

sn The former is more likely. One might also render “she fainted dead away,” but that idiom might not be familiar to all readers.  

sn The meaning of this line is debated. Some understand “her sun went down while it was still day.” Her sun went down while it was still day.” [sn] (Jeremiah Complains about His Lot and The Lord Responds)  

15:10 I said, “Oh, mother, how I regret that you ever gave birth to me! I am always starting arguments and quarrels with the people of this land. I have not lent money to anyone and I have not borrowed from anyone. Yet all of these people are treating me with contempt.”  

15:11 The Lord said, “Jerusalem, I will surely send you away
for your own good. I will surely bring the enemy upon you in a time of trouble and distress.  
15:12 Can you people who are like iron and bronze break that iron fist from the north?  

God is speaking and is promising Jeremiah deliverance from his detractors. In this case the troublesome word is taken to mean "deliver" (cf. BDB 1056 s.v. הָרֵיחַ, "strengthen" (see BDB’s discussion) or read as a noun "remnant" (ךָרֶיתְךָ = שֶׁרֶיתְךָ; again see BDB’s discussion). In this case the parallel verb is taken to mean “I will cause your enemies to entreat you,” a meaning it has nowhere else. Both of these approaches are probably wrong. The Greek text is the only evidence for leaving out “said.” The problem with making Jeremiah the addressee is twofold. First, the word “enemy” is never used in the book of Jeremiah’s foes, always of political enemies. Second, and more troublesome, one must assume a shift in the addressee between v. 11 and vv.13-14 or assume that the whole is addressed. The latter would be odd if he is promised deliverance from his detractors only to be delivered to captivity. If, however, one assumes that the whole is addressed to Jerusalem, there is less reason to worry. A check of earlier chapters will show that the second masculine pronoun is used for Judah/Jerusalem in 2:28-29; 4:1-2; 5:17-18; 11:13. In 2:28-28 and 4:1-2 the same shift from second singular to second plural takes place as does here in vv. 13-14. Moreover, vv. 13-14 continue much of the same vocabulary and is addressed to Jerusalem. The approach followed here is similar to that taken in REB except “for good” is taken in the way it is always used rather to mean “utterly.” The nuances suggested by BDB 1056 s.v. הָרֵיחַ is assumed and the meaning of the parallel verb is assumed to be similar to that in Isa 53:6 (see BDB 803 s.v. שֶׁרֶיתָ). The MT is retained with demonstrative meanings. For the concept of “for good” see Jer 24:5-6. This assumes that the ultimate goal of God’s discipline is here announced.

sn The Lord interrupts Jeremiah’s complaint with a word for Jerusalem. Compare a similar interruption in discussion with Jeremiah in vv. 5-6.

15:13 I will give away your wealth and your treasures as plunder. I will give it away free of charge for the sins you have committed throughout your land.  
15:14 I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you know nothing about. For my anger is like a fire that will burn against you.”  
15:15 I said, “LORD, you know how I suffer. Take thought of me and care for me. Pay back for me those who have been persecuting me. Do not be so patient with them that you allow them to kill me. Be mindful of how I have put up with their insults for your sake.  
15:16 As your words came to me I drank them in, and they filled my heart with joy and happiness because I belong to you. O Lord, the God who rules over all.  
15:17 I did not spend my time in the company of other people, laughing and having a good time. I stayed to myself because I felt obligated to you and because I was filled with anger at what they had done.  
15:18 Why must I continually suffer such painful anguish? Why must I endure the sting of their insults like an incurable wound? Will you let me down when I need you like a brook one goes to for water, but that cannot be relied on?”  

3 tc This reading follows the Greek and Syriac versions and several Hebrew mss. Other Hebrew mss read “I will cause the enemy to pass through a land.” The difference in the reading is between one Hebrew letter, a dalet (ד) and a resh (ר).

4 tn The words “I said” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to mark the shift from the Lord speaking to Jerusalem, to Jeremiah speaking to God.

5 tn The words “how I suffer” are not in the text but are implicit from the continuation. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. Jeremiah is not saying “you are all knowing.”

6 sn Heb “Your words were found and I ate them.” This line with Ezek 2:8—3:3 is a poetical picture of inspiration. The prophet accepted them, assimilated them, and made them such a part of himself that he spoked with complete assurance what he knew were God’s words.

7 tn Heb “Your name is called upon me.”

8 sn See Jer 14:9 where this idiom is applied to Israel as a whole and Jer 7:10 where it is applied to the temple. For discussion cf. note on 7:10.

9 tn Heb “LORD God of armies.” See the translator’s note at 2:19.

10 tn Heb “because of your hand.”

11 sn Hebrew is speaking of the stream beds or wadis which fill with water after the spring rains but often dry up in the summer time. A fuller picture is painted in Job 6:14-21. This contrasts with the earlier metaphor that God had used of himself in Jer 2:13.
15:19 Because of this, the Lord said,¹ "You must repent of such words and thoughts! If you do, I will restore you to the privilege of serving me.² If you say what is worthwhile instead of what is worthless, I will again allow you to be my spokesman.³ They must become as you have been. You must not become like them.⁴

15:20 I will make you as strong as a wall to these people, a fortified wall of bronze. They will attack you, but they will not be able to overcome you. For I will be with you to rescue you and deliver you."⁵ says the Lord.

15:21 "I will deliver you from the power of the wicked. I will free you from the clutches of violent people."

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry, to Mourn, or to Feast

16:1 The Lord said to me, 16:2 "Do not get married and do not have children here in this land. 16:3 For I, the Lord, tell you what will happen to the children who are born here in this land and to the men and women who are their mothers and fathers.⁷ 16:4 They will die of deadly diseases. No one will mourn for them. They will not be buried. Their dead bodies will lie like manure spread on the ground. They will be killed in war or die of starvation. Their corpses will be food for the birds and wild animals.

16:5 "Moreover I, the Lord, tell you:⁸ 'Do not go into a house where they are having a funeral meal. Do not go there to mourn and express your sorrow for them. For I have stopped showing them my good favor, my love, and my compassion. I, the Lord, so affirm it! 16:6 Rich and poor alike will die in this land. They will not be buried or mourned. People will not cut their bodies or shave off their hair to show their grief for them.¹⁰ 16:7 No one will take any food to those who mourn for the dead to comfort them. No one will give them any wine to drink to console them for the loss of their father or mother.

16:8 "Do not go to a house where people are feasting and sit down to eat and drink with them either. 16:9 For I, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all, tell you what will happen.¹² I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, to the glad celebration of brides and grooms in this land. You and the rest of the people will live to see this happen."¹³

The Lord Promises Exile (But Also Restoration)

16:10 "When you tell these people about all this,¹⁴ they will undoubtedly ask you, 'Why has the Lord threatened us with such great disaster? What wrong have we done? What sin have we done to offend the Lord our God?' 16:11 Then tell them that the Lord says,¹⁵ 'It is because your ancestors¹⁶ rejected me and paid allegiance to other gods. They have served them and worshiped them. But they have rejected me and not obeyed my law.¹⁸ 16:12 And you have acted

¹ tn Heb "So the Lord said thus."
² tn Heb "If you return [= repent], I will restore [more literally, 'cause you to return'] that you may stand before me." For the idiom of "standing before" in the sense of serving see BDB 764 s.v. יָשָׁב Qal 1.e and compare the usage in 1 Kgs 10:8; 12:8; 17:1; Deut 10:8.
³ tn Heb "you shall be as my mouth."
⁵ tn Heb "They must turn/return to you and you must not turn/return to them."
⁶ sn Once again the root "return" (בָּשָׂב, šāḇ) is being played on as in 3:1-4:4. See the threefold call to repentance in 3:12, 14, 22. The verb is used here four times "repent," "return," and "become" twice. He is to serve as a model of repentance, not an imitator of their apostasy. In accusing God of being unreliable he was coming dangerously close to their kind of behavior.
⁷ sn See 1:18. The Lord renews his promise of protection and reiterates his call to Jeremiah.
⁸ tn Heb "For thus says the Lord..."
⁹ tn Heb "my peace." The Hebrew word שלום (šēlôm) can be translated "peace, prosperity" or "well-being" (referring to wholeness or health of body and soul).
¹⁰ tn Heb "Oracle of the Lord.
¹¹ sn These were apparently pagan customs associated with mourning (Isa 15:2; Jer 47:5) which were forbidden in Israel (Lev 19:8; 21:5) but apparently practiced anyway (Jer 41:5).
¹² tn Heb "For thus says Yahweh of armies the God of Isra- el." The introductory formula which appears three times in vv. 1-9 (vv. 1, 3, 5) has been recast for smoother English style.
¹³ sn For the title "the Lord God of Israel who rules over all" see 7:3 and the study note on 2:19.
¹⁴ tn Heb "before your eyes and in your days." The pronouns are plural including others than Jeremiah.
¹⁵ tn Heb "all these words/things." The actions of the prophet would undoubtedly elicit questions about his behavior and he would have occasion to explain the reason.
¹⁶ tn These two sentences have been recast in English to break up a long Hebrew sentence and incorporate the oracular formula "says the Lord (Heb 'oracle of the Lord')" which occurs after "Your fathers abandoned me." In Hebrew the two sentences read: "When you tell them these things and they say, '...', then tell them, 'Because your ancestors abandoned me,' oracle of the Lord."¹⁰
¹⁷ tn Heb "fathers" (also in vv. 12, 13, 15, 19).
¹⁸ tn Heb "followed after." See the translator's note at 2:5 for the explanation of the idiom.
even more wickedly than your ancestors! Each one of you has followed the stubborn inclinations of your own wicked heart and not obeyed me.²

16:13 So I will throw you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your ancestors have ever known. "There you must worship other gods day and night, for I will show you no mercy."

16:14 Yet² I, the LORD, say:³ "A new time will certainly come.⁴ People now affirm their oaths with 'I swear as surely as the LORD lives who delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt.' ¹⁶:¹⁵ But in that time they will affirm them with 'I swear as surely as the LORD lives who delivered the people of Israel from the land of the north and from all the other lands where he had banished them.' At that time I will bring them back to the land I gave their ancestors."⁶

16:16 But for now I, the LORD, say:⁶ "I will send many enemies who will catch these people like fishermen. After that I will send others who will hunt them out like hunters from all the mountains, all the hills, and the crevices in the rocks."¹⁶:¹⁷ For I see everything they do. Their wicked ways are not hidden from me. Their sin is not hidden away where I cannot see it.⁸

16:18 Before I restore them⁹ I will punish them inful¹⁰ for their sins and the wrongs they have done. For they have polluted my land with the lifeless statues of their disgusting idols. They have filled the land I have claimed as my own¹¹ with their detestable idols.¹²

16:19 Then I said,¹³ "LORD, you give me strength and protect me. You are the one I can run to for safety when I am in trouble.¹⁴ Nations from all over the earth will come to you and say, "Our ancestors had nothing but false gods—worthless idols that could not help them at all."¹⁵ 16:20 Can people make their own gods? No, what they make are not gods at all."¹⁶

16:21 The LORD said,¹⁷ "So I will now let this wicked people know—I will let them know my mighty power in judgment. Then they will know that my name is the LORD."¹⁸

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¹ sn: For the argumentation here compare Jer 7:23-26.
² tn: The particle translated here "Yet" (ךָּהָּ, lakahon) is regularly translated "So" or "Therefore" and introduces a consequence. However, in a few cases it introduces a contrasting set of conditions. Compare its use in Judg 11:8; Jer 48:12; 49:5; 51:52; and Hos 2:14 (2:15 HT).
³ tn: Heb "Oracle of the LORD." The Lord has been speaking; the first person has been utilized in translation to avoid a shift which might create confusion.
⁴ tn: Heb "Behold the days are coming."
⁵ tn: These two verses which constitute one long sentence with compound, complex subordinations has been broken up for sake of English style. It reads, "Therefore, behold the days are coming, says the Lord [Heb 'oracle of the Lord'!] and it will not be said any longer, 'By the life of the Lord who...Egypt' but 'by the life of the Lord who...and I will bring them back...."
⁶ tn: Heb "Oracle of the LORD." The Lord has been speaking; the first person has been utilized in translation to avoid a shift which might create confusion.
⁷ tn: Heb "Behold I am about to send for many fishermen and they will catch them. And after that I will send for many hunters and they will hunt them from every mountain and from every hill and from the cracks in the rocks."

sn: The picture of rounding up the population for destruction and exile is also seen in Amos 4:2 and Hab 1:14-17.
⁸ tn: Heb "For my eyes are upon all their ways. They are not hidden from before me. And their sin is not hidden away from before my eyes."
⁹ tn: Heb "First." Many English versions and commentaries delete this word because it is missing from the Greek version and is considered a gloss added by a postexilic editor who is said to be responsible also for vv. 14-16. However, the reading of the MT is well attested, being supported by the other ancient versions. The word here refers to order in rank or order of events. Compare Gen 38:26; 1 Kgs 18:25. Here allusion is made to the restoration previously mentioned. First in order of events is the punishment of destruction and exile, then restoration.

¹¹ sn: For earlier references to the term used here see Jer 2:7 where it applies as here to the land, Jer 10:16; 12:8-9 where it applies to the people, and Jer 12:7 where it applies to the temple.
¹² tn: Many of the English versions take "lifeless statues of their detestable idols" with "filled" as a compound object. This follows the Masoretic punctuation but violates usage. The verb "fill" never takes an object preceded by the preposition ל (lakhen).
¹³ tn: The words "Then I said" are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation to show the shift from God, who has been speaking to Jeremiah, to Jeremiah, who here addresses God.
¹⁴ sn: Sometimes there is consistent with the interruptions that have taken place in chapters 14 and 15 and in Jeremiah's response to God's condemnation of the people of Judah's idolatry in chapter 10 (note especially vv. 6-16).
¹⁵ tn: Heb "O LORD, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in the day of trouble. The literal which piles up attributes is of course more forceful than the predications. However, piling up poetic metaphors like this adds to the length of the English sentence and risks lack of understanding on the part of some readers. Some rhetorical force has been sacrificed for the sake of clarity.
¹⁶ tn: Once again the translation has sacrificed some of the rhetorical force for the sake of clarity and English style: Heb "Only falsehood did our ancestors possess, vanity and [things in which?] there was no one profiting in them."
¹⁷ tn: This passage offers some rather forceful contrasts. The Lo-o is Jeremiah's source of strength, security, and protection. The idols are false gods, worthless idols, that can offer no help at all.
¹⁸ tn: Heb "and they are 'no gods.'" For the construction here compare 2:11 and a similar construction in 2 Kgs 19:18 and see BDB 519 s.v. נ "first."
17:1 The sin of Judah is engraved with an iron chisel on their stone-hard hearts. It is inscribed with a diamond point on the horns of their altars. 4

17:2 Their children are always thinking about their altars known to them at this time my power and my might. Then they will know that my name is the LORD. There is a decided ambi
guity in this text about the identity of the pronoun “them.” Is it his wicked people he has been predicting judgment upon or
the nations that have come to recognize the folly of idolatry? The nearer antecedent would argue for that. However, usage of “hand” (translated here “power”) in 6:12; 15:6 and later 21:15-17, and especially the threatening motif of “at this time” (or “now”) in 10:18 suggest that the “So” goes back logically to vv. 16-18, following a grounds of judgment with the threat
ceneced condition as it has in at least 16 out of 18 occurrences thus far. Moreover it makes decidedly more sense that the Jews will know that his name is the LORD as the result of the present (“at this time”) display of his power in judgment than that the idolaters will at some later point (cf. Isa 2:4-22 or later [supposable parallel] time). There has been a decided emphasis that the people of Israel do not “know” him (cf. 2:8; 4:22; 9:3, 6). Now they will, but in a way they did not wish to. There is probably an allusion (and an ironic reversal) here to Exod 3:13-15; 34:5-7. They have presumed upon his graciousness and forgotten that his name not only involves being with them to help but being against them to punish sin. Even so, the alter
cation to modern times. There is no evidence that diamond
was made known to the ancients prior to the writing of the Bible. The division may have resulted from the faulty identification of the “them” in the preceding verse. See the translator’s note on that verse.

3 tn The chapter division which was not a part of the original text but was added in the middle ages obscures the fact that there is no new speech here. The division may have resulted from the faulty identification of the “them” in the preceding verse. See the translator’s note on that verse.

4 tn Heb “adamant.” The word “diamond” is an accommodation to modern times. There is no evidence that diamond was known in ancient times. The division may have resulted from the faulty identification of the “them” in the preceding verse. See the translator’s note on that verse.

5 tn The adjective “stone-hard” is not in the Hebrew text. It is implicit in the metaphor and is supplied in the translation for clarity. Cf. Ezek 11:19; 36:26; and Job 19:24 for the figure.

6 tn Heb “adamant.” The word “diamond” is an accommodating to modern times. There is no evidence that diamond was known in ancient times. This division may have resulted from the faulty identification of the “them” in the preceding verse. See the translator’s note on that verse.

7 sn Sacred altars dedicated to...Asherah. A leading deity of the Canaanite pantheon was Asherah, wife/sister of El and goddess of fertility. She was commonly worshiped at shrines in or near groves of evergreen trees, or, failing that, at places marked by wooden poles (Hebrewasherim [ashertim], plural). They were to be burned or cut down (Deut 7:5; 12:3; 16:21; Judg 6:25, 28, 30; 2 Kings 18:4).

8 tc This reading follows some of the ancient versions. The MT reads, “hills. My mountain in the open field [alluding to Jeru
salem] and your wealth...I will give.” The vocalization of the noun plus pronoun and the unusual form of the expression to allude to Jerusalem calls into question the originality of the MT. The MT readsיָשָׂרָה (yashar) which combines the suffix for a singular noun with a pointing of the noun in the plural, a form which would be without parallel (compare the forms in Ps 30:8 for the singular noun with suffix and Deut 8:9 for the plural noun with suffix). Likewise, Jerusalem was not “in the open field.” For a similar expression compare Jer 13:27.

9 tc Or “I will give away your wealth, all your treasures, and your places of worship.” The translation follows the emenda
tion suggested in the footnote to BHS, reading בִּיןְכִּיר (binkhir) in place of בִּיןְכִּיר (bambaoteka). The forms are graphically very close and one could explain the origin of either from the other. The parallel in 15:13-14 reads יָשָׂרָה לְ (lo binkhir). The text here may be a deliberate play on that one. The emended text makes decidedly better sense contextually than the MT un
less some form in line with the也许是 being intended.

10 tc Or “Through your own fault you will lose the land...” As W. McKane (Jeremiah [ICC], 1:386) notes the ancient vers
sions do not appear to be reading בַּקְרָה (bakkara) as in the MT but possibly בַּקְרָה (vakkerah; see BHS fn). The translation follows the suggestion in BHS fn that בַּקְרָה (vakkerah, literally your hand) be read for MT בַּקְרָה. This has the advantage of fit
ting the idiom of this verb with “hand” in Deut 15:2 (see also v. 3 there). The Hebrew text thus reads “You will release your hand from your heritage.”

11 tc A few Hebrew MSS and two Greek MSS read “a fire is kindled in my anger” (reading יָשָׂרָה, yasharah) as in 15:14 in place of “you have kindled a fire in my anger” (reading יָשָׂרָה, yasharah) in the majority of Hebrew MSS and versions. The variant may be explained on the basis of harmonization with the parallel passage.

12 tn Heb “you have started a fire in my anger which will burn forever.”
Individuals Are Challenged to Put Their Trust in the Lord

17:5 The Lord says,
“I will put a curse on people who trust in mere human beings, who depend on mere flesh and blood for their strength, and whose hearts have turned away from the Lord.
17:6 They will be like a shrub in the desert. They will not experience good things even when they happen. It will be as though they were growing in the desert, in a salt land where no one can live.
17:7 My blessing is on those people who trust in me, who put their confidence in me.
17:8 They will be like a tree planted near a stream whose roots spread out toward the water. It has nothing to fear when the heat comes. Its leaves are always green. It has no need to be concerned in a year of drought. It does not stop bearing fruit.
17:9 The human mind is more deceitful than anything else. It is incurably bad. Who can understand it?
17:10 I, the Lord, probe into people’s minds.

Jeremiah Appeals to the Lord for Vindication

17:12 Then I said, “Lord, from the very beginning you have been seated on your glorious throne on high. You are the place where we can find refuge. You are the one in whom Israel may find hope.

7 tn The term rendered “mind” here and in the previous verse is actually the Hebrew word for “heart.” However, in combination with the word rendered “heart” in the next line, which is the Hebrew for “kidneys,” it is best rendered “mind” because the “heart” was considered the center of intellect, conscience, and will and the “kidneys” the center of emotions.
8 tn The meaning of this line is somewhat uncertain. The word translated “broods over” occurs only here and Isa 34:15. It is often defined on the basis of an Aramaic cognate which means “to gather” with an extended meaning of “to gather together under her to hatch.” Many commentators go back to a Rabbinic explanation that the partridge steals the eggs of other birds and hatches them only to see the birds depart when she recognizes that she is not the mother. Modern studies question the validity of this zoologically. Moreover, W. L. Holladay contests the validity on the basis of the wording “and she does hatch them” (Heb “bring them to birth”). See W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:498, and see also P. C. Craigie, P. H. Kelley, J. F. Drinkard, Jeremiah 1:25 (WBC), 229. The point of the comparison is that the rich gather their wealth but they do not get to see the fruits of it.
9 sn The Hebrew text merely says “it.” But the antecedent might be ambiguous in English so the reference to wealth gained by unjust means is here reiterated for clarity.
10 tn Heb “he will be [= prove to be] a fool.”
11 sn The words, “Then I said” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show the shift in speaker.
12 sn The Lord is no longer threatening judgment but is being addressed. For a similar doxological interruption compare Jer 16:19-20.
13 sn Heb “O glorious throne, O high place from the very beginning, O hope of Israel, O Lord.” Commentators and translators generally understand these four lines (which are three in the Hebrew original) as two predications, one eulogizing the temple and the other eulogizing God. However, that does not fit the context very well and does not take into account the nature of Jeremiah’s doxology in Jeremiah 16:19-20 and compare also 10:6-7. There the doxology is context motivated, focused on God, and calls on relevant attributes in the form of metaphorical epithets. That fits nicely here as well. For the relevant parallel passages see the study note.
All who leave you will suffer shame. Those who turn away from you will be consigned to the netherworld. For they have rejected you, the Lord, the fountain of life.

17:14 Lord, grant me relief from my suffering so that I may have some relief. Rescue me from those who persecute me so that I may be rescued.

17:15 Listen to what they are saying to me. They are saying, “Where are the things the Lord threatens us with? Come on! Let’s see them happen!”

17:16 But I have not pestered you to bring disaster.

He offers refuge for those who are fleeing for safety. Ezek 11:16; Hos 13:8-14 are examples of passages using that motif. Finally, the Lord has been referred to earlier in the object of Israel’s hope (Jer 14:18). All of these are relevant to the choices that the Lord has placed before them, trust or turn away, and the threat that as all-knowing Judge he will reward people according to their behavior.

The translation is based on an emendation suggested in W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:500, n. b-6. The emendation, following the reading preferred by Masoretes (the Qere) and understanding the preposition with the following word as a corruption of the suffix on it. The present translation reads מֵרֶעַה (merʻah) instead of מֵרֹעֶה (merʻah), “and those who leave me will be written in the dust”), a reading which is highly improbable since all the other pronouns are second singular.

Or “to the world of the dead.” An alternative interpretation is: “will be as though their names were written in the dust”; Heb “will be written in the dust.” The translation follows the nuance of “earth” listed in HALOT 88 s.v. מֵרָעָה and found in Jonah 2:6 (2:7 HT); Job 10:21-22. For the nuance of “enrolling, registering among the number” for the verb translated here “consign” see BDB 507 s.v. usurekha’reets) instead of מַעַרְעָה (ma‘are’ah), “and those who leave me will be written in the earth”), a reading which is highly improbable since all the other pronouns are second singular.

Heb “The fountain of living water.” For an earlier use of this metaphor and the explanation of it see Jer 2:13 and the notes there. There does not appear to be any way to retain this metaphor in the text without explaining it. In the earlier context the text would show that literal water was not involved. Here it might still be assumed that the Lord merely gives life-giving water.

The translation fills in the details of the metaphor from a preceding context (15:18) and from the following context (17:18). The literal translation “Heal me and I will be healed. Rescue me and I will be rescued.” does not make much sense if these details are not filled in. The metaphor is filled in for clarity for the average reader.

Or “Behold, they are saying to me.”

Heb “Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come (or come to pass) please.”

Heb “I have not run from being a shepherd after you.” The translation follows the suggestion of some ancient versions. The Hebrew text reads “I have not run from being a shepherd” in the Hebrew text. The issue is mainly one of vocalization. The versions mentioned are reading a form מַעַרְעָה (ma‘are’ah) instead of מַעַרְעָה (merʻah). There does not appear to be any clear case of a prophet being called a shepherd, especially in Jeremiah where it is invariably used of the wicked leaders/rulers of Judah, the leaders/rulers of the enemy that he brings to punish them, or the righteous ruler that he will bring in the future. Moreover, there are no cases where the preposition “after” is used with the verb “shepherd.” Parallellism also argues for the appropriateness of this reading; “disaster” parallels the “incurable day.” The thought also parallels the argument thus far. Other than 11:20; 12:3; 15:15 where he has prayed for vindication by the Lord punishing his persecutors as they deserve, he has invariably responded to the Lord’s word of disaster with laments and prayers for his people (see 4:19-21; 6:24; 8:18; 10:19-25; 14:7-9, 19-22).

Heb “the incurable day.” For the use of this word see the note on 17:9.

Heb “that which goes out of my lip is right in front of your face.”

Heb “do not be a source of dismay for me.” For this nuance of מַרְקִיתִיס (mar‘kitis) rather than “terror” as many of the English versions have it see BDB 370 s.v. המר (mar) and the usage in Prov 21:15. Compare also the usage of the related verb which occurs in the next verse (see also BDB 369 s.v. מַרְקִית (marqit)).

Or “complete destruction.” See the translator’s note on 16:18.

Jeremiah now does what he says he has not wanted to do or been hasty to do. He is, however, seeking his own vindication and that of God whose threats they have belittled.

Observance of the Sabbath day (and the Sabbatical year) appears to have been a litmus test of the nation’s spirituality since it is mentioned in a number of passages besides this one (cf., e.g., Isa 56:2; 6; 58:13; Neh 13:15-18). Perhaps this is because the Sabbath day was the sign of the Mosaic covenant (Exod 31:13-17) just as the rainbow was the sign of the Noahic covenant (Gen 9:12, 13, 17) and circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 17:11). This was not the only command they failed to obey, nor was their failure to obey this one the sole determining factor in the Lord’s decision to destroy Judah (cf. 7:23-24; 11:7-8 in their contexts).

The identity and location of the People’s Gate is uncertain since it is mentioned nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible. Some identify it with the Benjamin Gate mentioned in Jer 37:13; 38:7 (cf. NAB), but there is no textual support for this in the Hebrew Bible or in any of the ancient versions.
Jerusalem. 2 Then the kings and princes who follow in David’s succession and ride in chariots on horses will continue to enter through these gates, as well as their officials and the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. 15 This city will always be filled with people. 26 Then people will come here from the towns in Judah, from the villages surrounding Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin, from the western foothills, from the southern hill country, and from the southern part of Judah. They will come bringing offerings to the temple of the Lord: burnt offerings, sacrifices, grain offerings, and incense along with their thank offerings. 27 But you must obey me and set the Sabbath day apart to me. You must not carry any loads through in the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. If you disobey, I will set the gates of Jerusalem on fire. It will burn down all the fortified dwellings in Jerusalem and no one will be able to put it out.”

An Object Lesson from the Making of Pottery

18:1 The Lord said to Jeremiah: 2 “Go down at once to the potter’s house. I will speak to you further there.” 3 So I went down to the potter’s house and found him working at

1sn Comparison with Neh 13:15-18 suggests that these loads were merchandise or agricultural produce which were being brought in for sale. The loads that were carried out of the houses in the next verse were probably goods for barter.

2tn Heb “Do not carry any loads out of your houses on the Sabbath day and do not do any work.” Translating literally might give the wrong impression that they were not to work at all. The phrase “on the Sabbath day” is, of course, intended to qualify both prohibitions.

3tn Heb “But sanctify [or set apart as sacred] the Sabbath day.” The idea of setting it apart as something sacred to the Lord is implicit in the command. See the explicit statements of this in Exod 20:10; 31:5; 35:2; Lev 24:9. For some readers the idea of treating the Sabbath day as something sacred won’t mean much without spelling the qualification out specifically. Sabbath observance was not just a matter of not working.

4tn Heb “fathers.”

5tn Heb “They.” The antecedent is spelled out to avoid any possible confusion.

6tn Heb “hardened [or made stiff] their neck so as not to.”

7tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

8tn Heb “And I will cause you to hear my word there.”

9tn Heb “Listen to what the Lord says.”

10tn Heb “Be very careful if you value your lives!”

11tn Heb “You must not do any work on that day.”

12tn Heb “I will cause you to hear my word there.”

13tn Heb “If you will carefully obey me by not bringing…and by sanctifying…by not doing,…then kings will…. The structure of prohibitions and commands followed by a brief “if” clause has been used to break up a long condition and consequence relationship which is contrary to contemporary English style.

14tn Heb “who sit [or are to sit] on David’s throne.”

15tn Heb “There will come through the gates of this city the kings and princes…riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officials…” The structure of the original text is broken up here because of the long compound subject which would make the English sentence too long. The term “princes” is often omitted as a supposed double writing of the word that follows it and looks somewhat like it (the Hebrew reads here בְּשַׁרְיָם־וֹ שֵׁרִים יֹשְׁבִים, “princes…officials”) or the same word which occurs later in the verse (and is translated “officials”) (the word can refer to either). It is argued that “princes” are never said to sit on the throne of David (translated here “follow in the succession of David”). However, the word is in all texts and versions and the concept of sitting on the throne of someone is descriptive of both past, present, and future and is even used with the participle in a proleptic sense of “the one who is to sit on the throne” (cf. Ezek 11:5; 12:29).

16tn Heb “will be inhabited forever.”

17tn Heb “There will come from the cities of Judah and from the environs of Jerusalem and from…those bringing…incense and those bringing thank offerings.” This sentence has been restructured from a long complex original to conform to contemporary English style.

18tn Heb “who sit [or are to sit] on David’s throne.”

19tn “And I will cause you to hear my word there.”

20tn Heb “And behold he was working.”
his wheel. 18:4 Now and then there would be something wrong with the pot he was molding from the clay with his hands. So he would rework the clay into another kind of pot as he saw fit. 18:5 Then the Lord said to me, 18:6 “I, the Lord, say, 7 ‘O nation of Israel, can I not deal with you as this potter deals with the clay? 79 In my hands, you, O nation of Israel, are just like the clay in this potter’s hand.’ 18:7 There are times, Jeremiah, when I threaten to uproot, tear down, and destroy a nation or kingdom. 18:8 But if that nation I threatened stops doing wrong, I will cancel the destruction I intended to do to it. 18:9 And there are times when I promise to build up and establish a nation or kingdom. 18:10 But if that nation does what displeases me and does not obey me, then I will cancel the good I promised to do to it. 18:11 So now, tell the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem this: The Lord says, ‘I am preparing to bring disaster on you! I am making plans to punish you.’ So, every one of you, stop the evil things you have been doing. 18:12 But they just keep saying, ‘We do not care what you say! We will do whatever we want to do! We will continue to behave wickedly and stubbornly!’”

1 sn At his wheel (Heb “at the two stones”). The Hebrew expression is very descriptive of the construction of a potter’s wheel which consisted of two stones joined by a horizontal shaft. The potter rotated the wheel with his feet on the lower wheel and worked the clay with his hands on the upper. For a picture of a potter working at his wheel see I. Ben-Dor, “Potter’s Wheel,” JB 3:846. See also the discussion regarding the making of pottery in J. L. Kelso, “Pottery,” IDB 3:846-53.
2 tn The verbs here denote repeated action. They are the Hebrew perfect with the vav (ָ) consecutive. The text then reads somewhat literally, “Whenever the vessel he was molding...was ruined, he would remold...” For this construction see Jouon 2:393-94 §118.n and 2:628-29 §167.b, and compare the usage in Amos 4:7-8.
3 sn Some were wrong with the clay — either there was a lack in it, or it was too moist or not moist enough, or it had some other imperfection. In any case the vessel was “ruined” or “spoiled” or defective in the eyes of the potter. This same verb has been used of the linen shorts that were “ruined” and hence were “good for nothing” in Jer 13:7. The nature of the vessel was “ruined” or “spoiled” and hence “good for nothing” whenever it had been imperfectly made. The reference to the making of pottery in J. L. Kelso, “Pottery,” IDB 3:846-53, is the speaker. See, e.g., Ps 6:8-9 (6:9-10 HT). Earlier examples of this figure have been seen in 6:20; 9:4; 11:13; 12:13; 15:6.
4 tn Heb “he would turn and work.” This is an example of hendiadys where one of the two verbs joined by “and” becomes the adverbial modifier of the other. The verb “turn” is very common in this construction (see BDDB 998 s.v. וָשׁוּב Qal.8 for references).
5 sn Heb “as it was right in his eyes to do [or work it].” For this idiom see Judg 14:3, 7; 1 Sam 18:19, 26; 2 Sam 17:4.
6 tn Heb “Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying.”
7 tn This phrase (literally “Oracle of the Lord”) has been handled this way on several occasions when it occurs within first person addresses where the Lord is the speaker. See, e.g., 16:16; 17:24.
8 tn The words “deals with the clay” are not in the text. They are part of an elliptical comparison and are supplied in the translation here for clarity.
9 tn The word “ Jeremiah” is not in the text but it is implicit from the introduction in v. 5 that he is being addressed. It is important to see how the rhetoric of this passage is structured. The words of vv. 7-10 lead up to the conclusion “So now” in v. 11 which in turn leads to the conclusion “Therefore” in v. 13. The tense of the verb in v. 12 is very important. It is a vav consecutive perfect indicating the future (cf. GKC 333 §112.2.c, r); their response is predictable. The words of vv. 7-10 are addressed to Jeremiah (v. 5) in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to speak to him (v. 2) and furnish the basis for the Lord’s words of conditional threat to a people who show no promise of responding positively (vv. 11-12). Verse six then must be seen as another example of the figure of apostrophe (the turning aside from description about someone to addressing them directly; cf., e.g., Ps 6:8-9 (6:9-10 HT). Earlier examples of this figure have been seen in 6:20; 9:4; 11:13; 12:13; 15:6.
10 sn This has been the consistent pattern of their behavior. See 7:24; 9:13; 13:10; 16:12.
18:13 Therefore, the LORD says, “Ask the people of other nations whether they have heard of anything like this. Israel should have been like a virgin. But she has done something utterly revolting!

18:14 Does the snow ever completely vanish from the rocky slopes of Lebanon? Do the cool waters from those distant mountains ever cease to flow?

18:15 Yet my people have forgotten me and offered sacrifices to worthless idols! This makes them stumble along in the way they live and leave the old reliable path of their fathers.

They have left them to walk in bypaths, in roads that are not smooth and level.

18:16 So their land will become an object of horror. People will forever hiss out their scorn over it. All who pass that way will be filled with horror and will shake their heads in derision.

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4 tn The precise translation of this verse is somewhat uncertain. Two phrases in this verse are the primary cause of discussion and the source of numerous emendations, none of which has gained consensus. The phrase which is rendered here “rocky slopes” is in Hebrew נָטַשׁ (natash) which would normally mean something like “rocky crag of the field” (see BDB 961 s.v. נָטָשׁ 1.g). Numerous emendations have been proposed, most of which are listed in the footnotes of J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah (NICOT), 436. The present translation has chosen to follow the proposal of several scholars that the word here is related to the Akkadian word šadu meaning mountain. The other difficulty is the word translated “cease” which in the MT is literally “be uprooted” (tsur, yinnatšu). The word is usually emended to read יִנָּתְשׁוּ (yinnatšu, “are dried up”) as a case of transposed letters (cf., e.g., BDB 684 s.v. בָּטַשׁ Niph). This is probably a case of an error in hearing of which has gained consensus. The phrase which is rendered “cease” in the MT has been used in the translation.

6 to Heb “I will show them [my] back and not [my] face.” This reading follows the suggestion of some of the versions and some of the Masoretes. The MT reads “I will look on their back and not on their faces.”

8:10 “Let us make plans against Jeremiah.” See 18:18 where this has sinister overtones as it does here.

9 tn Heb “Instruction will not perish from priest, counsel from the wise, word from the prophet.”

10 tn Heb “Let us smite him with our tongues.” It is clear from the context that this involved plots to kill him.

12 tn Heb “Let us make plans against Jeremiah.” See 18:18 where this has sinister overtones as it does here.

13 tn “They.” The referent is unidentified; “some people” has been used in the translation.

13 sn These are the three channels through whom God spoke to his people in the OT. See Jer 8:8-10 and Ezek 7:26.

14 tn Heb “Let us smite him with our tongues.” It is clear from the context that this involved plots to kill him.

14 sn The words “Then I said” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show that Jeremiah turns from description of the peoples’ plots to his address to God to deal with the plotters.

14 sn Jeremiah’s prayers against the unjust treatment of his enemies here and elsewhere (see 11:18-20; 12:1-4; 15:15-18; 17:14-18) have many of the elements of the prayers of the innocent in the book of Psalms: an invocation of the LORD as just judge, a lament about unjust attacks, an appeal to inno
cence, and a cry for vindication which often calls for the LORD to pay back in kind those who unjustly attack the petitioner. See for examples Pss 5, 7, 17, 54 among many others.

15 tn Or “They are plotting to kill me”; Heb “They have dug a pit for my soul.” This is a common metaphor for plotting against someone. See BDB 500 s.v. תָּרַע Qal and for an example see Pss 7:16 (7:15 HT) in its context.

15 tn Heb “to speak good concerning them” going back to the concept of “good” being paid back with evil.

15 tn Heb “to turn back your anger from them.”

18:17 I will scatter them before their enemies like dust blowing in front of a burning east wind. I will turn my back on them and not look favorably on them when disaster strikes them.”

Jeremiah Petitions the Lord to Punish Those Who Attack Him

18:18 Then some people said, “Come on! Let us consider how to deal with Jeremiah! There will still be priests to instruct us, wise men to give us advice, and prophets to declare God’s word. Come on! Let’s bring charges against him and get rid of him!” Then we will not need to pay attention to anything he says.”

18:19 Then I said, “LORD, pay attention to me. Listen to what my enemies are saying. Should good be paid back with evil? Yet they are virtually digging a pit to kill me. Just remember how I stood before you pleading on their behalf to keep you from venting your anger on them.”
18:21 So let their children die of starvation.

Let them be cut down by the sword.¹

Let their wives lose their husbands and children.

Let the older men die of disease² and the younger men die by the sword in battle.

18:22 Let cries of terror be heard in their houses when you send bands of raiders unexpectedly to plunder them.³

For they have virtually dug a pit to capture me and have hidden traps for me to step into.

18:23 But you, LORD, know all their plots to kill me.

Do not pardon their crimes!

Do not ignore their sins as though you had erased them!¹⁴

Let them be brought down in defeat before you!

Deal with them while you are still angry!¹⁵

An Object Lesson from a Broken Clay Jar

19:1 The LORD told Jeremiah,⁶ “Go and buy a clay jar from a potter.” Take with you⁷ some of the leaders of the people and some of the leaders⁸ of the priests. 19:2 Go out to the part of the Hinnom Valley which is near the entrance of the Potsherd Gate.¹⁹ Announce there what I tell you.¹¹

19:3 Say, ‘Listen to what the LORD says to you kings of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem’¹² The LORD God of Israel who rules over all¹³ says, “I will bring a disaster on this place¹⁴ that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it ring!”¹⁵ 19:4 I will do so because these people¹⁶ have rejected me and have defiled¹⁷ this place. They have offered sacrifices in it to other gods which neither they nor their ancestors¹⁸ nor the kings of Judah knew anything about. They have filled it with the blood of innocent children.¹⁹ 19:5 They have built places here²⁰ for worship of the god Baal so that they could sacrifice their children as burnt offerings to him in the fire.

¹ tn Heb “be poured out to the hand [= power] of the sword.” For this same expression see Ezek 35:5; Ps 63:10 (63:11 HT). Comparison with those two passages show that it involved death by violent means, perhaps death in battle.

² tn Heb “be slain by death.” The commentators are generally agreed that this refers to death by disease or plague as in 15:2. Hence, the reference is to the deadly trio of sword, starvation, and disease which were often connected with war. See the notes on 15:2.

³ tn Heb “when you bring marauders in against them.” For the use of the noun translated here “bands of raiders to plunder them” see 1 Sam 30:3; 15; 23 and DBB 151 s.v. גְּדוּד 1.

⁴ sn Heb “Do not blot out their sins from before you.” For this same expression see Ezek 35:5; Ps 63:10 (63:11 HT); 69:28 (69:29 HT).

⁵ tn Heb “in the time of your anger.”

⁶ sn The word “Jeremiah” is not in the text. Some Hebrew MSS and some of the versions have “to me.” This section, 19:1–20:6 appears to be one of the biographical sections of the book of Jeremiah where incidents in his life are reported in third person. See clearly 9:14 and 20:1.3. The MSS and versions do not represent a more original text but are translational or interpretive attempts to fill in a text which had no reference. They are like the translational addition that has been supplied on the basis of contextual indicators.

⁷ tn Heb “an earthenware jar of the potter.”

⁸ sn The word translated “clay” here refers to a clay which has been baked or fired in a kiln. In Jer 18 the clay was still soft and pliable, capable of being formed into different kinds of vessels. Here the clay is set, just as Israel is set in its ways. The word for jar refers probably to a water jug or decanter and is onomatopoeic, baqsq, referring to the gurgling sound made by pouring out the water.

⁹ sn The words “for clarity.” see 1 Sam 30:3, 15, 23 and BDB 151 s.v.

¹⁰ tn The civil and religious leaders are referred to here. They were to be witnesses of the symbolic act of and the message that Jeremiah proclaimed to the leaders of Jerusalem and its citizens (see v. 3).

¹¹ sn The exact location of the Potsherd Gate is unknown since it is nowhere else mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. It is sometimes identified with the Dung Gate mentioned in Neh 2:13; 3:13-14; 12:31 on the basis of the Jerusalem Targum. It is probably called “Potsherd Gate” because that is where the potter threw out the broken pieces of pottery which were no longer of use to him.

¹² The Valley of Ben Hinnom has already been mentioned in 7:31-32 in connection with the illicit religious practices, including child sacrifice, which took place there. The Valley of Ben Hinnom (or sometimes Valley of Hinnom) runs along the west and south sides of Jerusalem.

¹³ sn Heb “the words that I will speak to you.”

¹⁴ sn Careful comparison of the use of this term throughout this passage and comparison with 7:31-33 which is parallel to several verses in this passage will show that the reference is to the Valley of Ben Hinnom which will become a Valley of Slaughter (see v. 6 and 7:32).

¹⁵ tn Heb “which everyone who hears it [or about it] his ears will ring.” This is proverbial for a tremendous disaster. See 1 Sam 3:11; 2 Kgs 21:12 for similar prophecies.

¹⁶ sn The text merely has “they.” But since a reference is made later to “they” and “their ancestors,” the referent must be to the people that the leaders of the people and leaders of the priests represent.

¹⁷ sn Heb “have made this city foreign.” The verb here is one that is built off of the noun and adjective which relate to foreign nations. Comparison may be made to Jer 2:21 where the adjective refers to the strange, wild vine as opposed to the choice vine the Lord planted and to 5:19 and 8:19 where the noun is used of worshiping foreign gods. Israel through its false worship has “denationalized” itself in its relation to God.

¹⁸ tn Heb “fathers.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “the blood of innocent ones.” This must be a reference to child sacrifice as explained in the next verse. Some have seen a reference to the sins of social injustice alluded to in 2 Kgs 21:16 and 24:4 but those are connected with the city itself. Hence the word children is supplied in the translation to make the reference explicit.

²⁰ tn The word “here” is not in the text. However, it is implicit from the rest of the context. It is supplied in the translation for clarity.
Such sacrifices\(^4\) are something I never commanded
them to make! They are something I never told them
to do! Indeed, such a thing never even
entered my mind! 19:6 So I, the LORD, say:\(^2\) “The
time will soon come that people will no longer call
this place Topheth or the Hinnom Valley. But they
will call this valley\(^5\) the Valley of Slaughter! 19:7
In this place I will thwart\(^6\) the plans of the people
of Judah and Jerusalem. I will deliver them over to
the power of their enemies who are seeking to kill
them. They will die by the sword\(^6\) at the hands of
their enemies. \(^6\) I will make their dead bodies food
for the birds and wild beasts to eat. 19:8 I will make
this city an object of horror, a thing to be hissed at.
All who pass by it will be filled with horror and
will hiss out their scorn\(^7\) because of all the disas-
ters that have happened to it. \(^6\) 19:9 I will reduce the
people of this city to desperate straits during
the siege imposed on it by their enemies who are
seeking to kill them. I will make them so desper-
ate that they will eat the flesh of their own sons
and daughters and the flesh of one another.””

19:10 The LORD continued,\(^8\) “Now break the
jar in front of those who have come here with you.
19:11 Tell them the LORD who rules over all says,\(^11\)
‘I will do just as Jeremiah has done.\(^2\) I will smash
this nation and this city as though it were a pot-
ter’s vessel which is broken beyond repair.\(^13\) The
dead will be buried here in Topheth until there is
no more room to bury them. \(^14\) 19:12 I, the LORD,
say:\(^15\) ‘That is how I will deal with this city and
its citizens. I will make it like Topheth. 19:13 The
houses in Jerusalem and the houses of the kings
of Judah will be defiled by dead bodies\(^8\) just
like this place, Topheth. For they offered sacrifice to
the stars\(^2\) and poured out drink offerings to other
gods on the roofs of those houses.””

19:14 Then Jeremiah left Topheth where the
LORD had sent him to give that prophecy. He went
to the LORD’s temple and stood\(^18\) in its
courtyard and called out to all the people. 19:15 “The
LORD God of Israel who rules over all\(^19\) says, ‘I will soon bring on this city and all
the towns surrounding it\(^20\) all the disaster I threat-
tened to do to it. I will do so because they have

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\(^2\) In The words “such sacrifices” are not in the text. The text
merely says “to burn their children in the fire as burnt offer-
ings to Baal which I did not command.” The command obvi-
ously refers not to the qualification “to Baal” but to burning
the children in the fire as burnt offerings. The words are sup-
plied in the translation to avoid a possible confusion that the
reference is to sacrifices to Baal. Likewise the words should
not be translated so literally that they leave the impression
that God never said anything about sacrificing their children
to other gods. The fact is he did. See Lev 18:21; Deut 12:30;
18:10.

\(^3\) In This phrase (Heb “Oracle of the LORD”) has been han-
dled this way on several occasions when it occurs within first
person addresses where the LORD is the speaker. See, e.g.,
16:16; 17:2; 18:6.

\(^4\) In Heb “it will no longer be called to this place Topheth or
the Valley of Ben Hinnom but the Valley of Slaughter.”

\(^5\) See Jer 7:31-32 for an almost word for word repetition
of vv. 5-6.

\(^6\) In There is perhaps a two-fold wordplay in the use of
this word. One involves the sound play with the word for “jar,”
which has been explained as a water decanter. The word
here is מֵקָתִי (vaqbuq). The word for jar in v. 1 is מֵקָתִי (vaqqoti).
There may also be a play on the literal use of this word to
refer to the plans of the people of this city to desperate straits
during the siege imposed on it by their enemies who are
seeking to kill them. I will make them so desper-
ate that they will eat the flesh of their own sons
and daughters and the flesh of one another.”

\(^7\) In This refers to the fact that they will die in battle. The
sword would be only one of the weapons that strikes them
down. It is one of the trio of “sword,” “starvation,” and “dis-
ease” which were the concomitants of war referred to so
often in the book of Jeremiah. Starvation is referred to in v. 9.

\(^8\) In Heb “I will cause them to fall by the sword before their
enemies and in the hand of those who seek their soul (= life).”
In this context the two are meant as obvious qualifications of
one entity, not two. Some rearrangement of the qualifiers had
to be made in the English translation to convey this.

\(^9\) In This verse has been restructured to try to bring out
the proper thought and subordinations reflected in the verse
without making the sentence too long and complex in English:
Heb “I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and daugh-
ters. And they will eat one another’s flesh in the siege and in
the straits which their enemies are seeking their lives
reduce them to.” This also shows the agency through which
God’s causation was effected, i.e., the siege.

\(^10\) In The words “And the LORD continued” are not in the text.
However, they are necessary to take us clearly back to the
flow of the narrative begun in vv. 1-2 and interrupted by the
long speech in vv. 3-9.

\(^11\) In Heb “Thus says Yahweh of armies.” For this title see the
study note on 2:19. The translation attempts to avoid the con-
fusion of embedding quotes within quotes by reducing this
one to an indirect quote.

\(^12\) In The adverb “Thus” or “Like this” normally points back
to something previously mentioned. See, e.g., Exod 29:35;

\(^13\) In Heb “Like this I will break this people and this city, just
as one breaks the vessel of a potter which is not able to be
repaired.”

\(^14\) In See Jer 7:22-23 for parallels.

\(^15\) In This phrase (Heb “Oracle of the LORD”) has been han-
dled this way on several occasions when it occurs within first
person addresses where the LORD is the speaker. See, e.g.,
16:15; 17:2; 18:6.

\(^16\) In The words “by dead bodies” is not in the text but is
implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation
for clarity.

\(^17\) In Heb “the host of heaven.”

\(^18\) In Heb “And Jeremiah entered from Topheth where the
LORD had sent him to prophesy and he stood in the
courtyard of the LORD’s temple.”

\(^19\) In Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.”

\(^20\) In See the study notes on 2:19 and 7:3 for explanation of
title.

\(^2\) In Hebrew Bible of scourging, both literally and met-
aphorically (cf. Deut 25:3; Isa 10:26), and of slaughter and
defeat (1 Sam 4:10; Josh 10:20). Here it refers to the results
of the crushing blows at the hands of her enemies which has
made her the object of scorn.
stubbornly refused to pay any attention to what I have said!"

Jeremiah is Flogged and Put in A Cell

20:1 Now Pashhur son of Immer heard Jeremiah prophesy these things. He was the priest who was chief of security in the LORD’s temple. 20:2 When he heard Jeremiah’s prophecy, he had the prophet flogged. Then he put him in the stocks which were at the Upper Gate of Benjamin in the LORD’s temple. 20:3 But the next day Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks. When he did, Jeremiah said to him, “The LORD’s name for you is not ‘Pashhur’ but ‘Terror is Everywhere.’” 20:4 For the LORD says, ‘I will make both you and your friends terrified of what will happen to you.’ You will see all of them die by the swords of their enemies. 20:5 I will hand all the people of Judah over to the king of Babylon. He will carry some of them away into exile in Babylon and he will kill others of them with the sword.

Jeremiah Complains about the Reaction to His Ministry

20:7 LORD, you coerced me into being a prophet, and I allowed you to do it. You overcame my resistance and prevailed over me.

2 tn Heb “They hardened [or made stiff] their neck so as not to.”
3 tn Heb “chief overseer/office.” The translation follows the suggestion of P. C. Craigie, P. H. Kelley, J. F. Drinkard, Jeremiah 1-25 (WBC), 267, based on the parallel passage in 29:26 where this word appears to have been in charge of maintaining order in the temple.
4 tn Judging from a comparison of this passage with Jer 29:26-27 and that passage in turn with 2 Kgs 25:18, Pashhur held an office second in rank only to the high priest. He was in charge of keeping order in the temple and took offense at what he heard Jeremiah saying.
5 tn Heb “And Pashhur son of Immer, the priest and he [= who] was chief overseer [or officer] in the house of the LORD heard Jeremiah prophesying these words/things 20:2 and Pashhur had the prophet Jeremiah flogged.” This verse and the previous one has been restructured in the translation to better conform with contemporary English style.
6 tn The meaning of this word is uncertain. It occurs only here, in 29:26 where it is followed by a parallel word that occurs only there and is generally translated “collar,” and in 2 Ch 16:10 where it is preceded by the word “house of.” It is most often translated “stocks” and explained as an instrument of confinement for keeping prisoners in a crooked position (from its relation to a root meaning “to turn.” See BDB 246 s.v. מַהְפֶּכֶת and KBL 500 s.v. מַהְפֶּכֶת for definition and discussion.) For a full discussion including the interpretation of the ancient versions see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Herme, 1:542-43.
7 sn A comparison of Ezek 8:3 and 9:2 in their contexts will show that this probably refers to the northern gate to the inner court of the temple. It is called Upper because it was on higher ground above the gate in the outer court. It is qualified by “in the LORD’s temple” to distinguish it from the Benjamin Gate next to the city wall (cf. 37:13; 38:7). Like the Benjamin Gate in the city wall it faced north toward the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.
8 tn This name is translated rather than transliterated to aid the reader in understanding this name and connect it clearly with the explanation that follows in the next verse. For a rather complete discussion on the significance of this name and an attempt to explain it as a pun on the name “Pashhur” see J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah (NICOT), 455, n. 35.
9 sn The name Pashhur is essentially a curse pronounced by Jeremiah invoking the LORD’s authority. The same phrase occurs in Jer 6:25; 46:5; 49:29 which are all in the context of war. In ancient Israelite culture the change in the name denoted a change in status or destiny. See, for example, the shift from Jacob (“He grabs the heel” and “Cheater” or “Deceiver,” Gen 25:26; 27:36) to Israel (“He perseveres with God,” Gen 32:28).
10 sn As a member of the priesthood and the protector of order in the temple, Pashhur was undoubtedly one of those who promulgated the deceptive belief that the LORD’s presence in the temple was a guarantee of Judah’s safety (cf. 7:4, 8). Judging from the fact that two other men held the same office after the leading men in the city were carried into exile in 597 B.C. (see Jer 29:25-26 and compare 29:1-2 for the date and 2 Kgs 24:12-16 for the facts), this prophecy was probably fulfilled in 597. For a similar kind of oracle of judgment see Amos 7:10-17.
11 sn The translation is admittedly interpretive but so is every other translation that tries to capture the nuance of the verb rendered here “coerced.” Here the Hebrew text reads: “You [–] led me and I let myself be [–] led. You overpowered me and prevailed.” The value one assigns to [–] is in every case interpretive based on what one thinks the context is referring to. The word is rendered “deceived” or “tricked” by several English versions (see, e.g., KJV, NASB, TEV, ICC) as though God had misled him. It is rendered “enticed” by some (see, e.g., NRSV, NJPS) as though God had tempted him with false hopes. Some go so far as to accuse Jeremiah of accusing God of metaphorically “raping” him. It is true that the word is used of “seducing” a virgin in Exod 22:15 and that it is used in several places to refer to “deceiving” someone with false words (Prov 24:28; Ps 78:36). It is also true that it is used of “coaxing” someone, and sometimes he reveals something he does not want to (Judg 14:15; 16:5) and of “enticing” some to do something on the basis of false hopes (1 Kgs 22:20-22; Prov 1:10). However, it does not always have negative connotations or associations. In Hos 2:14 (2:16 HT) God “charms” or “woos” Israel, his estranged “wife,” into the wilderness where he hopes to win her back to himself. What Jeremiah is alluding to here is crucial for translating and interpreting the word. There is no indication in this passage that Jeremiah is accusing God of misleading him or raising false hopes; God informed him at the outset that he would encounter opposition (1:17-19). Rather, he is alluding to his call to be a prophet, a call which he initially resisted but was persuaded to undertake because of God’s persistence (Jer 1:7-10). The best single word to translate “…” with is thus “persuaded” or “coerced.” The translation spells out the allusion explicitly so the reader is not left wondering about what is being alluded to when Jer-
20:8 For whenever I prophesy, 1 I must cry out, 2
“Violence and destruction are coming!” 3
This message from the Lord 4 has made me
an object of continual insults and derision.

20:9 Sometimes I think, “I will make no
mention of his message.
I will not speak as his messenger 6 any
more.”
But then 6 his message becomes like a fire
locked up inside of me, burning in my
heart and soul. 7
I grow weary of trying to hold it in;
I cannot contain it.

20:10 9 I hear many whispering words of intrigue
against me.

Jeremiah speaks of being “coerced.” The translation “I let you do it” is a way of rendering the Niphal of the same verb which must be tolerable rather than passive since the normal passive for the Piel would be the Pual (See IBHS 389-90 §23.4g for discussion and examples.). The translation “you overcame my resistance” is based on allusion to the same context (1:7-10) and the parallel use of כּי (kiṣaq) as a transitive verb with a direct object in 1 Kgs 16:22.

1 tn Heb “speak,” but the speaking is in the context of speaking as a prophet.
2 tn Heb “cry out, I proclaim.”
3 sn The words “Violence and destruction...” are a synopsis of his messages of judgment. Jeremiah is lamenting that his ministry up to this point has been one of judgment and has brought him nothing but ridicule because the Lord has not carried out his threats. He appears in the eyes of the people to be a false prophet.
4 tn Heb “the word of the Lord.” For the use of כּי...כּי (ki...ki) here in the sense of “for...and” see KBL 432 s.v. כּי 10.
5 tn Heb “speak in his name.” This idiom occurs in passages where someone functions as the messenger under the authority of another. See Exod 5:23; Deut 18:19, 29:20; Jer 14:14. The antecedent in the first line is quite commonly misidentified as being “him,” i.e., the Lord. Comparison, however, with the rest of the context, especially the consequential clause “then it becomes” (לְמַשֵּׁה, v/phayah), and Jer 23:36 shows that it is “the word of the Lord.”
6 tn The English sentence has again been restructured for the sake of English style. The Hebrew construction involves two vav consecutive perfects in a condition and consequence relation. “If I say to myself...then it [his words] becomes.” See GKC 337 §112.6k for the construction.
7 tn Heb “It is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones.” In addition to standing as part for the whole, the “bones” for the person (e.g., Ps 35:10), the bones were associated with fear (e.g., Job 4:14) and with pain (e.g., Job 33:19, Ps 102:3 [102:4 HT]) and joy or sorrow (e.g., Ps 51:8 [51:10 HT]). As has been mentioned several times, the heart was connected with intellectual and volitional concerns.
8 tn It would be difficult to render accurately the Hebrew particle כּי (ki) that introduces this verse without lengthening the English line unduly. It probably means something like “This is true even though I...,” i.e., the particle is concessive (cf. BDB s.v. כּי 2c). No other nuance seems appropriate. The particle is left out of the translation, but its presence is acknowledged here.

Jeremiah 20:11

20:11 But the Lord is with me to help me
like an awe-inspiring warrior.

Those who would cause me terror are
everywhere! 9 They are saying, “Come on, let’s publicly
denounce him!” 10
All my so-called friends 11 are just watching
for something that would lead to my downfall. 12
They say, “Perhaps he can be enticed into
slipping up,
so we can prevail over him and get our
revenge on him.

9 tn The phrase translated “Those who would cause me terror are everywhere” has already occurred in 6:25 in the context of the terror caused by the enemy from the north and in 20:3 in reference to the curse pronounced on Pashhur who would experience it first hand. Some have seen the phrase here not as Jeremiah’s ejaculation of terror but of his assailant’s taunts of his message or even of his taunting nickname for him. But comparison of this passage with the first two lines of Ps 31:13 (31:14 HT) which are word for word the same as these two will show that it refers to the terror inspired by the plots of his enemies to do away with him. It is also clear from the context of that passage and the following context here that the “whispering of many” (the literal translation of “many whispering words of intrigue”) refers to intrigue to take vengeance on him and do away with him.
10 tn Heb “Denounce and let us denounce him.” The verb which is translated “denounce” (גָּזִיר, qazîr) does not take an accusative object of person as it does here very often. When it does it usually means to inform someone. The only relevant passage appears to be Jer 17:5 where it means something like “denounce.” What is probably involved here are the attempts to pass on Jeremiah as a traitor (Jer 26:10) and a false prophet (see his conflict with Hananiah in Jer 28).
11 tn Heb “the men of my peace [who are concerned about my welfare].” For this phrase compare Ps 41:9 [41:10 HT]; Jer 38:22. It is generally agreed that irony is being invoked here, hence “so-called” is supplied in the translation to bring out the irony.
12 tn Metaphorically they were watching for some slip-up that would lead to his downfall. Compare the use in Pss 35:15 and 38:17 (38:18 HT).

13 tn All the text says literally is “Perhaps he can be enticed so that we can prevail over him.” However the word “enticed” needs some qualification. As W. McKane (Jeremiah [ICC, 1:479]) notes, the Hebrew phrase of slipping up, the stumbling (מוּט, moṭ) could mean “something that would lead to my downfall.” Hence “slipping up” has been supplied as an object. It is vague enough to avoid specifics as the original text does but suggests some reference to “something that would lead to my downfall.”

sn There is an interesting ironic play on words here with the earlier use of some of these same Hebrew words in v. 7 to refer to the Lord coercing him into being his spokesman and overcoming his resistance. Jeremiah is lamenting that it was God’s call to speak his word which he could not (and still cannot) resist that has led ironically to his predicament, which is a source of terror to him.
14 sn This line has some interesting ties with Jer 15:20-21 where Jeremiah is assured by God that he is indeed with him as he promises him when he called him (1:8, 19) and will deliver him from the clutches of wicked and violent people. The word translated here “awe-inspiring” is the same as the word “violent people” there. Jeremiah is confident that his “awe-inspiring” warrior will overcome “violent people.” The statement of confidence here is, by the way, a common element in the psalms of petition in the Psalter. The common elements of that type of psalm are all here: invocation (v. 7), lament (v. 7-10), confession of trust/confidence in being heard (v. 11), petition (v. 12), thanksgiving or praise (v. 13). For some ex-
Therefore those who persecute me will fail and will not prevail over me. They will be thoroughly disgraced because they did not succeed. Their disgrace will never be forgotten. 20:12 

20:12 O L ORD who rules over all, 3 you test and prove the righteous. You see into people’s hearts and minds. 2 Pay them back for what they have done because I trust you to vindicate my cause. 20:13 Sing to the L ORD! Praise the L ORD! For he rescues the oppressed from the clutches of evildoers. 3 20:14 Cursed be the day I was born! May that day not be blessed when my mother gave birth to me. 4 20:15 Cursed be the man who made my father very glad when he brought him the news that a baby boy had been born to him! 5 20:16 May that man be like the cities that the L ORD destroyed without showing any mercy. May he hear a cry of distress in the morning and a battle cry at noon.

20:17 For he did not kill me before I came from the womb, making my pregnant mother’s womb my grave forever. 6 20:18 Why did I ever come forth from my mother’s womb? All I experience is trouble and grief, and I spend my days in shame. 8

The Lord Will Hand Jerusalem over to Enemies

21:1 The L ORD spoke to Jeremiah 9 when King Zedekiah 10 sent to him Pashhur son of Malkijah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah. 11 Zedekiah sent them to Jeremiah to ask, 12 21:2 “Please ask the L ORD to come and help us,” because King Nebuchadnezzar 14 of Babylon is attacking us. Maybe the L ORD will perform one of his miracles as in times past and make him stop attacking us and leave.” 15 21:3 Jeremiah answered them, “Tell Zedekiah

amples of this type of psalm see Pss 3, 7, 26. 1 sn See the study note on 2:19 for explanation of this title for God.

2 sn Heb “LORD of armies, the one who tests the righteous, who sees kidneys and heart.” The sentence has been broken up to avoid a long and complex English sentence. The translation is more in keeping with contemporary English style. The word “womb” moved from the last line to the next to the last line for English stylistic purposes and greater clarity.

3 sn While it may be a little confusing to modern readers to see kidneys and heart in the same sentence and the shift in addressee in a prayer and complaint like this, it was not at all unusual for Israel where these were often offered in the temple in the conscious presence of God before fellow worshipers. For another example of these same shifts see Ps 22 which is a prayer of David in a time of deep distress. 4 sn From the heights of exaltation, Jeremiah returns to the depths of despair. For similar mood swings in the psalms of lament compare Ps 102. Verses 14-18 are similar in tone of lament compare Ps 102. Verses 14-18 are similar in tone and mood to Job 3:1-10. They are very forceful rhetorical ways of Job and Jeremiah expressing the wish that they had never been born. 5 sn Heb “Curse be the man who brought my father the news saying, ‘A son, a male, has been born to you,’ making glad his joy.” This verse has been restructured for English stylistic purposes. 6 sn The birth of a child was an occasion of great joy. This was especially true if the child was a boy because it meant the continuance of the family line and the right of retention of the family property. See Ruth 4:10, 13-17.

sn The cities alluded to are Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the Jordan plain which had become proverbial for their wickedness and for the destruction that the L ORD brought on them because of it. See Isa 1:9-10; 13:19; Jer 23:14; 49:18.

sn Nebuchadnezzar was the second and greatest king of Babylon. He is known in the Bible both for his two conquests of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:10-17) and 587 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:1-7) and for his having built Babylon the Great (Dan 4:28-30).

10 sn Zedekiah was the last king of Judah. He ruled from 597 B.C. when he was placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kgs 24:17) until the fall of Jerusalem in 587/6 B.C. He acquainted to some of his anti-Babylonian counselors, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and sought help from the Egyptians (Ezek 17:12-15). This brought Nebuchadnezzar against the city in 588 B.C. This is the first of two delegations to Jeremiah. The later one was sent after Nebuchadnezzar withdrew to take care of the Egyptian threat (cf. Jer 37:1-9).

11 sn The Pashhur son of Malkijah referred to here is not the same as the Pashhur referred to in 20:1-6 who was the son of Immer. This Pashhur is referred to later in 38:1. The Zephaniah referred to here was the chief of security referred to later in Jer 29:25-26. He appears to have been favorably disposed toward Jeremiah. 12 sn “sent to him...Maaseiah, saying...” 13 sn The verb used here is often used of seeking information through a prophet (e.g., 2 Kgs 1:16; 8:8) and hence many translate “inquire of the L ORD for us.” However, it is obvious from the following that they were not seeking information but help. The word is also used for that in Pss 34:4 (34:5 HT); 77:2 (77:3 HT).

14 sn The dominant spelling of this name is actually Nebuchadrezzar which is closer to his Babylonian name Nebu kuddurri uzzur. An alternate spelling which is found 6 times in the book of Jeremiah and 17 times elsewhere is Nebuchad nezzar which is the form of the name that is usually used in English versions.

15 sn Nebuchadnezzar was the second and greatest king of Babylon. He is known in the Bible both for his two conquests of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:10-17) and 587 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:1-7) and for his having built Babylon the Great (Dan 4:28-30).

16 sn Perhaps the L ORD will do according to his miracles that he may go up from against us.”

17 sn The birth of a child was an occasion of great joy. This was especially true if the child was a boy because it meant the continuance of the family line and the right of retention of the family property. See Ruth 4:10, 13-17.

18 sn The cities alluded to are Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the Jordan plain which had become proverbial for their wickedness and for the destruction that the L ORD brought on them because of it. See Isa 1:9-10; 13:19; Jer 23:14; 49:18.
21:4 that the Lord, the God of Israel, says, 4 ‘The forces at your disposal are now outside the walls fighting against King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonians who have you under siege. I will gather those forces back inside the city. 4 21:5 In anger, in fury, and in wrath I myself will fight against you with my mighty power and great strength! 15 21:6 I will kill everything living in Jerusalem, people and animals alike! They will die from terrible diseases. 21:7 Then I, the Lord, promise that I will hand over King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, and any of the people who survive the war, starvation, and disease. I will hand them over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to their enemies who want to kill them. He will slaughter them with the sword. He will not show them any mercy, compassion, or pity.’

21:8 “But tell the people of Jerusalem that the Lord says, ‘I will give you a choice between two courses of action. One will result in life; the other will result in death.’ 21:9 Those who stay in this city will die in battle or of starvation or disease. Those who leave the city and surrender to the Babylonians who are besieging it will live. They will escape with their lives. 21:10 For I, the Lord, say that I am determined not to deliver this city but to bring disaster on it. 14 It will be handed over to the king of Babylon and he will destroy it with fire.”

Warnings to the Royal Court

21:11 The Lord told me to say to the royal court of Judah,

“Listen to what the Lord says,

21:12 O royal family descended from David.”

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4 sn The Babylonians (Heb “the Chaldeans”). The Chaldeans were a group of people in the country south of Babylon from which Nebuchadnezzar came. The Chaldean dynasty that the Lord established became the name by which the Babylonians are regularly referred to in the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah’s contemporary Ezekiel uses both terms.

4 tn The structure of the Hebrew sentence of this verse is long and complex and has led to a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding. There are two primary points of confusion: 1) the relation of the phrase “outside the walls,” and 2) the antecedent of “them” in the last clause of the verse that reads in Hebrew: “I will gather them back into the midst of the city.” Most take the phrase “outside the walls” with “the Babylonians...” Some take it with “turn back/bring back” to mean “from outside...” However, the preposition “from” is part of the idiom for “outside...” The phrase goes with “fighting” as J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 215) notes and as NJPS suggests. The antecedent of “them” has sometimes been taken mistakenly to refer to the Babylonians. It refers rather to “the forces at your disposal” which is literally “the weapons which are in your hands.” This latter phrase is a figure involving substitution (called metonymy) as Bright also correctly notes. The whole sentence reads in Hebrew: “I will bring back the weapons of war which are in your hand with which you are fighting Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside your wall and I will gather them into the midst of the city.” The sentence has been restructured to better reflect the proper relationships and to make the sentence conform more to contemporary English style.

5 sn The phrases in this order are unique but a very similar phrase “by strong hand and stretched out arm” are found several times with reference to God’s mighty power unleashed against Egypt at the exodus (cf. Deut 4:34; 5:15; 26:8; Jer 32:21; Ps 136:12). Instead of being directed at Israel’s enemies, it will now be directed against her.


7 sn Heb “And afterward.”

8 tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”
The LORD says:

“See to it that people each day” are judged fairly.²
Deliver those who have been robbed from those³ who oppress them. Otherwise, my wrath will blaze out against you.

It will burn like a fire that cannot be put out because of the evil that you have done.⁴

21:13 Listen, you⁵ who sit enthroned above the valley on a rocky plateau, I am opposed to you.⁶ says the LORD.⁷

² sn The kings of Israel and Judah were responsible for justice. See Pss 122:5. The king himself was the final court of appeals judging from the incident of David with the wise woman of Tekoa (2 Sam 14), Solomon and the two prostitutes (1 Kgs 3:16-28), and Ahab’s attempts to win the head of a woman and the people of Israel by interfering with due process (2 Sam 15:2-24).

³ sn These were classes of people who had no one to look after them because the Hebrew term does not necessarily mean that both parents have died. So, the term “orphan” is not totally appropriate. However, the term “alien” carries faulty connotations and the term “orphan” is not generic or collective. Therefore, the term “aliens, orphans, or widows” treating the terms as generic or collective is the best approach.

⁴ sn The allusion here is to going down from the temple to the palace which was on a lower eminence. See 36:12 in its context.

⁵ sn These are actually third feminine singular going back to the participle “you who sit enthroned above the valley.” The royal house was “enthroned” more literally than Jerusalem was. Taking this to refer to the royal court rather than Jerusalem also introduces one less unintroduced entity by the shift in pronoun in vv. 11-14 as well as eliminating the introduction of an otherwise unintroduced oracle. The “you” of “you boast” is actually the masculine plural participle (Heb “who say”) that modifies the feminine plural adjective “palace” much more natural language. The word is literally “forest” and is often seen to be an allusion to the armory which was called the “Forest of Lebanon” (1 Kgs 7:2-26; 10:17; 10:21; Isa 22:8 and see also Ezek 17:3 in an allegory (17:2-18) which may have been contemporary with this oracle). Taking the oracle to refer to the royal court also makes this oracle more parallel with the one that follows where destruction of the palace leads also to the destruction of the city.

⁶ sn Heb “I am against you.”

⁷ tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

⁸ sn Heb “Who can swoop...Who can penetrate...?” The questions are rhetorical and expect a negative answer. They are rendered as negative affirmations for clarity.

⁹ sn What is being expressed here is the belief in the inviolability of Zion/Jerusalem carried to its extreme. Signal deliverances of Jerusalem such as those experienced under Je-hoshaphat (2 Chr 20) and Hezekiah (Isa 37:36-37) in the context of promises to protect it (Isa 31:4-5; 37:33-35; 38:6) led to the belief that Zion was unconquerable. This belief found expression in several of Israel’s psalms (Pss 46, 48, 76) and led to the mistaken assumption that God would protect it regardless of how the people treated God or one another. Micah and Jeremiah both deny that (cf. Mic 3:8-12; Jer 21:13-14).

¹⁰ tn Heb “oracle of the LORD.”

¹¹ tn Heb “I will set fire in its forest and it will devour its surroundings.” The pronouns are actually third feminine singular going back to the participle “you who sit enthroned above the valley.” However, this is another example of those rapid shifts in pronouns typical of the biblical Hebrew style which are uncommon in English. They have regularly been leveled to the same person throughout in the translation to avoid possible confusion for the English reader.

¹² fn The word “me” is not in the text. It is, however, implicit and is supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹³ tn The allusion here is to going down from the temple to the palace which was on a lower eminence. See 36:12 in its context.

¹⁴ tn Heb “And speak there this word:” The translation is intended to eliminate an awkward and lengthy sentence.

¹⁵ tn Heb “who sits on David’s throne.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah who sits on the throne of David, you, and your officials and your people who pass through these gates.”

¹⁷ tn Heb “aliens, orphans, or widows” treating the terms as generic or collective. However, the term “alien” carries faulty connotations and the term “orphan” is not totally appropriate because the Hebrew term does not necessarily mean that both parents have died.

¹⁸ tn These were classes of people who had no one to look out for their rights. The laws of Israel, however, were careful to see that their rights were guarded (cf. Deut 10:18) and that provision was made for meeting their needs (cf. Deut 24:19-21). The LORD promised to protect them (cf. Ps 146:9) and a curse was called down on any who deprived them of justice (cf. Deut 27:19).

¹⁹ tn Heb “Do not shed innocent blood.”

²⁰ sn Do not kill innocent people. For an example of one of the last kings who did this see Jer 36:20-23. Manasseh was no-
22:4 If you are careful to obey these commands, then the kings who follow in David’s succession and ride in chariots or on horses will continue to come through the gates of this palace, as will their officials and their subjects.2 22:5 But, if you do not obey these commands, I solemnly swear3 that this palace will become a pile of rubble. I, the LORD, affirm it!4

22:6 “For the LORD says concerning the palace of the king of Judah, “This place looks like a veritable forest of Gilead to me. It is like the wooded heights of Lebanon in my eyes. But I swear that I will make it like a wilderness whose towns have all been deserted.”5 22:7 I will send men against it to destroy it6 with their axes and hatchets. They will hack up its fine cedar panels and columns and throw them into the fire.

22:8 “People from other nations will pass by this city. They will ask one another, “What has the LORD done such a thing to this great city?”

22:9 The answer will come back, “It is because they broke their covenant with the LORD their God and worshiped and served other gods.”

Judgment on Jehoiakim

22:10 “Do not weep for the king who was killed. Do not grieve for him. But weep mournfully for the king who has gone into exile. For he will never return to see his native land again.7

22:11 “For the LORD has spoken about Shallum son of Josiah, who succeeded his father as king of Judah but was carried off into exile. He has said, “He will never return to this land.”8 22:12 For he will die in the country where they took him as a captive. He will never see this land again.”9

Judgment on Jehoiachin

22:13 “Sure to be judged10 is the king who builds his palace using injustice and treats people unfairly while adding its upper rooms.11 He makes his countrymen work for nothing for nothing.
He does not pay them for their labor.

22:14 He says, “I will build myself a large palace with spacious upper rooms.”
He cuts windows in its walls, panels it with cedar, and paints its rooms red.

22:15 Does it make you any more of a king that you outstrip everyone else in building with cedar?
Just think about your father.
He was content that he had food and drink.
He did what was just and right.
So things went well with him.

22:16 He upheld the cause of the poor and needy.
So things went well for Judah.

The Lord says, ‘That is a good example of what it means to know me.'

22:17 But you are always thinking and looking for ways to increase your wealth by dishonest means.
Your eyes and your heart are set on killing some innocent person and committing fraud and oppression.

22:18 So the Lord has this to say about Josiah’s son, King Jehoiakim of Judah:
People will not mourn for him, saying, “This makes me sad, my brother! This makes me sad, my sister!”
They will not mourn for him, saying, “Poor, poor lord! Poor, poor majesty!”

22:19 He will be left unburied just like a dead donkey.
His body will be dragged off and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem.”

Warning to Jerusalem

22:20 People of Jerusalem, go up to Lebanon and cry out in mourning.
Go to the land of Bashan and cry out loudly.
Cry out in mourning from the mountains of Moab.

For your allies have all been defeated.

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1 tc The MT should be emended to read חַלֹּנָי וְסָפוּן (khallonay v’safon) instead of חַלֹּנָי וְסָפוּן (khallonay v’safon), i.e., the plural noun with third singular suffix rather than the first singular suffix and the infinitive absolute rather than the passive participle. The latter form then parallels the form for “paints” and functions in the same way (cf. GKC 345 §113.2 for the infinitive with vav (ו) continuing a perfect). The errors in the MT involve reading the vav once instead of twice (haplography) and reading the (ו) for the (ו).

2 tn The word translated “red” only occurs here and in Ezek 23:14 where it refers to the pictures of the Babylonians on the wall of the temple. Evidently this was a favorite color for decoration. It is usually identified as vermilion, a mineral product from red ocher (cf. C. L. Wickwire, “Vermilion,” IDB 4:748).

3 tn For the use of this verb see Jer 12:5 where it is used of Jeremiah “competing” with horses. The form is a rare Tiphel (see GKC 153 §55.h).

4 tn Heb “Your father, did he not eat and drink and do justice and right.” The copulative vav in front of the verbs here (all Hebrew perfects) shows that these actions are all coordinate not sequential. The contrast drawn here between the actions of Jehoiakim and Josiah show that the phrase eating and drinking and doing justice and right is repeated in the next verse after the reiteration of Josiah’s practice of justice.

5 sn The father referred to here is the godly king Josiah. He followed the requirements for kings set forth in 22:3 in contrast to his son who did not (22:13).

6 tn The words “for Judah” are not in the text, but the absence of the preposition plus object as in the preceding verse suggests that this is a more general statement, i.e., “things went well for everyone.”

7 tn Heb “Is that not what it means to know me.” The question is rhetorical and expects a positive answer. It is translated in the light of the context.

8 sn Comparison of the usage of the words “know me” in their context in Jer 2:8; 9:3, 6, 24 and here will show that more than mere intellectual knowledge is involved. It involves also personal commitment to God and obedience to the demands of the agreements with him. The word “know” is used in ancient Near Eastern treaty contexts of submission to the will of the overlord. See further the notes on 9:3.

9 sn This is a regular way of introducing the announcement of judgment after an indictment of crimes. See, e.g., Isa 5:13, 14; Jer 23:2.

10 tn The translation follows the majority of scholars who think that the address of brother and sister are the address of the mourners to one another, lamenting their loss. Some scholars feel that all four terms are parallel and represent the relation that the king had metaphorically to his subjects; i.e., he was not only Lord and Majesty to them but like a sister or a brother. In that case something like: “How sad it is for the one who was like a sister to me. How sad is it for the one who was like a sister to us.” This makes for poor poetry and is not very likely. The lover can call his bride sister in Song of Solomon (Sg 4:9, 10) but there are no documented examples of a subject even speaking of a king in this way in Israel or the ancient Near East.

11 sn A similar judgment against this ungodly king is pronounced by Jeremiah in 36:30. According to 2 Chr 36:6 he was bound over to be taken captive to Babylon but apparently died before he got there. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar ordered his body thrown outside the wall in fulfillment of this judgment. The Bible itself, however, does not tell us that.

12 tn The words “people of Jerusalem” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation to clarify the referent of the imperative. The imperative is feminine singular and it is generally agreed that personified Zion/Jerusalem is in view. The second feminine singular has commonly been applied to Jerusalem or the people of Judah throughout the book. The reference to allies (v. 20, 22) and to leaders (v. 22) make it very probable that this is the case here too.

13 tn Heb “from Abarim.” This was the mountain range in Moab from which Moses viewed the promised land (cf. Deut 32:49).

14 tn Heb “your lovers.” For the usage of this term to refer to allies see 30:14 and a semantically similar term in 4:30.
22:21 While you were feeling secure I gave you warning.\(^1\) But you said, “I refuse to listen to you.” That is the way you have acted from your earliest history onward.\(^2\) Indeed, you have never paid attention to me.

22:22 My judgment will carry off all your leaders like a storm wind!\(^3\) Your allies will go into captivity. Then you will certainly\(^4\) be disgraced and put to shame because of all the wickedness you have done.

22:23 You may feel as secure as a birdnesting in the cedars of Lebanon. But oh how you\(^5\) will groan\(^6\) when the pains of judgment come on you.

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\(^1\) sn If the passages in this section are chronologically ordered, this refers to the help that Jehoiakim relied on when he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.

\(^2\) sn If the passages in this section are chronologically ordered, this refers to the help that Jehoiakim relied on when he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.

\(^3\) tn Heb “I spoke to you in your security.” The reference is to the sending of the prophets. Compare this context with the context of 7:25. For the nuance “security” for this noun (םַלְכָּה, ‘shulḥah’) rather than as “prosperity” as many translate see PSS 42:7; 30:6; 50:1. For the related adjective (םַלְכָּה, ‘shldv’) in Jer 49:31; Job 16:2; 21:23.

\(^4\) tn Heb “from your youth.” Compare the usage in 2:2; 3:24 and compare a similar idea in 7:25.

\(^5\) tn Heb “A wind will shepherd away all your shepherds.” The figures have all been interpreted in the translation for the sake of clarity. For the use of the word “wind” as a metaphor or simile for God’s judgment (using the enemy forces) see 4:11-12; 13:24; 18:17. For the use of the word “shepherd” to refer to rulers/leaders 2:8; 10:21; and 23:1-4. For the use of the word “shepherd away” in the sense of carry off/drive away see DDB 945 s.v. פָּנַי and compare Job 20:26. There is an obvious wordplay involved in two different senses of the word “shepherd,” one referring to their leaders and one referring to the loss of those leaders by the wind driving them off. There may even be a wordplay involving the word “wickedness” which comes from a word having the same consonants. If the oracles in this section are chronologically ordered this threat was fulfilled in 597 B.C. when many of the royal officials and nobles were carried away captive with Jehoiachin (see 2 Kgs 24:15) who is the subject of the next oracle.

\(^6\) tn The use of the Hebrew particle כִּי (ki) is intensive here and probably also marks the beginning of the last line of v. 21. (See DDB 472 s.v. כִּי 1.e.)

22:24 The LORD says,\(^8\) “As surely as I live, Jeconiah, King of Judah, son of Jehoiakim will not be a signet ring on my right hand. Indeed I will tear you off from it [i.e., pull you off of my finger as a signet ring]. The signet ring was the king’s seal by which he verified all his legal and political transactions. To have the signet ring was to exercise authority in the king’s name. For examples of this see Gen 41:42, 43; 1 Kgs 21:8; Esth 3:10; 8:2. The figure has been interpreted in the translation for the sake of clarity. The particles זָכַר ו (‘z̄aḵar ‘im) that stand after the oath formula “As I live” introduce a negative statement according to the usage of Hebrew grammar (cf. BDB 474 s.v. זָכַר 1.a and BDB 50 s.v. זָכַר 1.b[2] and compare 2 Sam 3:35). The particle זָכַר (‘z̄aḵar) that stands in front of “I will tear you off” introduces a positive affirmation according to the same rules of Hebrew grammar (cf. BDB 472 s.v. זָכַר 1.c and compare 1 Sam 14:39, 44). The LORD is swearing emphatically that Jeconiah will not be the earthly representative of his rule; i.e., not carry the authority of the signet ring bearer. As in several other places in Jeremiah there is a shift from the third person to the second person which runs throughout vv. 24-27. The pronouns are leveled in the translation to the second person to avoid confusion. The figures are interpreted in the translation to convey the proper significance. See the study note for explanation.

\(^7\) sn This simile has already been used in Jer 4:31; 6:24 in conjunction with Zion/Jerusalem’s judgment.

\(^8\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lorp.”

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The LORD says,\(^9\) “As surely as I am the living God, you, Jeconiah,\(^9\) king of Judah, son of Jehoiakim, will not be the earthly representative of my authority. Indeed, I will take that right away from you.\(^10\) I will hand you over to those who want to take your life and of whom you are afraid. I will hand you over to King Nebuchadnezzar of...
Babylon and his Babylonian soldiers. 22:26 I will force you and your mother who gave you birth into exile. You will be exiled to another country where neither of you were born, and you will both die there. 22:27 You will never come back to this land to which you will long to return! 78

22:28 This man, Jeconiah, will be like a broken pot someone threw away. He will be like a clay vessel 4 that no one wants. 5 Why will he and his children be forced into exile? Why will they be thrown out into a country they know nothing about? 76

22:29 O land of Judah, land of Judah, land of Judah! 17 Listen to what the Lord has to say!

22:30 The Lord says,

“Enroll this man in the register as though he were childless. 8

1 sn Heb “the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4.
2 sn Heb “I will hurl you and your mother…into another land where....” The verb used here is very forceful. It is the verb used for Saul throwing a spear at David (1 Sam 18:11) and for God unleashing a violent storm on the sea (Jonah 1:4). It is used both here and in v. 26 for the forceful exile of Jeconiah and his mother.
3 tn Heb “And unto the land which they lift up their souls to return there, there they will not return.” Once again there is a sudden shift in person from the second plural to the third plural. As before the translation levels the pronouns to avoid confusion. For the second person singular see BDB 670 s.v. נָשָׂא “to lift up the soul to/to see” (see BDB 670 s.v. נָשָׂא “to lift up the soul to/to see” (see BDB 1:9)).
4 tn The word translated “clay vessel” occurs only here. Its meaning, however, is assured on the basis of the parallelism and on the basis of the verb root which is used for shaping or fashioning in Job 10:8. The KJV renders it as “idol,” but that word, while having the same consonants, never appears in the singular. The word is missing in the Greek version but is translated as διαμορφώσατο in the Latin version. The word “clay” is supplied in the translation to clarify what sort of vessel is meant; its inclusion is justified based on the context and the use of the same verb root in Job 10:8 to refer to shaping or fashioning, which would imply clay pots or vessels.
5 tn Heb “is this man, Coniah, a despised, broken vessel or a vessel that no one wants?” The question is rhetorical expecting a positive answer in agreement with the preceding oracle.
6 sn For the image of the rejected, broken vessel see Jer 19:1-13 (where, however, the vessel is rejected first and then broken) and compare also the image of the linen shorts which are good for nothing in Jer 13 (see especially vv. 10-11).
7 sn The question “Why?” is a common rhetorical feature in Jeremiah. See the Jeremianic question in Jer 12:2 (cf. 1:21; 13:22: 14:19. In several cases like this one no answer is given, leaving a sense of exasperation and hopelessness with the sinfulness of the nation that calls forth such punishment from God.
8 sn There is no certain explanation for the triple repetition of the word “land” here. F. B. Huey (Jeremiah, Lamentations [NIC], 209) suggests the idea of exasperation, but exasperation at what? Their continued apostasy which made these exiles necessary? Or exasperation at their pitiful hopes of seeing Jeconiah restored? Perhaps “pitiful, pitiful, pitiful land of Judah” would convey some of the force of the repetition without being any more suggestive of why the land is so addressed.
9 tn Heb “Write this man childless.” For the explanation see the study note. The word translated “childless” has spawned some debate because Jeconiah was in fact not childless. There is record from both the Bible and ancient Near Eastern texts that he had children (see, e.g., 1 Chr 3:17). G. R. Driver, ‘Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah’, JQR 28 (1937-38): 115, has suggested that the word both here and in Lev 20:20-21 should be translated “stripped of honor.” While that would relieve some of the difficulties here, the word definitely means “childless” in Gen 15:2 and also in Sir 16:3 where it is contrasted with having godless children. The issue is not one of childlessness but of having “one of his sons” succeed to the Davidic throne. The term for “one of his sons” is literally “from his seed a man” and the word “seed” is the same one that is used to refer to his “children” who were forced into exile with him (v. 28).
10 sn The figure here is of registering a person on an official roll of citizens, etc. (cf. Num 11:26; 1 Chr 4:41; Ps 87:6). Here it probably refers to the “king list” of dynastic succession. While Jeconiah did have children (2 Chr 3:17) none of them ever returned to Judah and ruled over it. What is being denied here is his own succession and that of his immediate sons contrary to the popular hopes expressed in Jer 28:4. His grandson Zerubbabel did return to Judah, became governor (Hag 1:1; 2:2), and along with the high priest Joshua was responsible for rebuilding the second temple (e.g., Ezra 5:2).
11 sn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
12 sn Heb This oracle once again introduces a judgment speech. The indictment is found in v. 1 and the announcement of judgment in v. 2. This leads into an oracle of deliverance in vv. 3-4. See also the note on the word “judged” in 22:13.
13 tn Heb “Woe to the shepherds who are killing and scattering the sheep of my pasture.” See the study note on 22:13 for the significance of “Sure to be judged” (Heb “Woe”). See the study note for the significance of the metaphor introduced here.
14 sn Verses 1-4 of ch. 23 are an extended metaphor in which the rulers are compared to shepherds and the people are compared to sheep. This metaphor has already been met with in 10:21 and is found elsewhere in the context of the Lord’s covenant (cf. Jer 2:2; 7:22; 23:1-2; 31:10; 32:20; 49:1-22; 50:5). For a complete development of this metaphor with similar messianic and eschatological implications see Ezek 34. The metaphor has been interpreted in the translation but some of the flavor left in the Hebrew.
15 sn Heb “about the shepherds who are shepherding my people. ‘You have caused my sheep...’” For the metaphor see the study note on the previous verse.
ish you for the evil that you have done.\(^1\) I, the Lord, affirm it!\(^2\) 23:3 Then I myself will regather those of my people\(^3\) who are still alive from all the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their homeland.\(^4\) They will greatly increase in number. 23:4 I will install rulers\(^5\) over them who will care for them. Then they will no longer need to fear or be terrified. None of them will turn up missing.\(^6\) I, the Lord, promise it!\(^7\)

23:5 “I, the Lord, promise\(^8\) that a new time will certainly come,\(^9\) when I will raise up for them a righteous branch,\(^10\) a descendant of David. He will rule over them with wisdom and understanding\(^11\) and will do what is just and right in the land.\(^12\)

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\(^1\) tn Heb “Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who should be shepherding my people: You have scattered my sheep and driven them away and you have not taken care of them. Behold I will visit upon you the evil of your deeds.” “Therefore” announces the judgment which does not come until “Behold.” It is interrupted by the messenger formula and a further indirect indictment. The original has been broken up to conform more to contemporary English style, the metaphors have been interpreted for clarity and the connections between the indictments and the judgments have been carried by “So.”

\(^2\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^3\) tn Heb “my sheep.”

\(^4\) tn Heb “their fold.”

\(^5\) tn Heb “shepherds.”

\(^6\) There are various nuances of the word צָצָל (paqag) represented in vv. 2, 4. See Ps 8:4 (8:5 HT) and Zech 10:3 for “care for/take care of” (cf. BDB 823 s.v. נָפַד Niph.1). See Exod 20:5; Amos 3:2; Jer 9:24; 11:22 for “punish” (cf. BDB 823 s.v. נָפַד Qal.A.3). See 1 Kgs 20:39 and 2 Kgs 10:19 for “be missing” (cf. BDB 823 s.v. נָפַד Niph.1).

\(^7\) tn There is an extended play on the Hebrew word צָצָל which is a word with rather broad English equivalents. Here the word refers to the fault of the shepherds/rulers who have not “taken care” of the sheep/people (v. 2), the “punishment” for the evil they have done in not taking care of them (v. 2), and the fact that after the Lord assigns new shepherds/rulers over them they will be cared for in such a way that none of them “will turn up missing” (v. 4).

\(^8\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^9\) tn Heb “Behold the days are coming.”

\(^10\) tn Hebrew word translated “justice” here is very broad in its usage, and it is hard to catch all the relevant nuances for this word in this context. It is used for “vindication” in legal contexts (see, e.g., Job 6:29), for “deliverance” or “salvation” in exilic contexts (see, e.g., Isa 5:5, 8:18), and in the sense of ruling, judging with “justice” (see, e.g., Lev 19:15; Isa 32:1). Here it probably sums up the justice that the Lord provides through raising up this ruler as well as the safety, security, and well-being that result (see vv. 5-6a). In the NT this takes on soteriological connotations (see 1 Cor 1:31 in its context).

\(^11\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^12\) sn This has been the constant emphasis in this section.

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23:6 Under his rule\(^13\) Judah will enjoy safety\(^4\) and Israel will live in security.\(^15\)

This is the name he will go by: “The Lord has provided us with justice.”\(^16\) 23:7 “So I, the Lord, say:\(^17\) ‘A new time will certainly come.\(^18\) People now affirm their oaths with “I swear as surely as the Lord lives who delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt.”’ 23:8 But at that time they will affirm them with “I swear as surely as the Lord lives who delivered the descendants of the former nation of Israel\(^19\) from the land of the north and from all the other lands where he had banished them:\(^20\) at that time they will live in their own land.’”

See 22:3 for the demand, 22:15 for its fulfillment, and 22:13 for its abuse. The ideal king would follow in the footsteps of his illustrious ancestor David (2 Sam 8:15) who set this forth as an ideal for his dynasty (2 Sam 7:16) and prayed for it to be true of his son Solomon (Ps 72:1-2).

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\(^13\) tn Heb “In his days [= during the time he rules].”

\(^14\) tn Parallelism and context (cf. v. 4) suggest this nuance for the word often translated “be saved.” For this nuance elsewhere see Ps 119:117; Prov 28:18 for the verb יָשַׁע (yashu’) in the Niphal; and Ps 126:2; Job 5:4, 11 for the related noun יָשָׁע (yashua’).

\(^15\) sn It should be noted that this brief oracle of deliverance implies the reunification of Israel and Judah under the future Davidic ruler. Jeremiah has already spoken about this reunification earlier in 3:18 and will have more to say about it in 30:3; 31:27, 31. This same ideal was espoused in the prophecies of Hosea (1:10-11 [2:1-2 HT], Isaiah (11:1-4, 10-12), and Ezekiel (37:15-28) all of which have messianic and eschatological significance.

\(^16\) tn Heb “his name will be called ‘The Lord our righteousness’.”

\(^17\) sn The Hebrew word translated “justice” here is very broad in its usage, and it is hard to catch all the relevant nuances for this word in this context. It is used for “vindication” in legal contexts (see, e.g., Job 6:29), for “deliverance” or “salvation” in exilic contexts (see, e.g., Isa 5:5, 8:18), and in the sense of ruling, judging with “justice” (see, e.g., Lev 19:15; Isa 32:1). Here it probably sums up the justice that the Lord provides through raising up this ruler as well as the safety, security, and well-being that result (see vv. 5-6a). In the NT this takes on soteriological connotations (see 1 Cor 1:31 in its context).

\(^18\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^19\) tn Heb “Behold the days are coming.”

\(^20\) tn Hebrew word translated “justice” here has a wide range of uses and meanings, and it is difficult to catch all the relevant nuances for this word in this context. It is used for “vindication” in legal contexts (see, e.g., Job 6:29), for “deliverance” or “salvation” in exilic contexts (see, e.g., Isa 5:5, 8:18), and in the sense of ruling, judging with “justice” (see, e.g., Lev 19:15; Isa 32:1). Here it probably sums up the justice that the Lord provides through raising up this ruler as well as the safety, security, and well-being that result (see vv. 5-6a). In the NT this takes on soteriological connotations (see 1 Cor 1:31 in its context).

\(^21\) tn Heb “Behold the days are coming.”

\(^22\) sn He is the descendant of the house of Israel.”

\(^23\) sn To it is probably preferable to read the third masculine singular plus suffix (יִהְיוּ, iyyu’im) here with the Greek version and the parallel passage in 16:15 rather than the first singular plus suffix in the MT (יֵיהוּ, yehu’im). If this is not a case of mere graphic confusion, the MT could have arisen under the influence of the first person in v. 3. Though sudden shifts in person have been common in the book of Jeremiah, that is unlikely in a context reporting an oath.

\(^24\) tn This passage is the same as 16:14-15 with a few minor variations in Hebrew wording. The notes on that passage should be consulted for the rendering here. This passage has the Niphal of the verb “to say” rather than the impersonal use of the Qal. It adds the idea of “bringing out” to the idea of “bringing up out” and (Heb “who brought up and who brought out,” probably a case of hendiatris) before “the people [here ‘seed’ rather than ‘children’] of Israel [here ‘house of Israel’] from the land of the north.” These are minor variations and do not affect the sense in any way. So the passage is rendered in much the same way.

\(^25\) sn This passage looks forward to a new and greater Exodus, one that so outstrips the earlier one that the earlier will not serve as the model of deliverance any longer. This same ideal was the subject of Isaiah’s earlier prophecies in Isa 11:11-12, 15-16; 43:16-21; 49:8-13; 51: 1-11.
Oracles Against the False Prophets

23:9 Here is what the Lord says concerning the false prophets:
My heart and my mind are deeply disturbed.
I tremble all over.
I am like a drunk person, like a person who has had too much wine.
because of the way the Lord and his holy word are being mistreated.

23:10 For the land is full of people unfaithful to him.
They live wicked lives and they misuse their power.
So the land is dried up because it is under his curse.
The pastures in the wilderness are withered.

± sn Jeremiah has already had a good deal to say about the false prophets and their fate. See 2:8, 26; 5:13; 31; 14:13-15. Here he parallels the condemnation of the wicked prophets and their fate (23:9-40) with that of the wicked kings (21:11-22:30).

tn The particle ע (šīl) which begins this verse is parallel to the one at the beginning of the preceding verse. However, the connection is too distant to render it “for.” “Moreover” is intended to draw the parallel. The words “the Lord says” (Heb “Oracle of the Lord”) have been drawn up to the front to introduce the shift in speaker from Jeremiah, who describes his agitated state, to God, who describes the sins of the prophets and priests and his consequent judgment on them.

tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

tn For the last two lines see 11:23 and the notes there.

tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

tn The words “The words” are not in the text, but it is clear from the context that he is the speaker. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

tn For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.

tn According to BDB 107 4 s.v. מְשַׁמְּרוּ this word means “unseemly, unsavory.” The related adjective is used in Job 6:6 of the tastelessness of something that is unseasoned.

tn Heb “By Baal.”

sn Prophesying in the name of the god Baal was a clear violation of Mosaic law and punishable by death (see Deut 13:1-5). For an example of the apostasy encouraged by prophets of Baal in the northern kingdom of Israel see 1 Kgs 18:16-40.

map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

tn Or “they commit adultery and deal falsely.” The word “shocking” only occurs here and in 5:30 where it is found in the context of prophesying lies. This almost assures that the reference to “walking in lies” (Heb “in the lie”) is referring to false prophecy. Moreover the references to the prophets in 5:13 and in 14:13-15 are all in the context of false prophecy as are the following references in this chapter in 23:24, 26, 32 and in 28:15. This appears to be the theme of this section. This also makes it likely that the reference to adultery is not literal adultery, though two of the false prophets in Babylon were guilty of this (29:23). The reference to “encouraging those who do evil” that follows also makes more sense if they were preaching messages of comfort rather than messages of doom. The verbs here are infinitive absolutes in place of the figure “strengthen the hands” meaning “encourage” see.
I consider all of them as bad as the people of Sodom, and the citizens of Jerusalem as bad as the people of Gomorrah.¹

23:15 So then I, the Lord who rules over all,² have something to say concerning the prophets of Jerusalem:³

“I will make these prophets eat the bitter food of suffering and drink the poison water of judgment.⁴ For the prophets of Jerusalem are the reason⁵ that ungodliness⁶ has spread throughout the land.”⁷

23:16 The Lord who rules over all⁷ says to the people of Jerusalem:⁸ “Do not listen to what those prophets are saying to you. They are filling you with false hopes.

Judg 9:24; Ezek 13:22 (and cf. BDB 304 s.v. פֶּלֶל, Piel,2). The vav consecutive on the front of the form gives the logical consequence equivalent to “so” in the translation.

¹ tn Heb “They tell of a vision of their own heart [i.e. mind] not from the mouth of the Lord.”

² tn The translation reflects an emphatic construction where the infinitive absolute follows a participle (cf. GKC §343). This is a common rhetorical device for bracketing material that belongs together. The criticism has, however, focused on the false prophets and the judgment due them.

³ sn The compound preposition מֵאֵת (me’et) expresses source or origin (see BDB 86 s.v. מֵאֵת 4.c). Context shows that the origin is in their false prophesying which encourages people in their evil behavior.

⁴ tn A word that derives from this same Hebrew word is used in v. 11 at the beginning of the Lord’s criticism of the prophets and priests. This is a common rhetorical device for bracketing material that belongs together. The criticism has, however, focused on the false prophets and the judgment due them.

⁵ tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”

⁶ sn See the study note on 2:19 for explanation of this title.

⁷ tn “Yahweh of armies.”

⁸ sn The translation is deliberate, intending to reflect the repetition of the Hebrew root which is “swirl/swirling.”

They are reporting visions of their own imaginations, not something the Lord has given them to say.⁹

23:17 They continually say¹⁰ to those who reject what the Lord has said,¹¹ “Things will go well for you!”¹² They say to all those who follow the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts, “Nothing bad will happen to you!”¹³

23:18 Yet which of them has ever stood in the Lord’s inner circle so they could see and hear what he has to say?¹⁴ Which of them have ever paid attention or listened to what he has said?²³:19 But just watch!¹⁸ The wrath of the Lord will come like a storm!¹⁷ Like a raging storm it will rage down

⁹ tn Heb “They tell of a vision of their own heart [i.e. mind] not from the mouth of the Lord.”

¹⁰ tn The translation reflects an emphatic construction where the infinitive absolute follows a participle (cf. GKC §343). This is a common rhetorical device for bracketing material that belongs together. The criticism has, however, focused on the false prophets and the judgment due them.

¹¹ sn The translation follows the Greek version. The Hebrew text reads, “who reject me,” The Lord has spoken, “Things...” The Greek version is to be preferred here because of (1) the parallelism of the lines “reject what the Lord has said” // “follow the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts;” (2) the preceding context which speaks of “visions of their own imaginations not of what the Lord has given them;” (3) the following context which denies that they have ever had access to the Lord’s secrets; (4) the general contexts earlier regarding false prophecy where rejection of the Lord’s word is in view (6:14 [see there v. 10]; 8:11 [see there v. 9]; (5) the meter of the poetic lines (the Hebrew meter is 3/5/4/3; the meter presupposed by the translation is 5/3/4/3 with the 3’s being their words). The difference is one of vocalization of the same consonants. The vocalization of the MT is מְנַאֲצֵי דְּבַר יְהוָה; the Hebrew Vorlage behind the Greek would be vocalized as מְנַאֲצֵי דְּבַר יְהוָה.

¹² tn “You will have peace.” But see the note on 14:13. See also 6:14 and 8:11.

¹³ sn Or “they have been the Lord’s confidant.”

¹⁴ sn The Lord’s inner circle refers to the council of angels (Ps 89:7 [89:8 HT]; 1 Kgs 22:19-22; Job 1:2; Job 15:8) where God made known his counsel/plans (Amos 3:7). They and those they prophesied to will find out soon enough what the purposes of his heart are, and they are not “peace” (see v. 20). By their failure to announce the impending doom they were not turning the people away from their wicked course (vv. 21-22).

¹⁵ sn The form here is a jussive with a vav of subordination introducing a purpose after a question (cf. GKC §319.f).

¹⁶ tn Heb “his word.” In the second instance (“what he has said” at the end of the verse) the translation follows the suggestion of the Masoretes (Qere) and many Hebrew texts rather than the consonantal text (Qethib) of the Leningrad Codex.

¹⁷ sn The syntax of this line has generally been misunderstood, sometimes to the point that some want to delete the word wrath. Both here and in 30:23 where these same words occur the word “anger” stands not as an accusative of attendant circumstance but an apposition, giving the intended referent to the figure. Comparison should be made with Jer 25:15 where “the cup of wrath” is appositional to “the cup of wine” (cf. GKC §313.k).

¹⁸ tn The translation is deliberate, intending to reflect the repetition of the Hebrew root which is “swirl/swirling.”
on the heads of those who are wicked.

23:20 The anger of the Lord will not turn back until he has fully carried out his intended purposes.\(^5\) In days to come you people will come to understand this clearly.\(^3\)

23:21 I did not send those prophets. Yet they were in a hurry to give their message.\(^4\) I did not tell them anything. Yet they prophesied anyway.

23:22 But if they had stood in my inner circle,\(^5\) they would have proclaimed my message to my people. They would have caused my people to turn from their wicked ways and stop doing the evil things they are doing.

23:23 Do you people think\(^6\) that I am some local deity and not the transcendent God?\(^7\) the Lord asks.\(^8\)

23:24 "Do you really think anyone can hide himself where I cannot see him?" the Lord asks.\(^9\) "Do you not know that I am everywhere?" the Lord asks.\(^10\)

23:25 The Lord says,\(^12\) "I have heard what those prophets who are prophesying lies in my name are saying. They are saying, 'I have had a dream! I have had a dream!'\(^13\) Those prophets are just prophesying lies. They are prophesying the delusions of their own minds.\(^14\)

23:27 How long will they go on plotting to fellow and their leaders through Jeremiah along these lines (Jer 16:17; 21:14). Lurking behind the thoughts expressed here is probably Deut 28:19-21 where God warns that one "bad apple" who thinks he can get away with sinning against the covenant can lead to the destruction of all. The false prophets were the "bad apples" that were encouraging the corruption of the whole nation by their words promoting a false sense of security unconnected with loyalty to God and obedience to his covenant. The first question deals with the issue of God's transcendence, the second with his omniscience, and the third with his omnipresence.

\(^1\) tn Heb "until he has done and until he has carried out the purposes of his heart."

\(^2\) tn Heb "in the latter days." However, as BDB 31 s.v. הָעָפֶר b suggests, the meaning of this idiom must be determined from the context. Sometimes it has remote, even eschatological, reference and other times it has more immediate reference as it does here and in Jer 30:23 where it refers to the coming days of Babylonian conquest and exile.

\(^3\) tn The translation is intended to reflect a Hebrew construction where a noun functions as the object of a verb from the same root word (the Hebrew cognate accusative).

\(^4\) tn Heb "Yet they ran."

\(^5\) sn The image is that of a messenger bearing news from the king. See 2 Sam 18:19-24; Jer 51:31; Isa 40:9; 52:7; Hab 2:2 (the tablet/scroll bore the message the runner was to read to the intended recipients of his message). Their message has been given in Jer 16:8-11 (see notes there for cross references).

\(^6\) tn Or "had been my confidant." See the note on v. 18.

\(^7\) tn The words "Do you people think" at the beginning of this verse and "Do you really think" at the beginning of the next verse are not in the text but are a way of trying to convey the nature of the rhetorical questions which expect a negative answer. They are also a way of trying to show that the verses are connected with the preceding discussion addressed to the people (cf. 23:16, 20).

\(^8\) tn Heb "Oracle of the Lord."

\(^9\) tn Heb "Oracle of the Lord."

\(^10\) tn The words "Don't you know" are not in the text. They are a way of conveying the idea that the question which reads literally "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" expects a positive answer. They follow the pattern used at the beginning of the previous two questions and continue that thought. The words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^11\) tn Heb "Oracle of the Lord."

\(^12\) tn The words, "The Lord says" are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show that the Lord continues speaking.

\(^13\) sn To have had a dream was not an illegitimate means of receiving divine revelation. God had revealed himself in the past to his servants through dreams (e.g., Jacob [Gen 31:10-11] and Joseph [Gen 37:6, 7, 9]) and God promised to reveal himself through dreams (Num 12:6; Joel 2:28 [3:1 HT]). What was illegitimate was to use the dream to lead people away from the Lord (Deut 13:1-5 [13:2-6 HT]). That was what the prophets were doing through their dreams which were "lies" and the "delusions of their own minds." Through them they were making people forget who the Lord really was which was exactly what their ancestors had done through worshiping Baal.

\(^14\) sn See the parallel passage in Jer 14:13-15.

\(^15\) tn The relation of the words to one another in v. 26 and the beginning of v. 27 has created difficulties for translators and commentators. The proper solution is reflected in the NJPS. Verses 26-27 read somewhat literally, "How long is there in the hearts of the prophets who are prophesying the lie and [in the hearts of] the prophets of the delusions of their [own] heart the plotting to cause my people to forget my name..." Most commentators complain that the text is corrupt, that there is no subject for "is there." However, the long construct qualification "in the hearts of..." has led to the lack of observation that the proper subject is "the plotting to make my people forget." There are no exact parallels but Jer 14:22; Neh 5:5 follow the same structure. The "How long" precedes the other means of asking a question for the purpose of emphasis (cf. BDB 210 s.v. מְאֹד 1b and compare for example the usage in 2 Sam 7:7). There has also been a failure to see that "the prophets of the delusion..." is a parallel construct noun after "heart of." Stripping the syntax down to its barest minimum and translating literally, the sentence would read "How long will the plotting...continue in the hearts of the prophets who...and [in hearts of] the prophets of..." The sentence has been restructured in the translation to conform to contempla-
make your people forget who I am through the dreams they tell one another? That is just as bad as what their ancestors did when they forgot who I am by worshiping the god Baal. 23:28 Let the prophet who has had a dream go ahead and tell his dream. Let the person who has received my message report that message faithfully. What is like straw cannot compare to what is like grain! What is like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? I, the LORD, affirm it! 23:29 My message is like a fire that purges dross. It is like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces! I, the LORD, so affirm it! 23:30 So I, the LORD, affirm that I am opposed to those prophets who steal messages from one another that they claim are from me. 23:31 I, the LORD, affirm that I am opposed to those prophets who are using their own tongues to declare, ‘The LORD declares.

1 tn Heb “my name.” 2 sn In the OT, the “name” reflected the person’s character (cf. Gen 27:36; 1 Sam 25:25) or his reputation (Gen 11:4; 2 Sam 8:13). To speak in someone’s name was to act as his representative or carry his authority (1 Sam 25:9; 1 Kgs 21:8). To call someone’s name over something was to claim it for one’s own (2 Sam 12:28). Hence, here to forget the name is equivalent to forgetting who he was in his essential character (cf. Exod 3:13-15; 6:3; 34:5-7). By preaching lies they had forfeited part of his essential character and caused people to forget who he really was. 3 2tn Heb “fathers” (also in v. 39). 4 sn In Heb “through Baal.” This is an elliptical expression for the worship of Baal. See 11:17; 12:16; 19:5 for other references to their relation to Baal. There is a deliberate parallelism in the syntax here between “through their dreams” and “through Baal.” 5 4tn Heb “What to the straw with [in comparison with] the grain?” This idiom represents an emphatic repudiation or denial of relationship. See, for example, the usage in 2 Sam 16:10 and note BDB 553 s.v. masa’ 1.d(c). 6 5tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 7 6tn Heb “Is not my message like a fire?” The rhetorical question expects a positive answer that is made explicit in the translation. The words “that purges dross” are not in the text but are implicit to the metaphor. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. 8 7tn Heb “Is it not like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?” See preceding note. 9 8tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 10 9tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 11 10tn Heb “who are stealing my words from one another.” However, context shows that it is their own word which they claim is from the LORD (cf. next verse). 12 11tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 13 12tn The word “The LORD” is not actually in the text but is implicit in the idiom. It is generally supplied in all the English versions. 14 sn Jer 23:30-33 are filled with biting sarcasm. The verses all begin with “Behold I am against the prophets who...” and go on to describe their reprehensible behavior. They “steal” one another’s messages which the LORD sarcastically calls “my words” (The passage shows that they are not; compare Marc Anthony’s use of “noble” to describe the ignoble men who killed Caesar). Here the use of the idiom translated “to use their own tongue” is really the idiom that refers to taking something in preparation for action, i.e., “they take their tongue” and “declare.” The verb “declare” is only used here and is derived from the idiom “oracle of” which is almost universally used in the idiom “oracle of the LORD” which occurs 176 times in Jeremiah, i.e., it is their tongue that is “declaring not his mouth” (v. 16). Moreover in the report of what they “declare” the LORD has left out the qualifying “of the LORD” to suggest the delusive nature of their message, i.e. they mislead people into believing that their message is from the LORD. Elsewhere in the discussion of the issue of false prophecy the LORD will use the full formula (Ezek 13:6-7). How ironic that their “Oracle of...” is punctuated by the triple “Oracle of the LORD” (vv. 30, 31, 32; translated here “1, the LORD, affirm that...”). 15 13tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 16 14tn Heb “with their lies and their recklessness.” This is an example of hendiadys where two nouns (in this case a concrete and an abstract one) are joined by “and” but one is intended to be the adjectival modifier of the other. 17 15sn In the light of what has been said this is a rhetorical understatement; they are not only “not helping,” they are leading them to their doom (cf. vv. 19-22). This figure of speech is known as litotes. 18 16tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” 19 17tn The words “The LORD said to me, ‘Jeremiah’” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show the shift between the LORD addressing the people (second masculine plural) and the LORD addressing Jeremiah (second masculine singular). 20 18tn The meaning of vv. 33-40 is debated. The translation given here follows the general direction of NRSV and REB rather than that of NIV and the related direction taken by NCV and God’s Word. The meaning of vv. 33-40 are debated because of (1) the ambiguity involved in the word מָשָּׂא (masa’), which can mean either “burden” (as something carried or weighing heavily on a person; see, e.g., Exod 23:5; Num 4:27; 2 Sam 15:33; Ps 38:4) or “oracle” (of doom; see, e.g., Isa 13:1; Nah 1:1); (the translation is debated due to etymological concerns), (2) the ambiguity of the line in v. 36 which has been rendered “For what is ‘burdensome’ really pertains rather to what a person himself says” (Heb “the burden is to the man his word”), and (3) the text in v. 33 of “you are the burden.” Many commentaries see a wordplay on the two words “burden” and “oracle” which are homonyms. However, from the contrasts that are drawn in the passage, it is doubtful whether the nuance of “oracle” ever is in view. The word is always used in the prophets of an oracle of doom or judgment; it is not merely revelation of God which one of the common people would have been uttering (contra NIV). Jeremiah never uses the word in that sense nor does anyone else in the book (cf. Jer 17:1).
burden, and I will cast you away. I, the LORD, affirm it! I will punish any prophet, priest, or other person who says “The LORD’s message is burdensome.” I will punish both that person and his whole family.”

23:35 So I, Jeremiah, tell you, “Each of you people should say to his friend or his relative, ‘How did the LORD answer? Or what did the LORD say?’

23:36 You must no longer say that the LORD’s message is burdensome. For what is ‘burdensome’ really pertains to what a person himself says.

The latter is also ruled out by the fact that the antecedent of his on “his word” is clearly the word “man” in front of it. This would be the only case where the phrase “man of his word” occurs. There is also no textual reason for repointing the noun with the article as the noun with the interrogative to read “for how can his word become a burden to anyone?” There are, of course, other options but this is sufficient to show that the translation has been chosen after looking at other alternatives.

23:37 Each of you should merely ask the prophet, “What answer did the LORD give you? Or what did the LORD say?”

23:38 But just suppose you continue to say, “The message of the LORD is burdensome.” Here is what the LORD says will happen: ‘I sent word to you that you must not say, “The LORD’s message is burdensome.” But you used the words “The LORD’s message is burdensome” anyway. 23:39 So I will carry you far off and throw you away. I will send both you and the city I gave to you and to your ancestors out of my sight. I will bring on you lasting shame and lasting disgrace which will never be forgotten!’”

You are misrepresenting the words of our God, the living God, the LORD who rules over all. Each of you should merely ask the prophet, “What answer did the LORD give you? Or what did the LORD say?” But just suppose you continue to say, “The message of the LORD is burdensome.” Here is what the LORD says will happen: ‘I sent word to you that you must not say, “The LORD’s message is burdensome.” But you used the words “The LORD’s message is burdensome” anyway.

1 tc The translation follows the Latin and Greek versions. The Hebrew text reads “What burden [i.e., burdensome message]?” The syntax of “what message?” is not in itself objectionable; the interrogative can function as an adjective (cf. BDB 552 s.v. נָשָׂא 1[a]). What is objectionable to virtually all the commentators and lexicons is the unparalleled use of the accusative particle in front of the interrogative and the noun (see, e.g., BDB 672 s.v. נָשָׂא; GKC 365-66 §117.3). The emendation only involves the redivision and revocalization of the same consonants: נָשָׂאֹת בָּאָה (et-mah-masa) becomes נָשָׂאֹת בָּא (atem hammasa). This also makes a much more natural connection for the vav consecutive perfect that follows (cf. GKC 334 §112.x and compare Isa 6:7; Judg 13:3).

2 tn The meaning “cast you away” is questioned by some because the word is regularly used of “forsaking” or “abandoning” (see, e.g., Jer 7:29; 12:7; 15:6). However, it is clearly used of “casting down” or “throwing away” in Ezek 29:5; 32:4 and that meaning is virtually assured in v. 39 where the verb is combined with the phrase “from my presence” which is elsewhere used in rejection contexts with verbs like “send away,” “throw out,” or “remove” (see BDB 619 s.v. וְנָשָׂא 1b, 3). This is another example of the bracketing effect of a key word and should be rendered the same in the two passages. Moreover, it fits in nicely with the play on “burden” here.

3 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

4 tn Heb “burden of the LORD.”

5 tn Heb “And the prophet or the priest or the people [common person] who says, ‘The burden of the LORD,’ I will use him. I will punish him and his house.” This is an example of the Hebrew construction called nominative absolute or causa pendens (cf. GKC 458 §143.d).

6 tn The words “So, I, Jeremiah tell you” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity to show that it is he who is addressing the people, not the LORD. See “our God” in v. 38 and “Here is what the LORD says…” which indicate the speaker is other than he.

7 tn This line is sometimes rendered as a description of what the people are doing (cf. NIV). However, repetition with some slight modification referring to the prophet in v. 37 followed by the same kind of prohibition that follows here shows that what is being contrasted is two views toward the LORD’s message, i.e., one of openness to receive what the LORD says through the prophet and one that already characterizes the LORD’s message as a burden. All the more pressuring is the question that started the discussion in v. 33 should not be missed. The prophet alluded to is Jeremiah. He is being indirect in his reference to himself.

8 tn Heb “burden of the LORD.”

9 tn Heb “the burden.”

10 tn Heb “The burden is [or will be] to a man his word.” There is a good deal of ambiguity regarding how this line is to be rendered. For the major options and the issues involved see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 1:651-52 should be consulted. Most of them are excluded by the observation that כָּל probably does not mean “oracle” anywhere in this passage (see note on v. 33 regarding the use of this word). Hence it does not mean “every man’s word becomes his oracle” as in NIV or “for that ‘burden’ or oracle he speaks which he entrusts to the man of his word” (W. McKane, Jeremiah [ICC], 1:600-601). The latter is also ruled out by the fact that the antecedent of his on “his word” is clearly the word “man” in front of it. This

11 tn Heb “thou knowest the words of my God, the living God, the LORD who rules over all.”

12 tn The translation of v. 38 and the first part of v. 39 represents the restructuring of a long and complex Hebrew sentence: Heb “But if you say, ‘The burden of the LORD,’ therefore this is what the LORD says, ‘Because you said this word, “The burden of the LORD,” even though I sent unto saying, “you shall not say, “The burden of the LORD,” therefore...’ The first “therefore...” picks up the שֵׁד (BDB 487 s.v. שֵׁד 3.d) and the second answer the “because” (BDB 774 s.v. פְּרִי, 1).

13 tn See the note on v. 35.

14 sn As noted in v. 35 the prophet is Jeremiah. The message is directed against the prophet, priest, or common people who have characterized his message as a “burden from the LORD.”

15 tn The translation of v. 38 and the first part of v. 39 represents the restructuring of a long and complex Hebrew sentence: Heb “But if you say, ‘The burden of the LORD,’ therefore this is what the LORD says, ‘Because you said this word, “The burden of the LORD,” even though I sent unto saying, “you shall not say, “The burden of the LORD,” therefore...’ The first “therefore...” picks up the שֵׁד (BDB 487 s.v. שֵׁד 3.d) and the second answer the “because” (BDB 774 s.v. פְּרִי, 1).

16 tc The translation follows a few Hebrew mss and the major versions. The majority of Hebrew mss read “I will totally forget [or certainly forget] you.” In place of יִשָּׁבֶה (v’nishashi) a few Hebrew mss, LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, Syriac, and Vulgate read יִשָּׁבֶה (v’na’sheh). Instead of the infinitive absolute יִשָּׁבֶה (v’na’sheh) a number of Hebrew mss, Aquila, Symmachus, Syriac, and Vulgate read יִשָּׁבֶה (v’nasu). For the confusion of III לַעֲמַד and III נָשָׁבֶה presupposed by the miswriting of the Hebrew text see GKC 216 §75.q and compare the forms of יָשָׂבֶה (nava) in Jer 26:9 and 1 Sam 10:6. While the verb “forget” would not be totally inappropriate here it does not fit the concept of “throwing away from my presence” as well as “pick up” does. For the verb יִשָּׁכֵל (v’nasu) meaning “carry you off” compare the usage in 1 Kgs 15:22; 18:12 (and see BDB 671 s.v. יָשָׂב; 3.b).

17 tn Heb “throw you and the city that I gave you and your fathers out of my presence.” The English sentences have been broken down to conform to contemporary English style.
Good Figs and Bad Figs

24:1 The LORD showed me two baskets of figs sitting before his temple. This happened after King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon deported Jehoiakim's son, King Jeconiah of Judah. He deported him and the leaders of Judah, along with the craftsmen and metal workers, and took them to Babylon.¹

24:2 One basket had very good-looking figs in it. They looked like those that had ripened early.² The other basket had very bad-looking figs in it, so bad they could not be eaten. 24:3 The LORD said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” I answered, “I see figs. The good ones look very good. But the bad ones look very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten.”

24:4 The LORD said to me.³ 24:5 “I, the LORD, the God of Israel, say: ‘The exiles whom I sent away from here to the land of Babylon⁴ are like those good figs. I consider them to be good. 24:6 I will look after their welfare⁵ and will restore them to this land. There I will build them up and will not tear them down. I will plant them firmly in the land⁶ and will not uproot them.⁷ 24:7 I will give them the desire to acknowledge that I am the LORD. I will be their God and they will be my people. For they will wholeheartedly⁸ return to me.’

24:8 “I, the LORD, also solemnly assert: ‘King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, and the people who remain in Jerusalem⁹ or who have gone to live in Egypt are like those bad figs. I consider them to be just like those bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten.¹⁰ 24:9 I will bring such disaster on them that all the kingdoms of the earth will be horrified. I will make them an object of reproach, a proverbial example of disaster. I will make them an object of ridicule, an example to be used in curses.²² That is how they will be remembered wherever I banish them.¹³ 24:10 I will bring war, starvation, and disease²⁴ on them until they are completely destroyed from the land I gave them and their ancestors.’”³⁵

Seventy Years of Servitude for Failure to Give Heed

25:1 In the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was king of Judah, the LORD spoke to Jeremiah²⁶ concerning all the people of Judah. (That was the same as the first year that Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon.)²⁷ 25:2 So the prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the people who were living in Jerusalem.²⁸ 25:3 “For the last twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amon was ruling in Judah²⁹ until now, the LORD has been speaking to me. I told you over and

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¹ sn See 2 Kgs 24:10-17 (especially vv. 14-16). Nebuchadnezzar left behind the poorest people of the land under the puppet king Zedekiah. Jeconiah has already been referred to earlier in 13:18; 22:25-26. The deportation referred to here occurred in 597 b.c. and included the priest Ezekiel.


³ tn Heb “The word of the LORD came to me.”

⁴ tn Heb “the land of the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4.

⁵ tn Heb “I will set my eyes upon them for good.” For the nuance of “good” see Jer 21:10; Amos 9:4 (in these cases the opposite of harm; see BDB 375 s.v. יָרָא).

⁶ tn The words “There” and “firmly in the land” are not in the text but are implicit from the connection and the metaphor. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁷ sn For these terms see Jer 1:10.

⁸ tn Heb “I will give them a heart to know me that I am the LORD.” For the use of “heart” here referring to “inclinations, resolutions, and determinations of the will” see BDB 525 s.v. כֵּן and compare the usage in 2 Chr 12:14. For the use of “knowledge” to mean “acknowledge” see BDB 384 s.v. יד וָתַן; Jer 3:31 and compare the usage in Jer 39:4. For the construction “know ‘someone’ that he...” = “know that ‘someone’...” see GKC 365 §117.h and compare the usage in 2 Sam 3:25.

⁹ tn Heb “with all their heart.”

¹⁰ sn For location see Map 5:8; B1: Map 6:F3; Map 7:E2; Map 8:F2; Map 9:B3; JP 1:F4; JP 2:F4; JP 3:F4; JP 4:F4.

¹¹ tn Heb “Like the bad figs which cannot be eaten from badness [because they are so bad] surely [emphasis כָּז, כְּז] so I regard Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his officials and the remnant of Jerusalem which remains in this land and those who are living in Egypt.” The sentence has been restructured in the translation to conform more to contemporary English style. For the use of כָּז (natum) meaning “regard” or “treat like” see BDB 681 s.v. כָּז 3.c and compare the usage in Ezek


¹² tn Or “an object of reproach in peoples’ proverbs...an object of ridicule in people’s curses.” The alternate translation treats the two pairs which are introduced without vav (ו) but are joined by vav as examples of hendiadys. This is very possible here but the chain does not contain this pairing in 25:18; 29:18.

¹³ tn Heb “I will make them for a terror for disaster to all the kingdoms of the earth, for a reproach and for a proverb, for a taunt and a curse in all the places which I banish them there.” The complex Hebrew sentence has been broken down into equivalent shorter sentences to conform more with contemporary English style.

¹⁴ sn See Jer 14:12 and the study note there.

¹⁵ tn Heb “fathers.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “The word was to Jeremiah.” It is implicit from the context that it was the LORD’s word. The verbal expression is more in keeping with contemporary English style.

¹⁷ sn The year referred to would be 605 b.c. Jehoiakim had been placed on the throne of Judah as a puppet king by Pharaoh Necho after the defeat of Josiah at Megiddo in 609 b.c. (2 Kgs 23:34-35). According to Jer 46:2 Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho at Carchemish in that same year. After defeating Necho, Nebuchadnezzar had hurried back to Babylon where he was made king. After being made king he then returned to Judah and attacked Jerusalem (Dan 1:1). The date given there is the third year of Jehoiakim but scholars are generally agreed that the dating there is based on a different system than the one here. It did not count the part of the year before New Year’s day as an official part of the king’s official rule. Hence, the third year there is the fourth year here.) The identity of the foe from the north referred to in general terms there is more in keeping with contemporary English style.

¹⁸ map For location see Map 5:8; B1: Map 6:F3; Map 7:E2; Map 8:F2; Map 9:B3; JP 1:F4; JP 2:F4; JP 3:F4; JP 4:F4.

¹⁹ sn The year referred to would be 627 b.c. The same year is referred to in 1:2 in reference to his call to be a prophet.
over again\(^1\) what he said.\(^2\) But you would not listen. 25:4 Over and over again\(^3\) the Lord has sent\(^4\) his servants the prophets to you. But you have not listened or paid attention.\(^5\) 25:5 He said through them,\(^6\) ‘Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and stop doing the evil things you are doing.’\(^7\) If you do, I will allow you to continue to live here in the land that I gave to you and your ancestors as a lasting possession.\(^8\) 25:6 Do not pay allegiance to\(^9\) other gods and worship and serve them. Do not make me angry by the things that you do.\(^10\) Then I will not cause you any harm.’ 25:7 So, now the Lord says,\(^11\) ‘You have not listened to me. But you have made me angry by the things that you have done.\(^12\) Thus you have brought harm on yourselves.’

25:8 ‘Therefore, the Lord who rules over all\(^13\) says, ‘You have not listened to what I said.\(^14\) So I, the Lord, affirm that\(^15\) I will send for all the peoples of the north\(^16\) and my servant,\(^17\) King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and all the nations that surround it. I will utterly destroy\(^19\) this land, its inhabitants, and all the nations that surround it\(^20\) and make them everlasting ruins.\(^21\) I will make them objects of horror and hissing scorn.\(^22\) 25:10 I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, to the glad celebration of brides and grooms in these lands.\(^23\) I will put an end to the sound of people grinding meal. I will put an end to lamps shining\(^24\) with “pay attention” (see, e.g., Prov 4:20; 5:1).

1 tn For the idiom involved here see the notes at 7:13 and 11:7.
2 tn The words “what he said” are not in the text but are implicit. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
3 tn For the idiom involved here see the notes at 7:13 and 11:7.
4 tn The vav consecutive with the perfect in a past narrative is a little unusual. Here it is probably indicating repeated action in past time in keeping with the idiom that precedes and follows it. See GKC 332 §112.f for other possible examples.
5 tn Heb “inclined your ear to hear.” This is idiomatic for “paying attention.” It is often parallel with “listen” (see, e.g., Prov 4:20; 5:1).
6 tn Heb “saying.” The infinitive goes back to “he sent,” i.e., “he sent saying.”
7 tn Heb “Turn [masc. pl.] each person from his wicked way and from the evil of your [masc. pl.] doings.” See the same demand in 23:22.
8 tn Heb “gave to you and your fathers with reference to from ancient times even unto forever.” See the same idiom in 7:7.
9 tn Heb “follow after.” See the translator’s note on 2:5 for this idiom.
10 tn Heb “make me angry with the work of your hands.” The term “work of your own hands” is often interpreted as a reference to idolatry as is clearly the case in Isa 2:8; 37:19. However, the parallelism in 25:14 and the context in 32:30 show that it is more general and refers to what they have done. That is likely the meaning here as well.
11 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
12 tn This is a rather clear case where the Hebrew particle פִּדְנַן (P’dan) introduces a consequence and not a purpose, contrary to the dictum of BDB 775 s.v. פִּדְנַן note 1. They have not listened to him in order to make him angry but with the result that they have made him angry by going their own way. Jeremiah appears to use this particle for result rather than purpose on several other occasions (see, e.g., 7:18, 19; 27:10, 15; 32:29).
13 tn Heb “make me angry with the work of your hands.” The term “work of your own hands” is often interpreted as a reference to idolatry as is clearly the case in Isa 2:8; 37:19. However, the parallelism in 25:14 and the context in 32:30 show that it is more general and refers to what they have done. That is likely the meaning here as well.
14 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”
15 sn See the study note on 2:19 for an explanation of this title.
in their houses.\textsuperscript{5} 25:11 This whole area\textsuperscript{2} will become a desolate wasteland. These nations will be subject to the king of Babylon for seventy years.\textsuperscript{3}

25:12 \textit{"But when the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation\textsuperscript{4} for their sins. I will make the land of Babylon an everlasting ruin."} I, the LORD, affirm it!\textsuperscript{6} 25:13 I will bring on that land everything that I said I would. I will bring on it everything that is written in this book. I will bring on it everything that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{5} sn The sound of people grinding meal and the presence of lamps shining in their houses were signs of everyday life. The LORD is going to destroy Jerusalem (vv. 8-12) by destroying all signs of life. (The statement is, of course, hyperbolic or poetic exaggeration; even after the destruction of Jerusalem many people were left in the land.) For these same descriptions of everyday life applying to the end of life see the allegory in Ecol 12:3-6.

\textsuperscript{6} tn Heb “All this land.”

\textsuperscript{2} sn This should be understood that the text says that the nations will be subject to the king of Babylon for seventy years, not that they will lie desolate for seventy years. Though several proposals have been made for dating this period, many ignore this fact. This most likely refers to the period beginning with Nebuchadnezzar’s defeat of Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish in 605 b.c. and the beginning of his rule over Babylon. At this time the Chaldean dominion was the dominant force (in the area and continued to be so until the fall of Babylon in 538 b.c. More particularly Judah became a vassal state (cf. Jer 46:2; 2 Kgs 24:1) in 605 b.c. and was allowed to return to her homeland in 538 when Cyrus issued his edict allowing all the nations exiled by Babylon to return to their homelands. (See 2 Chr 36:21 and Ezra 1:2-4; the application there is made to Judah but the context of the passage is wider.)

\textsuperscript{8} tn Compare Isa 13:19-22 and Jer 50:39-40.

\textsuperscript{3} tn In the alternate translation = Heb “that is to be written”; רָאָה, ḫukkatav (to refer to what is proleptic see GKC 349-50 §116). d, e, and compare usage in Jonah 1:3; 2 Kgs 11:2. For the use of the perfect to refer to a future act (in the alternate translation “is going to prophesy,” רָאָה, niḇḥa) see GKC 312 §106 and compare usage in Judg 1:2. In support of this interpretation is the fact that the verb in the next verse (Heb “they will be subjected,” רָאָה, ‘anḏāh) is undoubtedly prophetic (it is followed by a vav consecutive perfect; cf. Isa 5:14). Reading the text this way has the advantage of situating it within the context of the passage itself which involves prophecies against the nations and against Babylon. Babylon is both the agent of wrath (the cup from which the nations drink, cf. 51:7) and the recipient of it (cf. v. 26). However, this interpretation admittedly does not explain the reference to “this book,” except as a proleptic reference to some future form of the book and there would be clearer ways of expressing this view if that were definitively intended.

\textsuperscript{4} sn “Drinking from the cup of wrath” is a common figure to represent being punished by God. Isaiah had used it earlier to refer to the punishment which Judah was to suffer and from which God would deliver her (Isa 51:17, 22) and Jeremiah’s contemporary Habakkuk uses it of Babylon “pouring out its wrath” on the nations and in turn being forced to drink from the bitter cup herself (Hab 2:15-16). In Jer 51:7 the LORD will identify Babylon as the cup which makes the nations stagger. In v. 16 drinking from the cup will be identified with the sword (i.e., wars) that the LORD will send against the nations. Babylon is also to be identified as the sword (cf. Jer 51:20-23). What is being alluded to here in highly figurative language is the judgment that the LORD will wreak on the nations listed here through the Babylonians. The prophecy given here in symbolical form is thus an expansion of the one in v. 9-11.

\textsuperscript{7} tn In the alternate translation = Heb “that is to be written”; רָאָה, ḫukkatav (to refer to what is proleptic see GKC 356-57 §116).

\textsuperscript{8} sn “Drinking from the cup of wrath” is a common figure to represent being punished by God. Isaiah had used it earlier to refer to the punishment which Judah was to suffer and from which God would deliver her (Isa 51:17, 22) and Jeremiah’s contemporary Habakkuk uses it of Babylon “pouring out its wrath” on the nations and in turn being forced to drink from the bitter cup herself (Hab 2:15-16). In Jer 51:7 the LORD will identify Babylon as the cup which makes the nations stagger. In v. 16 drinking from the cup will be identified with the sword (i.e., wars) that the LORD will send against the nations. Babylon is also to be identified as the sword (cf. Jer 51:20-23). What is being alluded to here in highly figurative language is the judgment that the LORD will wreak on the nations listed here through the Babylonians. The prophecy given here in symbolical form is thus an expansion of the one in v. 9-11.

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\textsuperscript{3} tn And that these are proleptic of the latter prophecies which will be given later and will be incorporated in a future book. That is the tenor of the alternate translation. The verb forms involved are capable of either a past/perfect translation or a proleptic/future translation. For the use of the participle (in the alternate translation = Heb “that is to be written”; רָאָה, ḫukkatav) to refer to what is proleptic see GKC 349-50 §116.
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will stagger to and fro and act insane. For I will send wars sweeping through them.\(^2\) [2]

25:17 So I took the cup from the Lord's hand. I made all the nations to whom he sent me drink the wine of his wrath.\(^3\) [3] 25:18 I made Jerusalem\(^4\) and the cities of Judah, its kings and its officials drink it.\(^5\) I did it so Judah would become a ruin. I did it so Judah, its kings, and its officials would become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, an example used in curses.\(^6\) Such is already becoming the case.\(^7\) 25:19 I made all of these other people drink it: Pharaoh, king of Egypt,\(^8\) his attendants, his officials, his people, 25:20 the foreigners living in Egypt;\(^9\) all the kings of the land of Uz;\(^10\) all the kings of the land of the Philistines;\(^11\) the people of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, the people who had been left alive from Ashdod;\(^12\) 25:21 all the people of Edom,\(^13\) Moab,\(^14\) Ammon,\(^15\) all the kings of Tyre,\(^16\) all the kings of Sidon,\(^17\) all the kings of the coastlands along the sea;\(^18\) 25:23 the people of Dedan, Tema, Buz,\(^20\) all the desert people who cut their hair short at the temples;\(^21\) 25:24 all the kings of Arabia who live in the desert; 25:25 all the kings of Zimri,\(^22\) all the kings of Elam,\(^23\) all the kings of Media,\(^24\) 25:26 all the kings of the north, whether near or far from one another; and all the other kingdoms which are on the face of the earth. After all of them have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath,\(^26\) the king of Babylon must drink it.

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\(^{1}tn\) There is some debate about the meaning of the verb here. Both BDB 172 s.v. הָאָשֶׁר Hithpo and KBL 191 s.v. הָאָשֶׁר Hitpol interpret this of the back and forth movement of staggering. HALOT 192 s.v. הָאָשֶׁר Hithpo interprets it as vomiting. The word is used of the up and down movement of the mountains (2 Sam 22:8) and the up and down movement of the rolling waves of the Nile (Jer 46:7, 8). The fact that a different verb is used in v. 27 for vomiting would appear to argue against it referring to vomiting (contra W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 1:674; it is "they" that do this not their stomachs).

\(^{2}tn\) Heb "because of the sword that I will send among them, as elsewhere in Jeremiah, the sword is figurative for warfare which brings death. See, e.g., 15:2. The causal particle here is found in verbal locutions where it is the cause of emotional states or action. Hence there are really two "agents" which produce the effects of "staggering" and "acting insane," the cup filled with God's wrath and the sword. The sword is the "more literal" and the actual agent by which the first agent's action is carried out.

\(^{3}tn\) The words "the wine of his wrath" are not in the text but are implicit in the metaphor (see v. 15:16). They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^{4}tn\) For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F3; JP4-F4.

\(^{5}tn\) The words "I made" and "drink it" are not in the text. The phrase from v. 18 to v. 26 contains a list of the nations that have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath, which the first agent's action is carried out.

\(^{6}tn\) The words "have drunk the wine of his wrath" are not in the text but are implicit in the metaphor (see v. 15:16). They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^{7}tn\) The connection with Tyre and Sidon suggests that these were Phoenician cities to the north and west of Judah on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in what is now Lebanon.

\(^{8}tn\) The words "I made" and "drink it" are not in the text. The phrase from v. 18 to v. 26 contains a list of the nations that have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath, which the first agent's action is carried out.

\(^{9}tn\) The connection is broken up and the antecedents are made specific for the sake of clarity. Jeremiah "made drink it." The words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^{10}sn\) See further Jer 47:1-7 for the judgment against the Philistines. The Philistine cities were west of Judah.

\(^{11}sn\) The Greek historian Herodotus reports that Ashdod had been destroyed under the Pharaoh who preceded Necho, Psammetichus.

\(^{12}sn\) See Jer 49:7-22 for the judgment against Edom. Edom, Moab, and Ammon were east of Judah.

\(^{13}sn\) See further Jer 48:1-47 for the judgment against Moab.

\(^{14}sn\) See further Jer 49:1-6 for the judgment against Ammon.

\(^{15}map\) For location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

\(^{16}sn\) Tyre and Sidon are mentioned within the judgment on the Philistines in Jer 47:4. They were Phoenician cities to the north and west of Judah on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in what is now Lebanon.

\(^{17}sn\) The connection with Tyre and Sidon suggests that these were Phoenician colonies. See also Isa 23:2.

\(^{18}sn\) Dedan and Tema are mentioned together in Isa 21:13-14 and located in the desert. They were located in the northern part of the Arabian peninsula south and east of Edion Gebir. "Buz" is not mentioned anywhere else and its location is unknown. Judgment against Dedan and Tema is mentioned in conjunction with the judgment on Edom in Jer 49:7-8.

\(^{19}tn\) For the discussion regarding the meaning of the terms here see the notes on 9:26.

\(^{20}sn\) See Jer 9:26 where these are mentioned in connection with Moab, Edom, and Ammon.

\(^{21}tc\) Or "and all the kings of people of mixed origion who." The Greek version gives evidence of having read the term only once; it refers to the "people of mixed origin" without reference to the kings of Arabia. While the term translated "people of mixed origin" seems appropriate in the context of a group of foreigners within a larger entity (e.g., Israel in Exod 12:38; Neh 13:3; Egypt in Jer 50:37), it seems odd to speak of them as a separate entity under their own kings. The presence of the phrase in the Hebrew text and the other versions dependent upon it can be explained as a case of ditrypgraphy.

\(^{22}sn\) See further Jer 49:28-33 for judgment against some of these Arabian peoples.

\(^{23}sn\) The kingdom of Zimri is mentioned nowhere else, so its location is unknown.

\(^{24}sn\) See further Jer 49:34-39 for judgment against Elam.

\(^{25}sn\) Elam and Media were east of Babylon; Elam in the south and Media in the north. They were in what is now western Iran.

\(^{26}tn\) The words "have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath" are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. The right end of the list to serve as a transition to the next sentence which does not directly mention the cup or the Lord's wrath. The text from v. 18 to v. 26 contains a list of the nations that have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath, which the first agent's action is carried out.

\(^{27}tn\) Heb "the king of Sheshach." "Sheshach" is a code name for Babylon formed on the principle of substituting the last letter of the alphabet for the first, the next to the last for the second, and so on. On this principle Hebrew צֵ涣 (shin) is
Then the Lord said to me, 14 "Tell them that the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 15 ‘Drink this cup until you get drunk and vomit. Drink until you fall down and can’t get up. For I will send wars sweeping through you. 16 If they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink it, tell them that the Lord who rules over all says, 17 ‘You most certainly must drink it!’ 18 For take note, I am already beginning to bring disaster on the city that I call my own. So how can you possibly avoid being punished? You will not go unpunished! For I am proclaiming war against all who live on the earth. I, the Lord who rules over all, 19 affirm it! 20 Then, Jeremiah, 21 make the following prophecy against them: 22 ‘Like a lion about to attack, the Lord substituted for Hebrew ב (bet) and Hebrew כ (kaf) is substitut- ed for Hebrew ו (lamed). On the same principle “Leb Kamai” in Jer 51:1 is a code name for Chasdime or Chaileans which is Jeremiah’s term for the Babylonians. No explanation is given for why the code names are used. The name “Sheshach” for Babylon also occurs in Jer 51:41 where the term Babylon is found in parallelism with it. 1tn The words “Then the Lord said to me” are not in the text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity, to connect this part of the narrative with vv. 15, 17 after the long intervening list of nations who were to drink the cup of God’s wrath in judgment. 2tn In Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” sn See the study notes on 2:19 and 7:3 for explanation of this extended title. 3tn In Heb “Tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord...’” The translation is intended to eliminate one level of imbedded quotation marks to help avoid confusion. 4tn In the words “this cup” are not in the text but are implicit to the metaphor and the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity. 5tn In Heb “Drink, and get drunk, and vomit and fall down and don’t get up.” The imperatives following drink are not parallel actions but consequent actions. For the use of the imperative plus the conjunctive “and” to indicate consequent action, even intention see GKC 324-25 §110.f and compare usage in 1 Kgs 22:12; Prov 3:3b-4a. 6tn In Heb “because of the sword that I will send among you.” See the notes on 2:16 for explanation. 7tn In Heb “Tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord...’” The translation is intended to eliminate one level of imbedded quote marks to help avoid confusion. 8tn The translation attempts to reflect the emphatic construction of the infinitive absolute preceding the finite verb which is here an obligatory imperfect. (See Joüon 2:371- 72 §113.m and 2:423 §123.h, and compare usage in Gen 15:13.) 9tn In Heb “which is called by my name.” See translator’s note on 7:10 for support. 10tn This is an example of a question without the formal introductory particle following a conjunctive vav introducing an opposition. (See Joüon 2:609 §161.a.) It is also an example of the use of the infinitive before the finite verb in a rhetorical question involving doubt or denial. (See Joüon 2:422-23 §123.f, and compare usage in Gen 37:8.) 11tn In Heb “Yahweh of armies.” sn See the study notes on 2:19 and 7:3 for explanation of this extended title. 12tn In Heb “Oracle of Yahweh of armies.” 13tn The word “Jeremiah” is not in the text. It is supplied in the translation to make clear who is being addressed. 14tn In Heb “Prophecy against them all these words.” 15tn The words “like a lion about to attack” are not in the text but are implicit in the metaphor. The explicit comparison will roar from the heights of heaven; from his holy dwelling on high he will roar loudly. He will roar mightily against his land. 16 He will shout in triumph like those stomping juice from the grapes against all those who live on the earth. 17 The Lord so affirms it! 18 The Lord who rules over all 19 says, ‘Disaster will soon come on one nation after another. 20 A mighty storm of military destruction is rising up of the Lord to a lion is made at the end of the passage in v. 38. The words are supplied in the translation here for clarity. sn For the metaphor of the Lord going forth against his enemies like an attacking lion see Jer 49:19; 50:44; Isa 31:4 in all of which the metaphor comes against the nations in defense of his people. In Hos 5:14 the metaphor is turned against his own people. The figure of a lion ravaging people has already been used in Jer 4:7 of the enemy from the north (Babylon). 21 The word used here (Heb “his habitation”) refers to the land of Canaan which the Lord chose to make his earthly dwelling (Exod 15:13) and which was the dwelling place of his chosen people (Jer 10:25; Isa 32:18). Judgment would begin at the “house of God” (v. 29; 1 Pet 4:17) but would extend to the rest of the earth (v. 29). 22 The metaphor shifts from God as a lion to God as a mighty warrior (Jer 20:11; Isa 42:13; Zeph 3:17) shouting in triumph over his foes. Within the metaphor is a simile where the warrior is compared to a person stomping on grapes to remove the juice from them in the making of wine. The figure will be invoked later in a battle scene where the sounds of joy in the grape harvest are replaced by the sounds of joy of the enemy soldiers (Jer 48:33). The picture is drawn in more gory detail in Isa 63:1-6. 23 For the use of this word see Amos 2:2; Hos 10:14; Ps 74:23. See also the usage in Isa 66:6 which is very similar to the metaphorical usage here. 24 In Heb “because of a lawsuit against the nations.” For usage of the term see Hos 4:1; Mic 6:2, and compare the usage of the related verb in Jer 4:9; 12:1. 25 In Heb “give the wicked over to the sword.” sn There is undoubtedly a deliberate allusion here to the reference to the “wars” (Heb “sword”) that the Lord had said he would send raging through the nations (vv. 16, 27) and the “war” (Heb “sword”) that he is proclaiming against them (v. 29). 26tn In Heb “Oracle of the Lord.” 27tn In Heb “Yahweh of armies.” sn See the study notes on 2:19 and 7:3 for explanation of this extended title. 28tn In Heb “will go forth from nation to nation.” 29tn In the words “of military destruction” have been supplied in the translation to make the metaphor clear. The metaphor has shifted from that of God as a lion, to God as a warrior, to God as a judge, to God as the author of the storm winds of destruction. sn For the use of this word in a literal sense see Jonah 1:4. For its use to refer to the wrath of the Lord which will rage over the wicked see Jer 23:19, 30:23. Here it refers to the mighty Babylonian army which will come bringing destruction over all the known world. The same prophecy has just been given under the figure of the nations drinking the wine of God’s wrath (vv. 15-29).
from the distant parts of the earth.’

25:33 Those who have been killed by the Lord at that time will be scattered from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned over, gathered up, or buried. Their dead bodies will lie scattered over the ground like manure.

25:34 Wail and cry out in anguish, you rulers! Roll in the dust, you who shepherd flocks of people! The time for you to be slaughtered has come. You will lie scattered and fallen like broken pieces of fine pottery. The leaders will not be able to run away and hide.

The shepherds of the flocks will not be able to escape.

25:36 Listen to the cries of anguish of the leaders.

Listen to the wails of the shepherds of the flocks. They are wailing because the Lord is about to destroy their lands. Their peaceful dwelling places will be laid waste by the fierce anger of the Lord. The Lord is like a lion who has left his lair.

So their lands will certainly be laid waste by the warfare of the oppressive nation and by the fierce anger of the Lord."
26:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah at the beginning of the reign of Josiah's son, King Jehoiakim of Judah.

26:2 The LORD said, “Go stand in the courtyard of the LORD's temple. Speak out to all the people who are coming from the towns of Judah to worship in the LORD's temple. Tell them everything I command you to tell them. Do not leave out a single word! 26:3 Maybe they will pay attention and each of them will stop living the evil way they do. If they do that, then I will forgo destroying them as I had intended to do because of the wicked things they have been doing. 26:4 Tell them that the LORD says, 8 You must obey me! You must live according to the way I have instructed you in my laws. 26:5 You must pay attention to the exhortations of my servants the priests. I have sent them to you over and over again. 26:6 But you have not paid any attention to them. 26:6 If you do not obey me, then I will do to this temple what I did to Shiloh. And I will make this city an example to be used in curses by people from all the nations on the earth.”

26:7 The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah say these things in the LORD's temple. 26:8 Jeremiah had just barely finished saying all the LORD had commanded him to say to all the people. All at once some of the priests, the prophets, and the people grabbed him and shouted, “You deserve to die!”

26:9 How dare you claim the LORD's authority to prophesy such things! How dare you claim his authority to prophesy that this temple will become like Shiloh and that this city will become an uninhabited ruin!” Then all the people crowded around Jeremiah.

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2 sn Beginning with Jer 26 up to Jer 45 the book narrates in third person style incidents in the life of Jeremiah and prophecies (or sermons) he gave in obedience to the LORD's commands. Baruch is the probable narrator, passing on information gleaned from Jeremiah's own mouth or else from his scribe or secretary. Chapters 26-29 contain narrative reactions concerning Jeremiah's prophecies and his conflict with the prophets who were prophesying that things would be all right, see, e.g., 14:14-15; 23:21.

4 sn The words “to Jeremiah” are not in the Hebrew text. They are added to bring out the Old Latin (not the Vulgate) and the Syriac versions. They are implicit, however, to the narrative style which speaks of Jeremiah in the third person (cf. vv. 7, 12). They have been supplied in the translation for clarity.

5 sn In it is often thought that the term here is equivalent to a technical term in Akkadian (rashshumum) which refers to the part of the year remaining from the death or deposing of the previous king until the beginning of the calendar year when the new king officially ascended the throne. In this case it would refer to the part of the year between September, 609 B.C. when Jehoiakim was placed on the throne as a puppet king by Pharaoh Necho (2 Kgs 23:34-35) and April, 608 B.C. when he would have been officially acclaimed as king. However, it will be suggested below in conjunction with the textual problem in 7:1-15 that the term does not necessarily refer to this period.

6 sn It is generally agreed that the incident recorded in this chapter relates to the temple message that Jeremiah gave in 7:1-15. The message there is summarized here in vv. 3-6. The primary interest here is in the response to that message.

8 sn They are questioning his right to claim the LORD's authority for what they see as a false prophecy. They believed that the presence of the LORD in the temple guaranteed their safety (7:4, 10, 14) and that the LORD could not possibly be threatening its destruction. Hence they were ready to put him to death as a false prophet according to the law of Moses (Deut 18:20).
26:10 However, some of the officials of Judah heard about what was happening and they rushed up to the Lord's temple from the royal palace. They set up court at the entrance of the New Gate of the Lord's temple. 4 Then the priests and the prophets made their charges before the officials and all the people. They said, “This man should be condemned to die because he prophesied against this city. You have heard him do so with your own ears.” 2

26:12 Then Jeremiah made his defense before all the officials and all the people. 8 The Lord sent me to prophesy everything you have heard me say against this temple and against this city. 26:13 But correct the way you have been living and do what is right. Obey the Lord your God. If you do, the Lord will forgo destroying you as he threatened he would. 10 Then some of the elders and all the people remained to speak to the priests and the prophets. 26:14 As to my case, I am in your power. Do to me what you deem fair and proper.

26:15 But you should take careful note of this: If you put me to death, you will bring on yourselves and this city and those who live in it the guilt of murdering an innocent man. For the Lord has sent me to speak all this where you can hear it. That is the truth!”

26:16 Then the officials and all the people rendered their verdict to the priests and the prophets. They said, “This man should not be condemned to die. For he has spoken to us under the authority of the Lord our God. Then some of the elders of Judah stepped forward and spoke to all the people gathered there. They said, “Micah from Moresheth prophesied during the time Hezekiah was king of Judah. He told all the people of Judah, ‘The Lord who rules over all says, “Zion will become a plowed field. Jerusalem will become a pile of rubble. The temple mount will become a mere wooded ridge.””

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1 sn These officials of Judah were from the royal court. They may have included some of the officials mentioned in Jer 36:12-25. They would have been concerned about any possible “illegal” proceedings going on in the temple.

2 tn Heb “these things.”

3 tn Heb “they sat” or “they took their seats.” However, the context is one of judicial trial.

4 tn The translation follows many Hebrew mss and ancient versions in reading the word “house” (הַשָּׁם) here. The majority of Hebrew mss do not have this word. It is, however, implicit in the construction “the New Gate of the Lord.”

5 sn The location of the New Gate is uncertain. It is mentioned again in Jer 36:10 where it is connected with the upper (i.e., inner) court of the temple. Some equate it with the Upper Gate that Jotham rebuilt during his reign (2 Kgs 15:15; Jotham reigned from 750-735 B.C.). That gate, however, has already been referred to as the Upper Gate of Benjamin in Jer 20:2 (for more detail see the study note there) and would not likely have been called something different here.

6 tn Heb “the priests and prophets said to the leaders and the people.” “The long sentence has been broken up to conform better with contemporary English style and the situation- nal context is reflected in “laid their charges.”

7 tn Heb “a sentence of death to this man.”

8 tn Heb “it.”

9 tn Heb “Jeremiah said to all the leaders and all the people....” See the note on the word “said” in the preceding verse.

9 tn Heb “Make good your ways and your actions.” For the same expression see 7:3, 5; 18:11.

10 tn For the idiom and translation of terms involved here see 18:8 and the translator’s note there.

11 sn The Lord is being consistent in the application of the principle laid down in Jer 18:7-8 that reformation of character will result in the withdrawal of the punishment of “uprooting, tearing down, destroying.” His prophecies of doom are conditional threats, open to change with change in behavior.

11 tn Heb “And I, behold I am in your hand.” Hand is quite commonly used for “power” or “control” in biblical contexts.

12 tn Heb “For in truth the Lord has sent me to you to speak in your ears all these words/things.”

13 tn Heb “Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets...”

14 sn Contrast v. 11.

15 tn Heb “For in the name of the Lord our God he has spoken to us.” The emphasis is on “in the name of...”

16 sn The priests and false prophets claimed that they were speaking in the Lord’s name (i.e., as his representatives and with his authority [see 1 Sam 25:9; 1 Kgs 21:8 and cf. the study note on Jer 23:27]) and felt that Jeremiah’s claims to be doing so were false (see v. 9). Jeremiah (and the Lord) charged that the opposite was the case (cf. 14:14-15; 23:21). The officials and the people, at least at this time, accepted his claims that the Lord had sent him (vv. 12, 15).

17 tn Heb “elders of the land.”

18 sn The elders were important land-owning citizens, separate from the “heads” or leaders of the tribes, the officers and the judges. They were very influential in both the judicial, political, and religious proceedings of the cities and the state. (See, e.g., Josh 24:1; 2 Sam 19:11; 2 Kgs 23:1 for elders of Israel/Judah, and Deut 21:1-9; Ruth 4:1-2 for elders of the clans.)

19 sn Micah from Moresheth was a contemporary of Isaiah (compare Mic 1:1 with Isa 1:1) from the country town of Moresheth in the hill country southwest of Jerusalem. The prophecy referred to is found in Mic 3:12. This is the only time in the OT where an OT prophet is quoted verbatim and identified.

20 sn Hezekiah was co-regent with his father Ahaz from 729-715 B.C. and co-claimant from 715-714 B.C. His father was a wicked king who was responsible for the incursions of the Assyrians (2 Kgs 16; 2 Chr 28). Hezekiah was a godly king, noted for his religious reforms and for his faith in the Lord in the face of the Assyrian threat (2 Kgs 18-19; 2 Chr 32:1-23). The deliverance of Jerusalem in response to his prayers of faith (2 Kgs 19:14-19, 29-36) was undoubtedly well-known to the people of Jerusalem and Judah and may have been one of the prime reasons for their misplaced trust in the inviolability of Zion/Jerusalem (see Ps 46, 76) though the people of Micah’s day already believed it too (Mic 3:11).

19 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”

20 sn For an explanation of this title for God see the study note on 2:19.

21 sn Zion was first of all the citadel that David captured (2 Sam 5:6-10), then the City of David and the enclosed temple area, then the whole city of Jerusalem. It is often in poetic parallelism with Jerusalem as it is here (see, e.g., Ps 76:2; Amos 1:2).

22 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4; JP5-F4.

23 sn There is irony involved in this statement. The text reads literally “high places of a forest/thicket.” The “high places” were the illicit places of worship that Jerusalem was supposed to replace. Because of their sin, Jerusalem would be like one of the pagan places of worship with no place left sac-
26:19 King Hezekiah and all the people of Judah did not put him to death, did they? Did not Hezekiah show reverence for the Lord and seek the Lord’s favor? Did not the Lord forgo destroying them as he threatened he would? But we are on the verge of bringing great disaster on ourselves.14

26:20 Now there was another man5 who prophesied as the Lord’s representative6 against this city and this land just as Jeremiah did. His name was Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kirjath Jearim.7 26:21 When the king and all his bodyguards,8 and officials heard what he was prophesying,9 the king sought to have him executed. But Uriah found out about it and fled to Egypt out of fear.10 26:22 However, King Jehoiakim sent some men to Egypt, including Elzaphan son of Achbor,11 26:23 and they brought Uriah back from there.12 They took him to King Jehoiakim, who had him executed and had his body thrown into the burial place of the common people.13

26:24 However, Ahikam son of Shaphan14 used his influence to keep Jeremiah from being handed over and executed by the people.15

Jeremiah Counsels Submission to Babylon

27:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah16 early in the reign of Josiah’s son, King Zedekiah of Judah.37 27:2 The Lord told...
He says Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel, “Thus you shall say this title. Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

the yoke has been used earlier in Jer 2:20, 5:5 to refer to Israel’s enemies. (See Jer 25:12-14, 16.) The casting off of the yoke is a figure that emphasizes that they will serve for a long time but not for an unlimited duration. The kingdom of Babylon lasted a relatively short time by ancient standards. It lasted from 605 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho of Carchemish until the fall of Babylon in 538 B.C. There were only four rulers. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son, Evil Merodach (cf. 52:31), and two other rulers who were not descended from him.

nations must serve him and his son and grandson until the time comes for his own nation to fall. Then many nations and great kings will in turn subjugate Babylon. 27:8 But suppose a nation or a kingdom will not be subject to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Suppose it will not submit to the yoke of servitude to him. I, the Lord, affirm that I will punish that nation. I will use the king of Babylon to punish it with war, starvation, and disease until I have destroyed it. 27:9 So do not listen to your proph-

1 sn See Jer 25:12-14, 16.

2 tn Heb “him.” This is a good example of the figure of substitution where the one person is put for his descendants or the nation or subject he rules. (See Gen 28:13-14 for another good example and Acts 22:7 in the NT.)

3 sn See Jer 25:12-14, 16.

4 sn The nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon were east of Judah. They were sometimes allies and sometimes enemies. The nations of Tyre and Sidon were on the sea coast north and west of Judah. They are best known for their maritime trade during the reign of Solomon. They were more commonly allies of Israel and Judah than enemies.

5 fn Map For the location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

6 sn The yoke is a common biblical symbol of political servitude (see, e.g., Deut 28:48; 1 Kgs 12:4, 9, 10). From the context of 1 Kgs 12 it is clear that it applied to taxation and the provision of conscript labor. In international political contexts it involved the payment of heavy tribute which was often conscripted from the citizens (see, e.g., 2 Kgs 15:19-20; 23:34-35) and the furnishing of military contingents for the service of the more powerful nations (see, e.g., 2 Kgs 24:22). Jeremiah’s message here combines both a symbolic action (the wearing of a yoke) and words of explanation as in Jer 19:1-13. (See Isa 20:1-6 for an example outside of Jeremiah.) The casting off of the yoke has been used earlier in Jer 2:20, 5:5 to refer to Israel’s failure to remain spiritually “subject” or faithful to God.

7 sn The nations of Tyre and Sidon were on the sea coast north and west of Judah. They are best known for their maritime trade during the reign of Solomon. They were more commonly allies of Israel and Judah than enemies.

8 fn Map For the location see Map1-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

9 tn Heb “by my great power and my outstretched arm.” Again “arm” is symbolical for “strength.” Compare the similar expression in 21:5.

10 sn See Dan 4:17 for a similar statement.

11 tn Heb “have given...into the hand of.”

12 sn See the study note on 25:9 for the significance of the application of this term to Nebuchadnezzar.

13 tn Heb “I have given...to him to serve him.” The verb “give” in this syntactical construction is functioning like the Hitpael stem, i.e., as a causative. See Dan 1:9 for parallel usage. For the usage of “serve” meaning “be subject to” compare 2 Sam 22:44 and BDB 713 s.v. tamam 3.

14 sn This statement is rhetorical, emphasizing the totality of Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion. Neither here nor in Dan 2:38 is it to be understood literally.

15 sn For the location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

16 tn Heb “send by means of them” [i.e., the straps and crossbars made into a yoke] to...through.” The text is broken up in conformity with contemporary English style. Many English versions ignore the suffix on the end of “send” and find some support for this on the basis of its absence in the Lucan Greek text. However, it is probably functioning metonymically here for the message which is the yoke symbolized before them and is now explained clearly to them.

17 fn Map For the location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

18 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.”

19 sn See study note on 2:19 and 7:3 for the significance of this title.

20 tn Heb “with/by the sword.”

21 tc The verb translated “destroy” (עָבַד, tamam) is usually intransitive in the stem of the verb used here. It is found in a transitive sense elsewhere only in Ps 64:7. BDB 1070 s.v. tamam 7 emends both texts. In this case they recommend sn (yiqtol): “and I give it to whomever I see fit.” 10 27:6 I have at this time placed all these nations of yours under the power of my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I have even made all the wild animals subject to him. Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

22 sn The yoke is a common biblical symbol of political servitude (see, e.g., Deut 28:48; 1 Kgs 12:4, 9, 10). From the context of 1 Kgs 12 it is clear that it applied to taxation and the provision of conscript labor. In international political contexts it involved the payment of heavy tribute which was often conscripted from the citizens (see, e.g., 2 Kgs 15:19-20; 23:34-35) and the furnishing of military contingents for the service of the more powerful nations (see, e.g., 2 Kgs 24:22). Jeremiah’s message here combines both a symbolic action (the wearing of a yoke) and words of explanation as in Jer 19:1-13. (See Isa 20:1-6 for an example outside of Jeremiah.) The casting off of the yoke has been used earlier in Jer 2:20, 5:5 to refer to Israel’s failure to remain spiritually “subject” or faithful to God.

23 fn Map For the location see Map1-A2; Map2-G2; Map4-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

24 sn The nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon were east of Judah. They were sometimes allies and sometimes enemies. The nations of Tyre and Sidon were on the sea coast north and west of Judah. They are best known for their maritime trade during the reign of Solomon. They were more commonly allies of Israel and Judah than enemies.

25 fn Map For the location see Map1-A1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

26 sn Give them a charge to give your masters saying, ‘Thus says Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel, “Thus you shall say unto your masters...”’ The sentence is broken up in conformity with contemporary English style.
ets or to those who claim to predict the future by divination,² by dreams, by consulting the dead,³ or by practicing magic. They keep telling you, ‘You do not need to be ⁴ subject to the king of Babylon.’

27:10 Do not listen to them,⁴ because their prophecies are lies.⁵ Listening to them will only cause you⁶ to be taken far away from your native land. I will drive you out of your country and you will die in exile.⁷ 27:11 Things will go better for the nation that submits to the yoke of servitude to⁸ the king of Babylon and is subject to him. I will leave that nation⁹ in its native land. Its people can continue to farm it and live in it. ¹, the Lord, affirm it!"⁰¹⁰

27:12 I told King Zedekiah of Judah the same thing. I said,¹¹ “Submit¹² to the yoke of servitude to¹³ the king of Babylon. Be subject to him and his people. Then you will continue to live. 27:13 There is no reason why you and your people should die in war¹⁴ or from starvation or disease.¹⁵ That’s what the Lord says will happen to any nation¹⁶ that will not be subject to the king of Babylon. 27:14 Do not listen to the prophets who are telling you that you do not need to serve the king of Babylon. For they are prophesying lies to you. 27:15 For I, the Lord, affirm that I did not send them. They are prophesying lies to you. If you¹⁷ listen to them, I will drive you and the prophets who are prophesying lies out of the land and you will all die in exile."¹⁸

27:16 I also told the priests and all the people, ‘The Lord says, ‘Do not listen to what your prophets are saying. They are prophesying to you that the valuable articles taken from the Lord’s temple will be brought back from Babylon very soon.²² But they are prophesying a lie to you. 27:17 Do not listen to them. Be subject to the king of Babylon. Then you²³ will continue to live. Why should this city be made a pile of rubble!’²⁴ 27:18 I also told them,²⁵ “If they are really prophets and the Lord is speaking to them,²⁶ let them pray earnestly to the Lord who rules over all.²⁷ Let them plead with him not to stroyed by his hand” (reading בְּמִעָם [bimmam]). The MT here is accepted as the more difficult reading and support is seen in the transitive use of the verb in Ps 64:7.

tn Heb “I will punish that nation until I have destroyed them [i.e., its people] by his hand.” Hand here refers to agency. Hence, “I will use him.”

¹ sn Various means of divination are alluded to in the OT. For example, Ezek 21:26-27 alludes to throwing down arrows to see which way they fall and consulting the shape of the liver of sacrificed animals. Gen 44:4-5 alludes to reading the future through pouring liquid in a cup. The means alluded to in this verse were all classified as pagan and prohibited as illegitimate in Deut 18:10-14. The Lord had promised that he would speak to them through prophets like Moses (Deut 18:15, 18). But even prophets could lie. Hence, the Lord told them that the test of a true prophet was whether what he said came true or not (Deut 18:20-22). An example of false prophesying and the vindication of the true as opposed to the false will be given in the chapter that follows this.

² sn An example of this is seen in 1 Sam 28.

³ tn The verb in this context is best taken as a negative imperative. See IBHS §31.4g for discussion and examples. See Exod 4:15 as an example of positive obligation.

⁴ tn The words “Don’t listen to them” have been repeated from v. 9a to pick up the causal connection between v. 9a and v. 10 that is formally introduced by a causal particle in v. 10 in the original text.

⁵ tn Heb “they are prophesying a lie.”

⁶ tn Heb “lies will result in your being taken far…” (לַעֲבָדֵי [lave’ei] + infinitive). This is a rather clear case of the particle לַעֲבָדֵי introducing result (contra BDB 775 s.v. הִעָבָדֵה note 1. There is no irony in this statement; it is a bold prediction).

⁷ tn The words “out of your country” are not in the text but are implicit in the meaning of the verb. The words “in exile” are also not in the text but are implicit in the context. These words have been supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁸ tn Heb “put their necks in the yoke of.” See the study note on v. 2 for the figure.

⁹ tn The words “Things will go better for” are not in the text. They are supplied contextually as a means of breaking up the awkward syntax of the original which reads “The nation which brings its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and subjects itself to him, I will leave it…”

¹⁰ tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

¹¹ tn Heb “I spoke to Zedekiah…according to all these words.”

¹² sn The verbs in this verse are all plural. They are addressed to Zedekiah and his royal advisers (compare 22:2).

¹³ tn Heb “put their necks in the yoke of.” See the study note on v. 2 for the figure.

¹⁴ tn Heb “with/by the sword.”

¹⁵ tn Heb “Why should you and your people die…?” The rhetorical question expects the answer made explicit in the translation. “There is no reason!”

¹⁶ tn Heb “...disease according to what the Lord spoke concerning the nation that…”

¹⁷ tn The verb in this context is best taken as a negative imperative. See IBHS §31.4g for discussion and examples. See Exod 4:15 as an example of positive obligation.

¹⁸ tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

¹⁹ sn The verbs are again plural referring to the king and his royal advisers.

²⁰ tn Heb “…drive you out and you will perish, you and the prophets who are prophesying lies.”

²¹ sn For the fulfillment of this prophecy see Jer 39:5-7; 52:7-11; 2 Kgs 25:4-7.

²² tn Heb “don’t listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you…” The sentence has been broken up for the sake of English style and one level of embedded quotes has been eliminated to ease complexity.

²³ sn This refers to the valuable articles of the temple treasury which were carried off by Nebuchadnezzar four years earlier when he carried off Jeconiah, his family, some of his nobles, and some of the cream of Judean society (2 Kgs 24:10-16, especially v. 13 and see also vv. 19-20 in the version following).

²⁴ tn The imperative with וַי (wāy) here and in v. 12 after another imperative are a good example of the use of the imperative to introduce a consequence. (See GK 324-25 §110.f and see Gen 42:18. This is a common verb in this idiom.)

²⁵ tn According to E. W. Bullinger (Figures of Speech, 954) both this question and the one in v. 13 are examples of rhetorical questions of prohibition/ “don’t let this city be made a pile of rubble.”

²⁶ tn The words “I also told them” are not in the text, but it is obvious from the fact that the Lord is spoken about in the third person in vv. 18, 19, 21 that he is not the speaker. This is part of Jeremiah’s own speech to the priests and the people (v. 16). These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.

²⁷ tn Heb “the word of the Lord is with them.”

²⁸ tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.”

²⁹ sn For the significance of this title see the study note on 2:19.
let the valuable articles that are still left in the Lord’s temple, in the royal palace, and in Jerusalem be taken away to Babylon. 27:19 For the Lord who rules over all has already spoken about the two bronze pillars, the large bronze basin called ‘The Sea,’ and the movable bronze stands. He has already spoken about the rest of the valuable articles that are left in this city. 27:20 He has already spoken about these things that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did not take away when he carried Jehoiakim’s son King Jeconiah of Judah and the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem away as captives. 27:21 Indeed, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all has already spoken about the valuable articles that are left in the Lord’s temple, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem. 27:22 He has said, ‘They will be carried off to Babylon. They will remain there until it is time for me to show consideration for them again. Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place.’ I, the Lord, affirm this!”

Jeremiah Confronted by a False Prophet

28:1 The following events occurred in that same year, early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah. To be more precise, it was the fifth month of the fourth year of his reign.

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1 tn Heb “...speaking to them, let them entreat the Lord... so that the valuable articles...will not go to Babylon.” The long original sentence has been broken up for the sake of English style.

2 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.” For the significance of this title see the note at 2:19.

3 tn The words “two bronze” are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to help identify the referent.

4 tn The words “the large bronze basin called” are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to help identify the referent. See the study note for further reference.

5 sn The bronze stands are the movable bronze stands described in 1 Kgs 7:27-37. They were the stands for the bronze basins described in 1 Kgs 7:38-39. According to 2 Chr 4:6 the latter were used to wash the burnt offerings. The priests would have observed especially about the bronze basin and the movable stands and their basins because they involved their ritual purification apart from which they would have had no sanctity. These articles (or furnishings in this case) were broken up and the bronze carried away to Babylon along with all the other bronze, silver, and gold furnishings when the temple and the city were destroyed in 587 B.C.E. (see 1 Kgs 7:23-26).

6 sn The bronze stands are the movable bronze stands described in 1 Kgs 7:27-37. They were the stands for the bronze basins described in 1 Kgs 7:38-39. According to 2 Chr 4:6 the latter were used to wash the burnt offerings. The priests would have observed especially about the bronze basin and the movable stands and their basins because they involved their ritual purification apart from which they would have had no sanctity. These articles (or furnishings in this case) were broken up and the bronze carried away to Babylon along with all the other bronze, silver, and gold furnishings when the temple and the city were destroyed in 587 B.C.E. (see 1 Kgs 7:23-26).

7 sn The large bronze basin called “The Sea” refers to the large basin that was mounted on twelve bronze bulls. It stood in front of the temple and contained water for the priests to bathe themselves (2 Chr 4:6; cf. Exod 30:17-21). It is described in 1 Kgs 7:23-26.

8 sn The words “two bronze” are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to help identify the referent. For the significance of this title see the note at 2:19.

9 tn This verb is a little difficult to render here. The word is used in the sense of taking note of something and acting according to what is noticed. It is the word that has been translated several times throughout Jeremiah as “punish [someone].” It is also used in the opposite sense of taking note and “show consideration for” (or “care for;” see, e.g., Ruth 1:6). Here the nuance is positive and is further clarified by the actions that follow, bringing them back and restoring them.

10 tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

11 tn The original text is unusually full here and deemed by many scholars to be corrupt: Heb “And it happened in that year in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month Hananiah said to me...” Many scholars see a contradiction between “in the fourth year” and “in the beginning of the reign of.” These scholars point to the fact that the Greek version does not have “in that year” and “in the beginning of the reign of”; it merely reads “in the fourth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month.” These scholars generally also regard the heading at 27:1 to be unoriginal and interpret the heading in the MT here as a faulty harmonization of the original (that in the Greek version) with the erroneous one in the Hebrew of 27:1. However, it is just as possible that the Greek version in both places is an attempt to harmonize the data of 27:1 and 28:1. I.e., it left out both the heading at 27:1, and “in that year” and “at the beginning of the reign of” in the heading here because it thought the data was contradictory. However, it is just as likely that there is really no contradiction here. I.e., the term “beginning of the reign” can include the fourth year. E. H. Merrill has argued that the term here refers not to the accession year (see the translator’s note on 26:1) but to the early years in general (“The ‘Accession Year’ and Davidic Chronology,” JANESCU 19 [1989]: 105-6, and cf. note 18 for bibliography on Akkadian parallels). Hence the phrase has been translated both here and in 27:1 “early in the reign of...” For other attempts at harmonization see the discussion in G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC) , 41, n. 1a.

12 tn The dating here is very full and precise. “In that same year” ties the events here in with the messages that Jeremiah delivered to the envoys, the king and his court, and the priests and people while wearing the yoke symbolizing servitude to Nebuchadnezzar. The text wants to show that the events here transpired shortly after those in Jer 27 and that Jeremiah is still wearing the yoke. The supplying of the preceding month is important because the end of the chapter will show that Jeremiah’s prophecy regarding Hananiah was fulfilled two months later. Hence Jeremiah is the true prophet and Hananiah and the others (27:16) are false. The supplying of the year is perhaps significant because the author states in 51:59 that Zedekiah went to Babylon that same year, probably to pledge his loyalty. The suggestion lies ready to hand that the events of this chapter and the preceding one lead to his dismissal of the false prophet Hananiah’s advice and the acceptance of Jeremiah’s.
war, disaster, and plagues against many countries and great kingdoms. 28:9 So if a prophet prophesied peace and prosperity, it was only known that the Lord truly sent him when what he prophesied came true.

28:10 The prophet Hananiah then took the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah’s neck and broke it. 28:11 Then he spoke up in the presence of all the people. “The Lord says, ‘In the same way I will break the yoke of servitude of all the nations to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon before two years are over.’” After he heard this, the prophet Jeremiah departed and went on his way.

28:12 But shortly after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah’s neck, the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. 28:13 “Go and tell Hananiah that the Lord says, ‘You have indeed broken the wooden yoke. But you have only succeeded in replacing it with an iron one.’

28:14 For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘I have put an irresistible yoke of servitude on all these nations so they will serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. And they will indeed serve him. I have even given him control over the wild ani-

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1 tn Heb “to me.” The rest of the chapter is all in third person narrative (see vv. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15). Hence, many explain the first person narrative here as a misunderstanding of the abbreviation “to Jeremiah (רְאוֹעָה לָֽךְ) = רְאוֹעָה לָֽךְ” (‘etp]). It is just as likely that there is a similar kind of disjunction here that was found in 27:1-2 only in the opposite direction. There what started out as a third person report was really a first person report. Here what starts out as a first person report is really a third person report. The text betrays both the hands of the narrator, probably Baruch, and the reportee, Jeremiah, who dictated a synopsis of his messages and his stories to Baruch to write down (Jer 36:4, 32).

2 tn Heb “And it happened in that year in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, Hananiah son of Azzur the prophet who was from Gibeon said to me…” The sentence has been broken up to correspond with a choice of whom to believe. Who is the “true” prophet?

3 sn See the study note on 27:2 for this figure. Hananiah is given the same title “the prophet” as Jeremiah throughout. Notice again that the “false” prophet uses the same formula and claims the same source for his message as the true prophet has (cf. 27:22).

4 sn Notice again that the “false” prophet uses the same formula and claims the same source for his message as the true prophet has. He even speaks like the true prophet, giving the same title “the prophet” as Jeremiah through Baruch to write down (Jer 36:4, 32).

5 sn Notice that “Oracle of the Lord” is a common title foracles implicit in the context and in the tense of the Hebrew verb. It is supplied in the translation for clarity and to help bring out the contrast in the next verse.

6 tn Heb “Listen to this word/message which I am about to speak in your ears and the ears of all these people.”

7 sn The word “invariably” is absent in the text but implicit in the context and in the tense of the Hebrew verb. It is supplied in the translation for clarity and to help bring out the contrast in the next verse.

8 tc Many Hebrew MSS read “starvation/famine” which is the second member of a common triad “sword, famine, and plague” in Jeremiah. This triad occurs thirteen times in the book and undoubtedly influenced a later scribe to read “starvation (= famine)” here. For this triad see the note on 14:14. The words “disaster and plagues” are missing in the LXX.

9 tn The verbs in this verse are to be interpreted as iterative imperfects in past time rather than as futures because of the explicit contrast that is drawn in the two verses by the emphatic syntactical construction of the two verses. Both verses begin with a casus pendens construction to throw the two verses into contrast: Heb “The prophets who were before me and you from ancient times, they prophesied…The prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet came true, that prophet was known that the Lord truly sent him.”

10 tn Heb “I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from upon the necks of all the nations.”

11 tn Heb “Then the prophet Jeremiah went his way.”

12 tn Heb “Hananiah, ‘Thus says the Lord...’ The translation uses an indirect quotation here used to eliminate one level of embedded quotation.

13 tn The Greek version reads “I have made/put” rather than “you have made/put.” This is the easier reading and is therefore rejected.

14 tn Heb “the yoke bars of wood you have broken, but you have made in its stead yoke bars of iron.”

15 sn This whole incident (and the preceding one in Jer 28) is symbolic. Jeremiah’s wearing of the yoke was symbolic of the Lord’s message to submit to Babylonian authority. Hananiah’s breaking of the yoke was a prediction that that authority would not last beyond two years. By breaking the yoke he was encouraging rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar’s (and hence the Lord’s) authority (cf. 27:9, 14). However, rebellion would only result in further, harsher, more irresistible measures by Nebuchadnezzar to control such rebellion.

16 tn Heb “An iron yoke I have put on the necks of all these nations.”
The prophet Jeremiah told the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah! The Lord did not send you! You are making these people trust in a lie!" So the Lord says, "I will most assuredly remove you from the face of the earth. You will die this very year because you have counseled rebellion against the Lord." In the seventh month of that very same year the prophet Hananiah died.

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles

The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles Nebuchadnezzar had carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon. It was addressed to the elders who were left among the exiles, to the priests, to the prophets, and to all the other people who were exiled in Babylon.

He sent it after King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the palace officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the metal workers had been exiled from Jerusalem.

He sent it with Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiash. King Zedekiah of Judah had sent these men to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The letter said:

"The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says to all those he sent into exile from Jerusalem. 'Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and allow your daughters to get married so that they too can have sons and daughters. Grow in number; do not dwindle away. See to it that the city where I sent you as exiles enjoys peace and prosperity. Pray to the Lord for it. For as it prospers you will prosper.' "

"For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Do not let the prophets or those among you who claim to be able to predict the future by divination deceive you. And do not pay any attention to the dreams that you are encouraging them to dream. They are prophesying lies to you and claiming my authority to do so. But I did not send them. I, the Lord, affirm it.' "

"For the Lord says, 'Only when the seventy years of Babylonian rule are over will I again take up consideration for you.' Then I again take up consideration for you.

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1 sn The emphasis is on the absoluteness of Nebuchadnezzar's control. The statement is once more rhetorical and not to be taken literally. See the study note on 27:6.
2 sn Or "You are giving these people false assurances."
3 sn There is a play on words here in Hebrew between "did not send you" and "will... remove you." The two verbs are from the same root word in Hebrew. The first is the simple active and the second is the intensive.
4 sn In giving people false assurances of restoration when the Lord had already told them to submit to Babylon, Hananiah was really counseling rebellion against the Lord. What Hananiah had done was contrary to the law of Deut 13:5 and was punishable by death.
5 sn Comparison with Jer 28:1 shows that this whole incident took place in the space of two months. Hananiah had prophesied that the captivity would be over before two years had past. However, before two months were past, Hananiah himself died in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy of his death. His death was a validation of Jeremiah as a true prophet. The subsequent events of 588 B.C. would validate Jeremiah's prophecies and invalidate those of Hananiah.

6 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
7 tn Jer 29:1-3 are all one long sentence in Hebrew containing a parenthetical insertion. The text reads "These are the words of the letter which the prophet Jeremiah sent to the elders...people whom Nebuchadnezzar had exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon." After Jeconiah...had gone from Jerusalem by the hand of Elasah...whom Zedekiah sent...saying, 'Thus says the Lord...' " The sentence has been broken up for the sake of contemporary English style and clarity.
8 tn This term is often mistakenly understood to refer to a "eunuch." It is clear, however, in Gen 39:1 that "eunuchs" could be married. On the other hand it is clear from Isa 59:3-5 that some who bore this title could not have children. In this period, it is possible that the persons who bore this title were high officials like the rab sars who was a high official in the Babylonian court (cf. Jer 39:3, 13; 52:25). For further references see HALOT 727 s.v. "eirc 1c.
9 sn See 2 Kgs 24:14-16 and compare the study note on Jer 24:1.
10 sn Elasah son of Shaphan may have been the brother of Ahikam, who supported Jeremiah when the priests and the prophets in Jerusalem sought to kill Jeremiah for preaching that the temple and the city would be destroyed (cf. 26:24).
will fulfill my gracious promise to you and restore you to your homeland.⁴ 29:11 For I know what I have planned for you,” says the Lord.⁵ I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope.⁶ 29:12 When you call out to me and come to me in prayer, I will hear your prayers.⁷ 29:13 When you seek me in prayer and worship, you will find me available to you. If you seek me with all your heart and soul,⁸ 29:14 I will make myself available to you.⁹ Says the Lord.¹⁰ ‘Then I will reverse your plight and will gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have exiled you,’ says the Lord.¹¹ ‘I will bring you back to the place from which I exiled you.’

29:15 ‘You say, “The Lord has raised up prophets of good news for us here in Babylon.”

29:16 But just listen to what the Lord has to say about the king who occupies David’s throne and all your fellow countrymen who are still living in this city of Jerusalem,¹² and were not carried off into exile with you. 29:17 The Lord who rules over all¹³ says, ‘I will bring war, starvation, and disease on them. I will treat them like figs that are so rotten they cannot be eaten. 29:18 I will chase after them with war, starvation, and disease. I will make all the kingdoms of the earth horrified at what happens to them. I will make them examples of those who are cursed, objects of horror, hissing scorn, and ridicule among all the nations where I exile them. 29:19 For they have not paid attention to what I said to them through my servants the prophets whom I sent to them over and over again,’ says the Lord.¹⁴ ‘And you exiles,¹⁵ have not paid any attention to them either,’ says the Lord. 29:20 ‘So pay attention to what I, the Lord, have said;¹⁶ all you exiles whom I have sent to Babylon from Jerusalem.’

or “to reestablish as it was” (HALOT 1386 s.v. 3c). In Ezek 16:53 it is paralleled by the expression “to restore the situation which prevailed earlier.” This amounts to restitutio in integrum, which is applicable to the circumstances surrounding the return of the exiles.

Sn Jeremiah answers their claims that the Lord has raised up prophets to encourage them that their stay will be short by referring to the Lord’s promise that the Lord’s plans are not for restoration but for further destruction.

The words “of Jerusalem” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation for clarity.

In Jer 27:22 for this promise.

The words “of good news” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

In Jer “But thus says the Lord about.” The words “just listen to what” are supplied in the translation to help show the connection with the preceding.

Sn Jeremiah relates it to the same noun and defines it as “as a future and a hope.”

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

The meaning of this word is somewhat uncertain. It occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible. BDB 1045 s.v. שֹׁעָר relates it to the noun “horrible thing” (translated “something shocking”) in Jer 5:30; 23:14 and defines it as “horrid, disgusting.” HALOT 1495 s.v. שֹׁעָר relates it to the same noun and define it as “rotten; corrupt.” That nuance is accepted here.

The translation attempts to reflect the theological nuances of “seeking” and “finding” and the psychological significance of “heart” which refers more to intellectual and volitional concerns in the OT than to emotional ones.

In Jer “come and pray to me.” This is an example of verbal hendiadys where two verbs formally joined by “and” convey a main concept with the second verb functioning as an adverbial qualifier.

In Jer “I know the plans that I am planning for you, oracle of the Lord,” plans of well-being and not for harm to give you a future and a hope.

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “a future and a hope.” This is a good example of hendiadys where two formal coordinately linked nouns (adjectives, verbs) convey a single idea where one of the terms functions as a qualifier of the other. For this figure see E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 658-72. This example is discussed on p. 661.

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “Or “the future you hope for”; Heb “a future and a hope.” This is also an example of verbal hendiadys where two verbs formally joined by “and” convey a main concept with the second verb functioning as an adverbial qualifier.

In Jer “Or “If you wholeheartedly seek me”, Heb “You will seek me out to me and come to me in prayer and I will hear your prayers.” The verbs are vav consecutive perfects and can be taken either as unconditional futures or as contingent futures. See GKC 337 §112.kk and 494 §159, g and compare the usage in Gen 44:22 for the use of the vav consecutive perfect in contingent futures. The conditional clause in the middle of 29:13 and the deuteronomic theology connected with the preceding.

In Jer “I will let myself be found by you.” For the nuance of the verb see BDB 594 s.v. נָפַג. Niph.1.f and compare the usage in Isa 6:5; 2 Chr 15:2. The Greek version already notes that nuance when it translated the phrase “I will manifest myself to you.”

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “restore your fortune.” Alternately, “I will bring you back from exile.” This idiom occurs twenty-six times in the OT and in several cases it is clearly not referring to return from exile but restoration of fortunes (e.g., Job 42:10; Hos 6:1 – 7:1; Jer 33:11). It is often followed as here by “regather” or “bring back” (e.g., Jer 30:3; Ezek 29:14) so it is often misunderstood as “bringing back the exiles.” The versions (LXX, Vulg., Tg., Pesh.) often translate the idiom as “to go away into captivity,” deriving the noun from סָפָר (‘sify, “captivity”). However, the use of this expression in Old Aramaic documents of Sefire parallels the biblical idiom: “the gods restored the fortunes of the house of my father again” (J. A. Fitzmyer, The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire [BibOr], 100-101, 119-20). The idiom means “to turn someone’s fortune, bring about change” or “to reestablish as it was” (HALOT 1386 s.v. 3c). In Ezek 16:53 it is paralleled by the expression “to restore the situation which prevailed earlier.” This amounts to restitutio in integrum, which is applicable to the circumstances surrounding the return of the exiles.

In Jer “with the sword.”

In Jer “the sword.”

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “Oracle of the Lord.”

In Jer “pay attention to the word of the Lord.” However, the Lord is speaking in the words just previous to this and in the words which follow (whom I have sent”). This is another example of the shift from third person referent to first person which is common in Hebrew poetry and prophecy but is not common in English style. The person has been adjusted in the translation to avoid confusion.
29:21 “The LORD God of Israel who rules over all⁴ also has something to say about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying lies to you and claiming my authority to do so.⁵ I will hand them over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and he will execute them before your very eyes. 29:22 And all the exiles of Judah who are in Babylon will use them as examples when they put a curse on anyone. They will say, “May the LORD treat you like Zedekiah and Ahab whom the king of Babylon roasted to death in the fire!”⁶

29:23 This will happen to them because they have done what is shameful⁷ in Israel. They have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives and have spoken lies while claiming my authority.⁸ They have spoken words that I did not command them to speak. I know what they have done. I have been a witness to it,” says the LORD.⁹

A Response to the Letter and a Subsequent Letter

29:24 The LORD told Jeremiah, “Tell Shemaiah the Nehelamite⁸ 29:25 that the LORD God of Israel who rules over all⁹ has a message for him.¹⁰ Tell him,¹¹ “On your own initiative¹² you sent a letter¹³ to the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah⁴ and to all the other priests and to all the people in Jerusalem.¹⁵ In your letter you said to Zephaniah,¹⁶ 29:26 “The LORD has made you priest in place of Jehoiada.¹⁷ He has put you in charge in the LORD’s temple of controlling⁸ any
Heb long and the people are to settle down in Babylon. They should have reprimanded Jeremiah from Anathoth who is pretending to be a prophet among you.\(^{29:27}\) For he has even sent a message to us here in Babylon. He wrote and told us.\(^{6}\) “You will be there a long time. Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce.”\(^{29:28}\)

29:29 Zephaniah the priest read that letter to the prophet Jeremiah.\(^{9} 29:30\) Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.\(^{29:31}\) “Send a message to all the exiles in Babylon. Tell them, ‘The Lord has spoken about Shemaiah the Nehelamite. “Shemaiah has spoken to you as a prophet even though I did not send him. He is making you trust in a lie.’\(^{29:32}\) Because he has done this,”\(^{10}\) the Lord says, “I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his whole family. There will not be any of them left to experience the good things that I will do for my people. I, the Lord, affirm it! For he counseled rebellion against the Lord.”\(^{29:33}\)

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\(^{1}\) lunatic\(^{2}\) who pretends to be a prophet.\(^{3}\) And it is your duty to put any such person in the stocks\(^{4}\) with an iron collar around his neck.\(^{4}\) 29:27 You should have reprimanded Jeremiah from Anathoth who is pretending to be a prophet among you.\(^{5}\) 29:28 For he has even sent a message to us here in Babylon. He wrote and told us.\(^{6}\) “You will be there a long time. Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce.”\(^{7}\)

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\(^{12}\) \(\text{tn Compare the headings at 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 21:1 and the translator’s note at those places.}\)

\(^{13}\) \(\text{tn Heb “Thus says Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel, saying…” For significance of the title “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel” see the note at 2:19.}\)

\(^{14}\) \(\text{tn Heb “Write all the words which I speak to you in a scroll.” The verb “which I speak” is the instantaneous use of the perfect tense (cf. GKC 311-12 §106.}\)

\(^{15}\) \(\text{tn Heb “affirm”}\)

\(^{16}\) \(\text{tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”}\)

\(^{17}\) \(\text{tn Heb “restore the fortune.”}\)

\(^{18}\) \(\text{tn Reference is made here to the so-called “Book of Consolation” which is the most extended treatment of the theme of hope or deliverance in the book. Jeremiah was called to be a prophet both of judgment (of tearing down and destroying) and of deliverance (of replanting and rebuilding; see Jer 1:10). Jeremiah lamented that he had to predominantly pronounce judgment but he has periodically woken in prophecies of hope after judgment in 3:14-18; 16:14-15; 23:3-8; 24:4-7; 29:10-14, 32. The oracles of hope contained in these chapters are undated but reference is made in them to the restoration of both Israel which had gone into exile in Assyria in 722 B.C. and Judah which began to be exiled in 605 and 597 B.C. Jeremiah had already written as early as the reign of Zedekiah about the exiles who were the good figs who were to experience the “good” of restoration (24:4-7; 29:10-14) and had spoken of the further exile of those who remained in Judah. So it is possible that these oracles fit in roughly the same time frame as chapters 27–29.}\)

\(^{19}\) \(\text{tn Heb “fathers.”}\)

\(^{20}\) \(\text{tn As the nations of Israel and Judah were united in their sin and suffered the same fate – that of exile and dispersion – (cf. Jer 3:8; 5:11; 11:10, 17) so they will ultimately be re-gathered from the nations and rejoined under one king, a descendant of David, and regain possession of their ancestral lands. The prophets of both the eighth and seventh century looked forward to this ideal (see, e.g., Hos 1:11:2 (22 HT); Isa 11:11-13; Jer 23:5-6; 30:3; 33:7; Ezek 37:15-22). This has already been anticipated in Jer 3:18.}\)

\(^{21}\) \(\text{tn Heb “And these are the words/things that the Lord speaks concerning Israel and Judah.”}\)

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\(^{22}\) \(\text{tn The particle }\text{(ki) is functioning here as loosely causal or epexegetical of the preceding introduction. For this usage cf. BDB 473-74 s.v. }\text{ note and }\text{i.e.}\)

\(^{23}\) \(\text{tn Heb “We have heard the sound of panic and of fear, and there is no peace.” It is generally agreed that the person of the verb presupposes that this is an unintroduced quote of the people.}\)
30:6 Ask yourselves this and consider it carefully:1 Have you ever seen a man give birth to a baby? Why then do I see all these strong men grabbing their stomachs in pain like2 a woman giving birth? And why do their faces turn so deathly pale?3
30:7 Alas, what a terrible time of trouble it is!3 There has never been any like it. It is a time of trouble for the descendants of Jacob, but some of them will be rescued out of it.4
30:8 When the time for them to be rescued comes,15 says the Lord who rules over all,6 “I will rescue you from foreign subjugation.”7

1 tn Heb “Ask and see/consider.”
2 tn Heb “with their hands on their loins.” The word rendered “loins” refers to the area between the ribs and the thighs.
3 sn The reference to a terrible time of trouble (Heb “that day”) is a common shorthand reference in the prophets to “the Day of the Lord.” The “Day of the Lord” refers to a time when God intervenes in judgment against the wicked. The time referenced can be either near or far, referring to something as near as the Assyrian threat in the time of Ahaz (Isa 7:18, 20, 21, 23) or as distant as the eschatological battle of God against Gog when he attacks Israel (Ezek 38:14, 18). The judgment can be against Israel’s enemies and result in Israel’s deliverance (Jer 50:30-34). At other times as here the Day of the Lord involves judgment on Israel itself. Here reference is to the judgment that the northern kingdom, Israel, has already experienced (cf., e.g., Jer 3:8) and which the southern kingdom, Judah, is in the process of experiencing and which Jeremiah has lamented over several times and even described in hyperbolic and apocalyptic terms in Jer 4:19-31.
4 tn Heb “It is a time of trouble for Jacob but he will be saved out of it.”
5 sn Jacob here is figurative for the people descended from him. Moreover the figure moves from Jacob = descendants of Jacob to only a part of those descendants. Not all of his descendants who have experienced and are now experiencing trouble will be saved. Only a remnant (i.e., the good figs, cf., e.g., Jer 23:3, 31:7) will see the good things that the Lord has in store for them (Jer 24:5-6). The bad figs will suffer destruction through war, occupation, and disease (cf., e.g., Jer 24:8-10 among many other references).
6 tn Heb “And it shall happen in that day.”
7 sn The time for them to be rescued (Heb “that day”) is the day of deliverance from the trouble alluded to at the end of the preceding verse, not the day of trouble mentioned at the beginning. Israel (even the good figs) will still need to go through the period of trouble (cf. v. 11).
8 tn Heb “I will tear off their bands.” The “bands” are the leather straps which held the yoke bars in place (cf. 27:2). The metaphor of the “yoke on the neck” is continued. The translation reflects the sense of the metaphor but not the specific referent.
9 tn The word “subject” in this verse and “subjugate” are from the same root word in Hebrew. A deliberate contrast is drawn between the two powers that they will serve.
10 tn Heb “and to David their king whom I will raise up for them.”
11 sn The Davidic ruler which I will raise up as king over them refers to a descendant of David who would be raised up over a regathered and reunited Israel and Judah. He is called “David” in Hos 3:5, Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25 and referred to as a shoot or sprout of Jesse in Isa 11:1, 10 and a “righteous branch” springing from David (the Davidic line). He is called “David” because he is from the Davidic line and because David is the type of the ideal king whom the prophets looked forward to. See further the study notes on 23:5 for this ideal king and for his relation to the NT fulfillment in the person of Jesus the Christ.
12 tn Heb “So do not be afraid, my servant Jacob, oracle of the Lord.” Here and elsewhere in the verse the terms Jacob and Israel are poetic for the people of Israel descended from the patriarch Jacob. The terms have been supplied throughout with plural referents for greater clarity.
13 tn Heb “For I will rescue you from far away, your descendants from the land of their captivity.”
14 sn Compare the ideals of the Mosaic covenant in Lev 26:6; the Davidic covenant in 2 Sam 7:10-11, and the new covenant in Ezek 34:25-31.
15 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
16 tn The translation “entirely unpunished” is intended to avoid confusion for modern readers who are not accustomed to this poetic tradition.

1 tn Heb “Ask and see/consider.”
2 sn In the immediate context the reference to the yoke of their servitude to foreign domination (Heb “his yoke”) should be understood as a reference to the yoke of servitude to Nebuchadnezzar which has been referred to often in Jer 27-28 (see, e.g., 27:8, 12; 28:2, 4, 11). The end of that servitude has already been referred to in 25:11-14; 29:11-14. Like many other passages in the OT it has been given a later eschatological reinterpretation in the light of subsequent bondages and lack of complete fulfillment, i.e., of restoration to the land and restoration of the Davidic monarchy.
3 sn The reference to a terrible time of trouble (Heb “that day”) is the day of deliverance from the trouble alluded to at the end of the preceding verse, not the day of trouble mentioned at the beginning. Israel (even the good figs) will still need to go through the period of trouble (cf. v. 11).
4 sn The translation “entirely unpunished” is intended to avoid confusion for modern readers who are not accustomed to this poetic tradition.
The Lord Will Heal the Wounds of Judah

30:12 Moreover, the LORD says to the people of Zion, ²

“Your injuries are incurable; your wounds are severe.”³

30:13 There is no one to plead your cause. There are no remedies for your wounds.⁴ There is no healing for you.

30:14 All your allies have abandoned you.⁵ They no longer have any concern for you. For I have attacked you like an enemy would. I have chastened you cruelly. For your wickedness is so great and your sin is so much.⁶

30:15 Why do you complain about your injuries, that your pain is incurable? I have done all this to you because your wickedness is so great and your sin is so much.⁶

30:16 But⁷ all who destroyed you will be destroyed. All your enemies will go into exile. Those who plundered you will be plundered. I will cause those who pillaged you to be pillaged.⁸

reflect the emphatic construction of the infinitive absolute before the finite verb.

¹ tn The particle ו (ki) here is parallel to the one in v. 5 that introduces the first oracle. See the discussion in the translator’s note there.

² tn The pronouns in vv. 10-17 are second feminine singular referring to a personified entity. That entity is identified in v. 17 as Zion, which here stands for the people of Zion.

³ sn The wounds to the body politic are those of the incursions from the enemy from the north referred to in Jer 4:6; 6:1 over which Jeremiah and even God himself have lamented (Jer 8:21; 10:19; 14:17). The enemy from the north has been identified as Babylon and has been identified as the agent of God’s punishment of his disobedient people (Jer 1:15; 4:6; 25:9).

⁴ tn The translation of these first two lines follows the redactional redivision of the lines suggested in NIV and NRSV rather than that of the Masoretic text. It is possible that it has an adversative sense as an implicit contrast with v. 13 which expresses these concepts in the negative (cf. BDB 14 s.v. כִּי for this use in statements which are contextually closer to one another).

⁵ tn Heb “Oracle from the Lord.”

⁶ tn Heb “I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and will have compassion on his habitations.” For the meaning of the idiom “restore the fortunes of” see the translator’s note on v. 1.2. It is possible that it has an adversative sense as an implicit contrast with v. 13 which expresses these concepts in the negative (cf. BDB 14 s.v. כִּי for this use in statements which are contextually closer to one another).

⁷ tn Heb “on its tel.” A tel is a site where successive layers of occupation are built upon one another after the destruction or decay of the former city. The original site was not abandoned because it had been chosen for strategic purposes, such as proximity to water or ease of defense. Many modern archaeological sites have the designation “Tel” as a component of their name because of this practice.

⁸ sn Compare Jer 29:6.

The Lord Will Restore Israel and Judah

30:18 The LORD says,

“I will restore the ruined houses of the descendants of Jacob. I will show compassion on their ruined homes.⁴ Every city will be rebuilt on its former ruins.⁵ Every fortified dwelling will occupy its traditional site.⁶

30:19 Out of those places you will hear songs of thanksgiving⁴ and the sounds of laughter and merri ment. I will increase their number and they will not dwindle away.⁵ I will bring them honor and they will no longer be despised.

30:20 The descendants of Jacob will enjoy their former privileges. Their community will be reestablished in my favor.⁶

lex talionis on a national and political level. This principle has already been appealed to in the case of the end of Babylonian sovereignty in 25:14; 27:7.

⁹ tn Again the particle ו (ki) appears to be intensive rather than causal. Compare the translator’s note on v. 12. It is possible that it has an adversative sense as an implicit contrast with v. 13 which expresses these concepts in the negative (cf. BDB 14 s.v. כִּי for this use in statements which are contextually closer to one another).

¹⁰ tn Heb “Oracle from the Lord.”

¹¹ sn With the exception of the second line there is a definite attempt at wordplay in each line to underline the principle of

I will heal your wounds. I, the LORD, affirm it.¹⁰ For you have been called an outcast, Zion, whom no one cares for.”
and I will punish all who try to oppress them.

30:21 One of their own people will be their leader. Their ruler will come from their own number.¹ I will invite him to approach me, and he will do so.²

For no one would dare approach me on his own.³

I, the L ORD, affirm it!⁴

30:22 Then you will again be my people and I will be your God.⁵

30:23 Just watch! The wrath of the L ORD will come like a storm. Like a raging storm it will rage down on the heads of those who are wicked.⁶

30:24 The anger of the L ORD will not turn back until he has fully carried out his intended purposes. In days to come you will come to understand this.⁶

31:1 At that time I will be the God of all the clans of Israel⁷ and they will be my people. I, the L ORD, affirm it!⁸

Israel Will Be Restored and Join Judah in Worship

31:2 The L ORD says, “The people of Israel who survived death at the hands of the enemy⁹ will find favor in the wilderness as they journey to find rest for themselves. In a far-off land the L ORD will manifest himself to them. He will say to them, ‘I have loved you with an everlasting love. That is why I have continued to be faithful to you.’¹⁰

31:4 I will rebuild you, my dear children Israel,¹¹ so that you will once again be built up. Once again you will take up the tambourine and join in the happy throng of dancers.”¹²

¹ sn This verse repeats v. 22 but with specific reference to all the clans of Israel, i.e., to all Israel and Judah. It functions here as a transition to the next section which will deal with the restoration of Israel (31:3-20) and Judah (31:21-25) and their reunification in the land (31:27-29) under a new covenant relationship with God (31:31-37). See also the study note on 30:3 for further reference to this reunification in Jeremiah and the other prophets.

² tn Heb “Oracle of the L ORD.”

³ sn This refers to the remnant of northern Israel who had not been killed when Assyria conquered Israel in 722 B.C.E. who had not died in exile. References to Samaria in v. 5 and to Ephraim in v. 6, 9 make clear that northern Israel is in view here.

⁴ tn Or “The people of Israel who survived the onslaughts of Egypt and Amalek found favor in the wilderness as they journeyed to find rest. At that time the L ORD manifest himself to them. I say, ‘I have... That is why I have drawn you to myself through my unfailing kindness.’” For the basis for each of these translations see the translator’s note. There is debate whether the reference here is to God’s preservation of Israel during their wandering in the Sinai desert or his promise to protect and preserve them on their return through the Arabian desert on the way back from Assyria and Babylon (see e.g., Isa 42:14-16; 43:16-21; Jer 16:14-15; 23:7-8). The only finite verbs in vv. 2-3a before the introduction of the quote are perfects which can denote either a past act or a future act viewed as certain of fulfillment (the prophetic perfect; see GKC 312-13 §106.α and see examples in Jer 11:16; 13:17; 25:14; 28:4). The phrase at the beginning of v. 3 can either refer to temporal (cf. v. 5, BDB 935 s.v. מִשְׁמַרַת 2.b and Isa 22:11) or spatial distance (cf. BDB 935 s.v. מְשַׁמֶרָה 2.a[2] and Isa 5:29; 59:14). The verb in the final clause in v. 3 can refer to either the continuance of God’s love as in Ps 36:10 (cf. BDB 604 s.v. יְרֵא ק), or drawing someone to himself in electing, caring love as in Hos 11:4 (cf. BDB 604 s.v. יְרֵא ק 1), or drawing someone to himself in electing, caring love as in Hos 11:4 (cf. BDB 604 s.v. יְרֵא ק 1). The translation has opted for the prophetic reference to future deliverance because of the preceding context, the use of מְשַׁמֶרָה (mishmarot) to refer to the far off land of exile in Jer 30:10; 46:27; 51:50, and the reference to survivors from the sword being called on to remember the L ORD in that far off land in 51:50.

⁵ tn Heb “Virgin Israel.”

⁶ sn For the significance of this metaphor see the note on Jer 14:17. Here the emphasis appears on his special love and care for his people and the hint (further developed in vv. 21-22) that, though guilty of sin, he considers them like an innocent young virgin.

⁷ sn Contrast Jer 7:34 and 25:10.
31:5 Once again you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria. Those who plant them will once again enjoy their fruit.
31:6 Yes, a time is coming when watchmen will call out on the mountains of Ephraim, “Come! Let us go to Zion to worship the Lord our God!”
31:7 Moreover, the Lord says, “Sing for joy for the descendants of Jacob. Uter glad shouts for that foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard. Then say, ‘Lord, rescue your people. Deliver those of Israel who remain alive.’”

4 map For location see Map2-B1; Map4-D3; Map5-E2; Map6-A4; Map7-C1.
2 sn The terms used here refer to the enjoyment of a period of peace and stability and the reversal of the curse (contrast, e.g., Deut 28:30). The Hebrew word translated “enjoy its fruit” is a technical one that refers to the owner of a vineyard getting to enjoy its fruit in the fifth year after it was planted, the crop of the first three years lying fallow, and that of the fourth being given to the Lord (cf. Lev 19:23-25).
3 sn Watchmen were stationed at vantage points to pass on warnings of coming attack (Jer 6:17; Ezek 33:2, 6) or to spread the news of victory (Isa 52:8). Here reference is made to the watchmen who signaled the special times of the year such as the new moon and festival times when Israel was to go to Jerusalem to worship. Reference is not made to these in the Hebrew Bible but there is a good deal of instruction regarding them in the later Babylonian Talmud.
4 sn Not only will Israel and Judah be reunited under one ruler (cf. 23:5-6), but they will share a unified place and practice of worship once again in contrast to Israel using the illicit places of worship, illicit priesthood, and illicit feasts instituted by Jeroboam (1 Kgs 12:26-31) and continued until the downfall of Samaria.
5 sn See the translator’s notes on 30:5, 12.
6 sn Heb “for the head/chief of the nations.” See BDB 911 s.v. Aviv 3.c and compare usage in Ps 18:44 referring to David as the “chief” or “foremost ruler” of the nations.
7 tn It is unclear who the addressees of the masculine plural imperatives are in this verse. Possibly they are the implied exiles living in the process of returning and praying for their fellow countrymen.
8 tc Or “The Lord will rescue his people. He will deliver those of Israel who remain alive.” The translation used in the text follows the Hebrew: “Rescue your people, O Lord, the remnant of Israel.” The alternate translation which is preferred by several modern English versions (e.g., REB, TEV) and a majority of modern commentaries (see, e.g., J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 569; J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 273, n. s-s) follows the reading of the Greek version and the Aramaic Targum and appears more appropriate to the context of praise presupposed by the preceding imperatives. The difference in the two readings are the omission of one vowel letter and the confusion of a final ג (kaf) and a ג (holem-vav) which are very similar in form. [The Greek presupposes ἀρχῆς τῆς ἁμαρτίας (arke's tēs amartias) for the Hebrew הושע יוה, ἀρχῆς τῆς ἁμαρτίας (hoshu' yhwh et'amartihs).] The key to a decision here is the shift from the verbs of praise to the imperative “say” which introduces the quotation: there is a shift from praise to petition. The shift in mood is not uncommon, occurring, for example, in Ps 118:25 and 126:4; it is the shift in mood between praise for what has begun to petition for what is further hoped for. It is easier to explain the origin contextually of the Greek and Targum than it is the Hebrew text, thus the Greek and Targum are probably a secondary smoothing of the text (this is the decision of the D. Barthélemy, ed., Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project, 4:263). The mood of prayer also shows up in v. 9 and again in vv. 17-18.
9 tn The words “And I will reply” are not in the text but the words vv. 8-9 appear to be the answer to the petition at the end of v. 7. These words are supplied in the translation for clarity.
10 tn Heb “They will come with weeping; I will bring them with supplication.” The ideas of contrition and repentance are implicit from the context (cf. vs. 18-19) and are supplied for clarity.
11 sn Jer 31:8-9 are reminiscent of the “New Exodus” motif of Isa 40:6-66 which has already been referred to in Jer 16:14-15; 23:7-8. See especially Isa 35:3-10; 40:3-5, 11; 41:17-20; 42:14-17; 43:16-21; 49:9-13. As there, the New Exodus will so outstrip the old that the old will pale in comparison and be almost forgotten (see Jer 23:7-8).
12 sn Ephraim was the second son of Joseph who was elevated to a place of prominence in the family of Jacob by the patriarch’s special blessing. It was the strongest tribe in northern Israel and Samaria lay in its territory. It is often used as a poetic parallel for Israel as here. The poetry is not speaking of two separate entities here; it is a way of repeating an idea for emphasis. Moreover, there is no intent to show special preference for northern Israel over Judah. All Israel is metaphorically God’s son and the object of his special care and concern (Exod 4:22; Deut 32:6).
13 sn Two rather theologically significant metaphors are used in this verse. The Hebrew word translated “will secure...release” is a word used in the legal sphere for paying a redemption price to secure the freedom of a person or thing (see, e.g., Exod 13:13, 15). It is used metaphorically and theologically to refer to Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Deut 15:15; Mic 6:4) and its deliverance from Babylonian exile (Isa 53:10). The word translated “secure their release” is a word used in the sphere of family responsibility where a person paid the price to free an indentured relative (Lev 25:48, 49) or paid the price to restore a relative’s property seized to pay a debt (Lev 25:25-33). This word, too, was used to refer metaphorically and theologically to Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Exod 6:6) or release from...
who had overpowered them.  

31:12 They will come and shout for joy on Mount Zion. They will be radiant with joy over the good things the LORD provides, the grain, the fresh wine, the olive oil, the young sheep and calves he has given to them. They will be like a well-watered garden and will not grow faint or weary any more.

31:13 The LORD says,  

“At that time young women will dance and be glad.

Young men and old men will rejoice.

I will give them comfort and joy in place of their sorrow.

31:14 I will provide the priests with abundant provisions. My people will be filled to the full with the good things I provide.”

31:15 The LORD says,  

“A sound is heard in Ramah, a sound of crying in bitter grief. It is the sound of Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are gone.”

Babylonian exile (Isa 43:1-4; 44:22). These words are traditionally translated “ransom” and “redeem” and are a part of traditional Jewish and Christian vocabulary for physical and spiritual return to the land.

1 tn Heb “from the hand/power of the one too strong for him.”

2 tn Reading a Qal perfect from the root לְכַח (nakhar; see KBL 509 s.v. and HALOT 639 s.v.) rather than לְכַח (so BDB 625 s.v.).

3 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.” This phrase has been brought up to the beginning of v. 13 from the end of v. 14 to introduce the transition from third person description by Jeremiah to first person address by the LORD.

4 tc The translation follows the reading of the LXX (Greek version). The Hebrew reads “will dance and be glad, young men and old men together.” The Greek version presupposes a Qal imperfect of a rare verb (יְחַדּ (yakhdu) from the verb יָחַד (yakhdav)). The consonantal text is the same but the vocalization is different. The transition from third person description by Jeremiah to first person address by the LORD is a familiar term is used, the term “people” added to it, and plural pronouns used throughout the verse to aid in understanding. The use of “indeed” is intended to reflect the infinitive absolute which precedes the verb for emphasis (see IBHS 585-86 §35.3.1f).

5 tn Heb “like an untrained calf.” The metaphor is that of a calf who has never been broken to bear the yoke (cf. Hos 5:11). The more familiar term is Ephraim.” See the study note on 31:9. The more plural provisions used throughout the verse to aid in understanding.

6 sn Ramah is a town in Benjamin approximately five miles (8 km) north of Jerusalem. It was on the road between Bethel and Bethlehem. Traditionally, Rachel’s tomb was located near there at a place called Zelzah (1 Sam 10:2). Rachel was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin and was very concerned about having children because she was barren (Gen 30:1-2) and went to great lengths to have them (Gen 30:3, 14-15, 22-24). She was the grandmother of Ephraim and Manasseh who were two of the major tribes in northern Israel. Here Rachel is viewed metaphorically as weeping for her “children,” the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who had been carried away into captivity in 722 b.c.

7 Or “gone into exile” (cf. v. 16), though some English versions take this as meaning “dead” (e.g., NCV, CEV, NLT), presumably in light of Matt 2:18.

8 tn The words “to her” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

9 tn Heb “Refrain your voice from crying and your eyes from tears.”

10 tn Heb “your work.” Contextually her “work” refers to her weeping and refusing to be comforted, that is, signs of genuine repentance (v. 15).

11 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

12 tn For this nuance for the Hebrew word וּרְמֹא (varkharet) see BDB 31 s.v. וּרְמֹא d and compare usage in Pss 37:38; 109:13. Others translate “your future” but the “future” lies with the return of her descendants, her posterity.

13 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

14 tn The use of “indeed” is intended to reflect the infinitive absolute which precedes the verb for emphasis (see IBHS 585-86 §35.3.1f).

15 tn Heb “Ephraim.” See the study note on 31:9. The more familiar term is used, the term “people” added to it, and plural pronouns used throughout the verse to aid in understanding.

16 tn Heb “like an untrained calf.” The metaphor is that of a calf who has never been broken to bear the yoke (cf. Hos 4:15; 10:11).

17 sn Jer 2:20; 5:5 already referred to Israel’s refusal to bear the yoke of loyalty and obedience to the LORD’s demands. Here Israel expresses that she has learned from the discipline of exile and is ready to bear his yoke.

18 tn The verb here is from the same root as the preceding and is probably an example of the “tolerative Niphal,” i.e., “let myself be disciplined/I responded to it.” See IBHS 389-90 §23.4g and note the translation of some of the examples there, especially Isa 19:22; 65:1.

19 tn Heb “Bring me back in order that I may come back.” For the use of the plural pronouns see the marginal note at the beginning of the verse. The verb “bring back” and “come back” are from the same root in two different verbal stems and in the context express the idea of spiritual repentance and restoration of relationship not physical return to the land. (See BBD 999 s.v. בָּשַׁד Hiph.2a for the first verb and 997 s.v. בָּשַׁד.6c for the second.) For the use of the cohortative to express purpose after the imperative see GKC 320 §108.d or IBHS 575 §34.5.2b.

sn There is a wordplay on several different nuances of the same Hebrew verb in vv. 16-17. The Hebrew verb shub refers both to their turning away from God (v. 19) and to their turning back to him (v. 18). It is also the word that is used for their return to their homeland (vv. 16-17).
Mark off in your minds the landmarks. Make a mental note of telltale signs marking the way back. Return, my dear children of Israel. Return to these cities of yours.

31:22 How long will you vacillate, you who were once like an unfaithful daughter? For I, the Lord, promise to bring about something new on the earth, something as unique as a woman protecting a man! Judah Will Be Restored

31:23 The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says,
“I will restore the people of Judah to their land and to their towns. When I do, they will again say of Jerusalem,2° ‘May the LORD bless you, you holy mountain, the place where righteousness dwells.’ 3

31:24 The land of Judah will be inhabited by people who live in its towns as well as by farmers and shepherds with their flocks.4

31:25 I will fully satisfy the needs of those who are weary and fully refresh the souls of those who are faint.5

31:26 Then they will say, ‘Under these conditions I can enjoy sweet sleep when I wake up and look around.’”6

1 tn Heb “They [i.e., people (the indefinite plural, GKC 460 §144.g)] will again say in the land of Judah and in its cities when I restore their fortunes.” For the meaning of the idiom “to restore the fortunes” see the translator’s note on 29:14.
2 tn The words “of Jerusalem” are not in the text but it is implicit in the titles that follow. They have been supplied in the translation for clarity to aid in identifying the referent.
3 sn For location see Map 5-B1; Map 6-F3; Map 7-E2; Map 8-F2; Map 10-B3; JPP-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4. See GKC §130.a. It is generally agreed that three classes of people are referred to here, townspeople, farmers, and shepherds. But the syntax of the Hebrew sentence is a little awkward: “And they [i.e., “people” (the indefinite plural, GKC 460 §144.g)] will live in it, Judah and all its cities [an apposition of nearer definition (GKC 425-26 §131.n)], [along with] farmers and those who move about with their flocks.” The Hebrew refers awkwardly to the townspeople and the other two classes are added asyndetically (i.e., without the conjunction “and”).
4 tn The translation “those who move about with their flocks” is based on an emendation of the Hebrew text which reads a third plural Qal perfect (נָסְעוּ, nosû), to a masculine plural Qal participle in the construct (נָסְעִים, nosû‘) as suggested by the BHS fn. For the use of the construct participle before a noun see GKC §130.c. See GKC §130.a. It is generally agreed that three classes of people are referred to here, townspeople, farmers, and shepherds. But the syntax of the Hebrew sentence is a little awkward: “And they [i.e., “people” (the indefinite plural, GKC 460 §144.g)] will live in it, Judah and all its cities [an apposition of nearer definition (GKC 425-26 §131.n)], [along with] farmers and those who move about with their flocks.” The Hebrew refers awkwardly to the townspeople and the other two classes are added asyndetically (i.e., without the conjunction “and”).
5 tn The verbs here again emphasize that the actions are as good as done (i.e., they are prophetic perfects; cf. GKC 312-13 §106.n).
6 tn For the concept here compare Jer 31:12 where the promise was applied to northern Israel. This represents the reversal of the conditions that would characterize the exiles around. My sleep had been very pleasant.” The text is something like what enigmatic. It has often been explained as an indication that Jeremiah had received this communication (30:3–31:26) while in a prophetic trance (compare Dan 10:9). However, there is no other indication that this is a vision or a vision report. G. L. Keown, J. P. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26–52 [WBC], 124, 128-29) suggest that this is a speech of the restored (and refreshed) exiles like that which is formally introduced in v. 23. This speech, however, is not formally introduced. This interpretation is also reflected in TEV, CEV and is accepted here as fitting the context better and demanding less presuppositions. The Holder of the text reads literally. “Upon this I awoke and looked and my sleep was sweet to me.” Keown, Scalise, and Smothers have the best discussion of these two options as well as several other options.
7 tn Heb “Behold days are coming!” The particle “Behold” is probably used here to emphasize the reality of a fact. See the translator’s note on 1:6.
8 sn This same expression is found in the introduction to the Book of Consolation (Jer 30:1-3) and in the introduction to the promise of a new covenant (or covenant: 31:31). In all these passages it is emphasized that the conditions apply to both Israel and Judah. The Lord will reverse their fortunes and restore them to their lands (30:3), increase their numbers and build them up (31:27-28), and make a new covenant with them involving forgiveness of sins (31:31-34).
9 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
10 sn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
11 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
12 tn This word only occurs here and in the parallel passage in Ezek 18:2 in the Qal stem and in Ecd 10:10 in the Piel stem. In the latter passage it refers to the bluntness of an ax that has not been sharpened. Here the idea is of the “bluntness” of the teeth from having been down due to the bitter taste of sour grapes but to the fact that they have lost their “edge,” “bite,” or “sharpness” because they are numb from the sour taste. For this meaning for the word see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 2:197.
13 tn This is a proverbial statement that is also found in Ezek 18:2. It served to articulate the complaint that the present generation was suffering for the accrued sins of their ancestors (cf. Lam 5:7) and that the Lord was hence unjust (Ezek 18:25, 29). However, Jeremiah had repeatedly warned his own generation that they were as guilty or even more so than their ancestors. The ancestors were indeed guilty of sin but the present generation had compounded the problem by their stubborn refusal to turn back to God despite repeated warnings from the prophets and hence God would withhold judgment no longer (cf. especially Jer 16:10-13 and compare Jer 7:24-34; 9:12-16 [9:11-15 HT]; 11:1-13).
sins. The teeth of the person who eats the sour grapes will themselves grow numb.\(^1\) 31:31 “Indeed, a time is coming,” says the Lord,\(^2\) “when I will make a new covenant\(^3\) with the people of Israel and Judah.\(^4\) 31:32 It will not be like the old\(^5\) covenant that I made with their ancestors\(^6\) when I delivered them from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them,”\(^7\) says the Lord.\(^8\) 31:33 “But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel\(^10\) after I plant them back in the land.”\(^11\) says the Lord.\(^12\) “I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds.\(^13\) I will be their God and they will be my people.\(^14\) 31:34 “People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me.\(^15\) For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me,”\(^16\) says the Lord. “For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done.”

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\(^1\) sn The Lord answers their charge by stating that each person is responsible for his own sin and will himself bear the consequences. Ezek 18 has a more extended treatment of this and shows that this extends not just to the link between parents and children but between former behavior and future behavior of the same individual. To a certain extent the principle articulated here is anticipatory of the statement in v. 34 which refers to the forgiveness of former sins.

\(^2\) tn In Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^3\) tn Or “a renewed covenant” (also in vv. 22-23).

\(^4\) tn Heb “the house of Israel and the house of Judah.”

\(^5\) tn The word “old” is not in the text but is implicit in the use of the word “new.” It is supplied in the translation for greater clarity.

\(^6\) tn In Heb “fathers.”

\(^7\) sn This refers to the Mosaic covenant which the nation entered into with God at Sinai and renewed on the plains of Moab. The primary biblical passages explicating this covenant are Exod 19–24 and the book of Deuteronomy; see as well the study note on Jer 1:12: for the form this covenant took and the prophet’s response to it (see the note on Jer 1:12). But it is apparent from Jeremiah’s confrontation with Judah after that time that the commitment of the people was only superficial (cf. Jer 3:10). The prior history of the nations of Israel and Judah and Judah’s current practice had been one of persistent violation of this covenant despite repeated warnings of the prophets that God would punish them for that (see especially Jer 3-4). Because of that Jer 3:13 states that the law had been exiled (cf., e.g., Jer 3:8), and now Judah was threatened with the same (cf., e.g., Jer 7:15). Jer 30:31–3 look forward to a time when both Israel and Judah will be gathered, reunited, and under a new covenant which includes the same stipulations but with a different relationship (v. 32).

\(^8\) tn In Heb “when I took them by the hand and led them out.”

\(^9\) tn Or ‘1 was their master.” See the study note on 3:14.

\(^10\) sn The metaphor of Yahweh as husband and Israel as wife has been used already in Jer 3 and is implicit in the repeated allusions to idolatry as spiritual adultery or prostitution. The best commentary on the faithfulness of God to his “husband-like” relation is seen in the book of Hosea, especially in Hos 1:2.

\(^11\) tn In Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

\(^12\) tn Heb “with the house of Israel.” All commentators agree that the term here refers to both the whole nation which was divided into the house of Israel and the house of Judah in v. 30.

\(^13\) tn Heb “after those days.” Commentators are generally agreed that this refers to the return from exile and the repopulation of the land referred to in vv. 27-28 and not to something subsequent to the time mentioned in v. 30. This is the sequencing that is also presupposed in other new covenant passages such as Deut 30:1-6; Ezek 11:17-20; 36:24-28.

\(^14\) tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
Jeremiah 31:35

The Lord Guarantees Israel’s Continuance

31:35 The LORD has made a promise to Israel. He promises it as the one who fixed the sun to give light by day and the moon and stars to give light by night. He promises it as the one who stirs up the sea so that its waves roll. He promises it as the one who is known as the LORD who rules over all.

31:36 The LORD affirms, “The descendants of Israel will not cease forever to be a nation in my sight. That could only happen if the fixed ordering of the heavenly lights were to cease to operate before me.”

31:37 The LORD says, “I will not reject all the descendants of Israel because of all that they have done. That could only happen if the heavens above could be measured or the foundations of the earth below could all be explored.”

31:38 “Indeed a time is coming,” says the LORD, “when the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt as my special city. It will be built from the Tower of Hananel westward to the Corner Gate. The boundary line will extend beyond that, straight west from there to the hill of Gareb and then turn southward to Goah. The whole valley where dead bodies and sacrificial ashes are thrown and all the terraced fields out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far north as the Horse Gate will be included within this city that is sacred to the LORD. The city will never again be torn down or destroyed.”

7 tc The words “is coming” (בָּאִים, ba’im) are not in the written text (Kethib) but are supplied in the margin (Qere), in several Hebrew MSS and in the versions. It is part of the idiom that also occurs in v. 27, 31.

8 sn On this idiom compare v. 27, 31.

9 map For location see Map 5:B1; Map 6:F3; Map 7:E2; Map 8:F2; Map 10:B3; Jp1:F4; Jp2:F4; Jp3:F4; Jp4:F4.

10 tn Heb “the city will be built to [or for] the LORD.” The words “of Jerusalem” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation for clarity. However, the word occurs in a first person speech so the translation has accommodated the switch in person as it has in a number of other places (compare also NIV, TEV, ICC).

11 tn The word “westward” is not in the text but is supplied in the translation to give some orientation.

12 sn The Tower of Hananel is referred to in Neh 3:1; 12:39; Zech 14:10. According to the directions given in Neh 3 it was in the northern wall, perhaps in the northeast corner, north of the temple mount. The Corner Gate is mentioned again in 2 Kgs 14:13; 2 Chr 25:23; 26:9; Zech 14:10. It is generally agreed that it was located in the northwest corner of the city.

13 sn It is generally agreed that this refers to the Hinnom Valley which was both the southwestern and southern side of the city. It was here where the people of Jerusalem had burned their children as sacrifices and where the LORD had said that there would be so many dead bodies when he punished them that they would be unable to bury all of them (cf. Jer 7:31-32). Reference here may be to those dead bodies and to the ashes of the cremated victims. This defiled place would be included within the holy city.

14 tc The translation here follows the Qere and a number of Hebrew MSS in reading אַחֲרֵי (akhare) for the otherwise unknown word לְאַחֲרֵי (leakhare) exhibiting the common confusion of ג (gath) and ח (daleth). The fields of Kidron are mentioned also in 2 Kgs 23:4 as the place where Josiah burned the cult objects of Baal.

15 sn The Kidron Valley is the valley that joins the Hinnom Valley in the southwestern corner of the city and runs northward on the east side of the city.

16 tn The words “on the east” and “north” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to give orientation.

17 sn The Horse Gate is mentioned in Neh 3:28 and is generally considered to have been located midway along the eastern wall just south of the temple area.

18 tn The words “will be included within this city that is” are not in the text. The text merely says that “The whole valley... will be sacred to the LORD.” These words have been supplied in the translation because they are really implicit in the de-
Jeremiah Buys a Field

32:1 In the tenth year that Zedekiah was ruling over Judah the LORD spoke to Jeremiah. That was the same as the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

32:2 Now at that time, the armies of the king of Babylon were besieging Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse attached to the royal palace of Judah. 32:3 For King Zedekiah^5 had confined Jeremiah there after he had reproved him for prophesying as he did. He had asked Jeremiah, "Why do you keep prophesying these things? Why do you keep saying that the LORD says, 'I will hand this city over to the king of Babylon'? I will let him capture it. 32:4 King Zedekiah of Judah will not escape from the Babylonians. He will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon. He must answer personally to the king of Babylon and confront him face to face. 32:5 Zedekiah will be carried off to Babylon and will remain there until I have fully dealt with him. 32:6 Even if you^6 continue to fight against the Babylonians, you cannot win."

32:6 So now, Jeremiah said, "The LORD told me,32:7 'Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, will come to you soon. He will say to

scription of the whole area as being included within the new city plan, not just the Hinnom and terraced fields as far as the Kidron Valley.

The area that is here delimited is larger than any of the known boundaries of Jerusalem during the OT period. Again, this refers to the increase in population of the restored community (cf. 31:27).

sn The dating formulas indicate that the date was 588/87 B.C. Zedekiah had begun to reign in 598/97 and Nebuchadnezzar had begun to reign in 605/604 B.C. The dating of Nebuchadnezzar's rule here includes the partial year before he was officially crowned on New Year's day. See the translator's note on 25:1 for the method of dating a king's reign.

2 sn Jer 32:2-5 are parenthetical, giving the background for the actual report of what the LORD said in v. 7. The background is significant because it shows that Jeremiah was predicting the fall of the city and the kingdom and was being held prisoner for doing so. Despite this pessimistic outlook, the LORD wanted Jeremiah to demonstrate his assurance of the prophecies he had been given. (This has been a consistent topic of the two preceding chapters) by buying a field as a symbolic act that the Israelites would again one day regain possession of their houses, fields, and vineyards (vv. 15, 44). (For other symbolic acts with prophetic import see Jer 13, 19.)

3 sn According to Jer 39:1 the siege began in Zedekiah's ninth year (i.e., in 589/88 B.C.). It had been interrupted while the Babylonian army was occupied with fighting against an Egyptian force that had invaded Judah. During this period of relaxed siege Jeremiah had attempted to go to his hometown town in Anathoth to settle some property matters, had been accused of treason, and been thrown into a dungeon (37:11-15). After appealing to Zedekiah he had been moved from the dungeon to the courtyard of the guardhouse connected to the palace. This remains Jeremiah's confinement until Jerusalem was captured in 587/86 B.C. (38:28).

4 Map for location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

5 tn Heb "the courtyard of the guarding" or "place of guarding." This expression occurs only in the book of Jeremiah (32:2, 8, 12; 33:1; 37:21; 38:6, 12, 28; 39:14, 15) and in Neh 3:25. It is not the same as an enclosed prison which is here, Hanamel was initially confined (Jer 32:15-16; literally a "house of imprisoning") (ירש עב, bet ha'esur) or "house of confining" (ירש עב, bet hakkele). It is said to have been in the palace compound (32:2) near the citadel or upper palace (Neh 3:25). Though it was a place of confinement (32:2; 33:1; 39:15) Jeremiah was able to receive visitors, e.g., his cousin Hanamel (32:8) and the scribe Baruch (32:12), and conduct business there (32:12). According to 32:17 other Judeans were also housed there. A cistern of one of the royal princes, Malkijah, was located in this courtyard, so this probably was not a "prison compound" as NJPS interpret but a courtyard adjacent to a guardhouse or guard post (so G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 [WBC], 151, and compare Neh 12:39 where reference is made to a Gate of the Guard/ Guardhouse used here for housing political prisoners who did not deserve death or solitary confinement as some of the officials thought Jeremiah did.

6 tn Heb "Zedekiah king of Judah."

7 tn The translation represents an attempt to break up a very long Hebrew sentence with several levels of subordination and embedded quotations and also an attempt to capture the rhetorical force of the question "Why..." which is probably an example of what E. W. Bullinger (Figures of Speech, 953-54) calls a rhetorical question of expostulation or remonstrance (cf. the note on 26:9 and compare also the question in 36:29. In all three of these cases NJPS translates "How dare you..." which captures the force nicely). The Hebrew text reads, "For Zedekiah king of Judah had confined him, saying, 'Why are you prophesying, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Behold I am giving this city into the hands of the king of Babylon and he will capture it.''"

8 tn Heb "The Chaldeans." See the study note on 21:4 for further explanation.

9 sn "This is probably an example of what E. W. Bullinger (Figures of Speech, 508-9 §31.4g) calls a rhetorical question of expostulation and embedded quotations and also an attempt to capture the rhetorical force of the question "Why..." which is probably an example of what E. W. Bullinger (Figures of Speech, 953-54) calls a rhetorical question of expostulation or remonstrance (cf. the note on 26:9 and compare also the question in 36:29. In all three of these cases NJPS translates "How dare you..." which captures the force nicely). The Hebrew text reads, "For Zedekiah king of Judah had confined him, saying, 'Why are you prophesying, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, 'Behold I am giving this city into the hands of the king of Babylon and he will capture it.''"

10 tn Heb "Oracle of the LORD."

11 sn The pronouns are plural here, referring to the people of Judah and Jerusalem. Jeremiah had counseled that they surrender (cf. 27:12; 21:8-10) because they couldn't succeed against the Babylonian army even under the most favorable circumstances (37:3-10).

12 tn Heb "The Chaldeans." See the study note on 21:4 for further explanation.

13 tn Heb "The word of the LORD came to me, saying." This verse resumes the narrative introduction in v. 1 which was interrupted by the long parenthetical note about historical background. There is again some disjunction in the narrative (compare the translator's notes on 27:2 and 28:1). What was begun as a biographical (third person) narrative turns into an autobiographical (first person) narrative until v. 26 where the third person is again resumed. Again this betrays the hand of the narrator, Baruch.
you, “Buy my field at Anathoth because you are entitled as my closest relative to buy it.” 3:8 Now it happened just as the Lord had said! My cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guardhouse. He said to me, ‘Buy my field which is at Anathoth in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. Buy it for yourself since you are entitled as my closest relative to take possession of it for yourself.’ When this happened, I recognized that the Lord had indeed spoken to me. 3:9 So I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel. I weighed out seven ounces of silver and gave it to him to pay for it. 3:10 I signed the deed of purchase, sealed it, and had some men serve as witnesses to the purchase. 3:11 I weighed out the silver for him on a scale. 3:12 There were two copies of the deed of purchase. One was sealed and contained the order of transfer and the conditions of purchase. The other was left unsealed. 3:12 I took both copies of the deed of purchase and gave them to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah. I gave them to him in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, the witnesses who had signed the deed of purchase, and all the Judeans who were housed in the courtyard of the guardhouse. 3:13 In the presence of all these people I instructed Baruch, 3:14 ‘The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “Take these documents, both the sealed copy of the deed of purchase and the unsealed copy. Put them in a clay jar so that they may be preserved for a long time to come.” ’ 3:15 For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land.”

Jeremiah’s Prayer of Praise and Bewilderment

3:16 “After I had given the copies of the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the Lord, 3:17 ‘Oh, Lord God, you

9 tn Heb “I took the deed of purchase, both that which was sealed [and contained] the order and the regulations and that which was open [i.e., unsealed], and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch...in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and in the presence of...and in the presence of...’ It is awkward to begin a sentence with “I took...” without finishing the thought, and the long qualifiers in v. 12 make that sentence too long. The sentence is broken up in accordance with contemporary English style. The reference to the “deed of purchase” in v. 12 should be viewed as a plural consisting of both written and sealed copies as is clear from v. 11 and also v. 14. Part of the confusion is due to the nature of this document which consisted of a single papyrus scroll, half of which was rolled up and sealed and the other half which was left “opened” or unsealed. J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 237-38) is probably incorrect in assuming that the copies were duplicate since the qualification “containing the order of transfer and the regulations” is only applied to the appositional participle, “the sealed one [or copy].”

10 tc The translation follows a number of Hebrew MSS and the Greek and Syriac versions in reading “the son of my uncle (= my cousin; בֶּן עֲנֵה הָשִּׁירֵי, ben dodi).” The majority of Hebrew MSS do not have the word “son of (אֲבָדַּד).”

11 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title see 7:3 and the study notes on 2:19.

12 tn Heb “many days.” See BDB s.v. מִלָּה 5.b for this usage.

13 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title see 7:3 and the study notes on 2:19.

14 sn The significance of the symbolic act performed by Jeremiah as explained here was a further promise (see the “again” statements in 31:4, 5, 23 and the “no longer” statements in 31:12, 29, 34, 40) of future restoration beyond the destruction implied in vv. 3-5. After the interruption of exile, normal life of buying and selling of fields, etc. would again be resumed and former property rights would be recognized.

15 tn Heb “Lord Yahweh.” For an explanation of the rendering here see the study note on 1:6.

16 sn The parallel use of the introduction in Jer 1:6; 4:10; 14:13 shows that though this prayer has a lengthy introductory section of praise in vv. 17-22, this prayer is really one of complaint or lament.

JEREMIAH 32:8

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did indeed^2 make heaven and earth by your mighty power and great strength. Nothing is too hard for you! 32:18 You show unfailing love to thousands. But you also punish children for the sins of their parents. You are the great and powerful God who is known as the Lord who rules over all. 32:19 You plan great things and you do mighty deeds. You see everything people do. You reward each of them for the way they live and for the things they do. 32:20 You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt which have had lasting effect. By this means you gained both in Israel and among humankind a renown that lasts to this day. 32:21 You used your mighty power and your great strength to perform miracles and amazing deeds and to bring great terror on the Egyptians. By this means you brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt. 32:22 You kept the promise that you swore on oath to their ancestors. You gave them a land flowing with milk and honey. But when they came in and took possession of it, they did not obey you or live as you had instructed them. They did not do anything that you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster on them. 32:24 Even now siege ramps have been built up around the city in order to capture it. War, starvation, and disease are sure to make the city fall into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. You threatened that this would happen. Now you can see that it is already taking place. 32:25 The city is sure to fall into the hands of the Babylonians. Yet, in spite of this, you, Lord God, have said to me, “Buy that field with silver and have the transaction legally witnessed.”

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^1 tn This is an attempt to render the Hebrew particle normally translated “behind.” See the translator’s note on 1:6 for the usage of this particle.
^2 in Heb “by your great power and your outstretched arm.” See 21:5, 27:5 and the marginal note on 27:5 for this idiom.
^3 in Or “to thousands of generations.” The contrast of short expanse of time to “thousands of generations” of punishing the third and fourth generation of children for their parents’ sins in Exod 20:5-6; Deut 5:9-10; Exod 34:7 has suggested to many commentators and translators (cf., e.g., NRSV, TEV, NJPS) that reference here is to “thousands of generations.” The statement is, of course, rhetorical emphasizing God’s great desire to bless as opposed to the reluctant necessity to punish. It is part of the attributes of God spelled out in Exod 34:6-7.

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In Hebrew “pays back into the bosom of their children the sin of their parents.”
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In Hebrew “Nothing is too hard for you who shew...and who punishes...the great [and] powerful God whose name is Yahweh of armies, [you who are] great in counsel...whose eyes are open...who did signs...” Jer 32:18-22 is a long series of relative clauses introduced by participles or relative pronouns showing steadfast love to “thousands” to the limitation of “at least one generation” (Heb “to thousands of generations.”)

Or “to thousands of generations.” The contrast of short expanse of time to “thousands of generations” of punishing the third and fourth generation of children for their parents’ sins in Exod 20:5-6; Deut 5:9-10; Exod 34:7 has suggested to many commentators and translators (cf., e.g., NRSV, TEV, NJPS) that reference here is to “thousands of generations.” The statement is, of course, rhetorical emphasizing God’s great desire to bless as opposed to the reluctant necessity to punish. It is part of the attributes of God spelled out in Exod 34:6-7.

In Hebrew “great in counsel and mighty in deed.”

In Hebrew “your eyes are open to the ways of the sons of men.”

In Hebrew “giving to each according to his way [= behavior/conduct] and according to the fruit of his deeds.”

In Hebrew “You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt. And you continue to do them until this day both in Israel and among mankind. By this means you have gained a renown...” The translation here follows the syntactical understanding reflected also in NJPS. The Hebrew text reads: “you did miracles and marvelous acts in the land of Egypt until this day and in Israel and in mankind and you made for yourself a name as this day.” The majority of English versions and contemporary English translations prefer the paraphrase “You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt until this day and in Israel and in mankind” to be an elliptical sentence with the preceding verb and objects supplied as reflected in the alternate translation. However, the emphasis on the miraculous deeds in Egypt in this section both before and after this elliptical phrase and the dominant usage of the terms “signs and wonders” to refer to the plagues and other miraculous signs in Egypt calls this interpretation into question. The key here is understanding “both in Israel and in mankind” as an example of a casus pendens construction (a dangling subject, object, or other modifier) before a conjunction introducing the main clause (cf. GKC 327 §111:h and 458 §143:d and compare the usage in Jer 6:19; 33:24; 1 Kgs 15:13). This verse is the topic sentence which is developed further in v. 21 and initiates a narrative history of the distant past that continues until v. 22b where reference is made to the long history of disobedience which has led to the present crisis.

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In Hebrew “You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders and with a mighty hand and with outstretched arm and with great terror.” For the figurative expressions involved here see the marginal notes on 27:5. The sentence has been broken down to better conform to contemporary English style.

In Hebrew “fathers.”

In Hebrew “a land flowing with milk and honey” see the translator’s note on 11:5.

In Hebrew “They did not do everything that you commanded them to do.” This is probably a case where the negative (וּלָּא, ‘lo’) negates the whole category indicated by “all” (כָּל, kol; see BDB 482 s.v. כָּל (e) and compare usage in Deut 12:16; 28:14). Jeremiah has repeatedly emphasized that the history of Israel since their entry into the land has been one of persistent disobedience and rebellion (cf., e.g. 7:22-26; 11:7-8). The statement, of course, is somewhat hyperbolical as all categorical statements of this kind are.

In Hebrew “Siege ramps have come up to the city to capture it.”

In Hebrew “sward.”

In Hebrew “The Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for further explanation.

In Hebrew “And the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it because of the sword, starvation, and disease.” The word “has been given” is one of those perfects that view the action as good as done (the perfect of certainty or prophetic perfect).

In the Word “Lozo” is not in the text but is supplied in the translation as a reminder that it is he who is being addressed.

In Hebrew “And what you said has happened and beheld you see it.”

In Hebrew “The Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for further explanation.

In Hebrew “And you, Lord Yahweh, have said to me, ‘Buy the field for...’ even though the city will be given into the hands of the Babylonians.” The sentence has been broken up and the order reversed for English stylistic purposes. For the rendering “is sure to fall into the hands of” see the translator’s note on the preceding verse.

In Hebrew “Lord God.” For the rendering of this title see the study note on 1:6.

In Hebrew “call in witnesses to witness.”
The Lord Answers Jeremiah's Prayer

32:26 The Lord answered Jeremiah.  
32:27 “I am the Lord, the God of all humankind. There is, indeed, nothing too difficult for me.  
32:28 Therefore, I, the Lord, say: I will indeed hand this city over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonian army. They will capture it.  
32:29 The Babylonian soldiers that are attacking this city will break into it and set it on fire. They will burn it down along with the houses where people have made me angry by offering sacrifices to the god Baal and by pouring out drink offerings to other gods on their rooftops.  
32:30 This will happen because the people of Israel and Judah have repeatedly done what displeases me from their earliest history until now, and because they have repeatedly made me angry by the things they have done. I, the Lord, affirm it.  
32:31 This will happen because the people of this city have aroused my anger and my wrath since the time they built it until now. They have made me so angry that I am determined to remove it from my sight.  
32:32 I am determined to do so because the people of Israel and Judah have made me angry with all their wickedness – they, their kings, their officials, their priests, their prophets, and especially the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have done this wickedness.  
32:33 They have turned away from me instead of turning to me. I tried over and over again to instruct them, but they did not listen and respond to correction.  
32:34 They set up their disgusting idols in the temple which I have claimed for my own and defiled it.  
32:35 They built places of worship for the god Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom so that they could sacrifice their sons and daughters to the god Molech. Such a disaster has been broken up in conformity with contemporary English style and an attempt has been made to preserve the causal connections.

14 tn Heb “from the day they built it until this day.”

15 sn The Israelites did not in fact “build” Jerusalem. They captured it from the Jebusites in the time of David. This refers perhaps to the enlarging and fortifying of the city after it came into the hands of the Israelites (2 Sam 5:6-10).

16 tn Heb “For this city has been to me for a source of my anger and my wrath from the day they built it until this day so as to remove it.” The preposition ד (lamed) with the infinitive יָשָׁר (yashar) expresses degree (cf. R. J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 37, §199, and compare usage in 2 Sam 13:2).

17 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F2; Map7-E3; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; J1-P4; J2-P4; J3-P4; J4-P4.

18 tn Heb “remove it from my sight.” Because of all the wickedness of the children of Israel and the children of Judah which they have done to make me angry, their kings and their officials, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” The sentence has been broken up in conformity with contemporary English style and an attempt has been made to preserve the causal connections.

19 tn Heb “they have turned [their] backs to me, not [their] faces.” Compare the same idiom in 2:27.

20 tn For the idiom involved here see the translator’s note on 7:13. The verb that introduces this clause is a Piel infinitive absolute which is functioning in place of the finite verb (see, e.g., GKC 346 §113.ff and compare usage in Jer 8:15; 14:19. This grammatical point means that the versions cited in BHS fn a may not be reading a different text after all, but may merely be interpreting the form as syntactically equivalent to a finite verb because the presence of the preposition to instruct them, but they did not listen and respond to correction.

21 sn Heb “the house which is called by my name.” Cf. 7:10, 11, 14 and see the translator’s note on 7:10 for the explanation for this rendering.

22 sn Compare Jer 7:30-31; 19:5 and the study notes on 7:30. The god Molech is especially associated with the practice of child sacrifice (Lev 18:21; 20:2-5; 2 Kgs 23:10). In 1 Kgs 11:7 this god is identified as the god of the Ammonites who is also called Milcom in 1 Kgs 11:5; 2 Kgs 23:13. Child sacrifice, however, was not confined to this god; it was also made to the god Baal (Jer 19:5) and to other idols that the Israelites had set up (Ezek 16:20-21). This practice was, however, strictly prohibited in Israel (Lev 18:21; 20:2-5; Deut 12:31; 18:10). It was this practice as well as other pagan rites that Manasseh had instituted in Judah that ultimately led to Judah’s demise (2 Kgs 24:3-4). Though Josiah tried to root these pagan practices (2 Kgs 23:4-14) out of Judah he could not do so. The people had only made a pretense of following his reforms; their hearts were still far from God (Jer 3:10; 12:2).
gusting practice was not something I commanded them to do! It never even entered my mind to command them to do such a thing! So Judah is certainly liable for punishment.

32:36 “You and your people are right in saying, ‘War, starvation, and disease are sure to make this city fall into the hands of the king of Babylon.’ But now I, the Lord God of Israel, have something further to say about this city:

32:37 ‘I will certainly regather my people from all the countries where I will have exiled them. I will bring them back to this place and allow them to live here in safety. 32:38 They will be my people, and I will be their God. 32:39 I will give them a single-minded purpose to live in a way that always shows respect for me. They will want to do that for their own good and the good of the children who descend from them. 32:40 I will make a lasting covenant with them that I will

in my anger, fury, and great wrath. I will bring them back to this place and allow them to live here in safety.

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1 In Heb “They built high places to Baal which are in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to cause their sons and daughters to pass through [the fire] to Molech [a thing] which I did not command them and [which] did not go up into my heart = “mind” in modern psychology, to do this abomination, as to make Judah liable for punishment.” For the use of the Hiphil of הקָו (khaqav) to refer to the liability for punishment see BDB s.v. הָקַו. Hiph.3 and compare the usage in Deut 24:8. Coming at the end as this does, this nuance is much more likely than “cause Judah to sin” which is the normal translation assigned to the verb here. The particle עַל (‘al) that precedes it is for the sake of introducing a result and not a purpose to what precedes (compare other clear examples in 27:10, 15). The sentence has been broken down in conformity to contemporary English style and an attempt has been made to make clear that what is detestable and not commanded is not merely child sacrifice to Molech but child sacrifice in general.

2 In Heb “you.” However, the pronoun is plural and is addressed to more than just Jeremiah (v. 26). It includes Jeremiah and those who have accepted his prophecy of doom.

3 In Heb “sword.”

4 sn Compare Jer 32:24, 28. In 32:24 this is Jeremiah’s statement just before he expresses his perplexity about the Lord’s command to buy the field of his cousin in spite of the certainty of the city’s demise. In 32:28 it is the Lord’s affirmation that the city will indeed fall. Here, the Lord picks up Jeremiah’s assessment only to add a further prophecy (v. 37-41) of what is just as sure to happen (v. 42). This is the real answer to Jeremiah’s perplexity. Verses 28-35 are an assurance that the city will indeed be captured and a reiteration again of the certainty of the city’s demise. In 32:28 it is the city that the Lord says will be given back to his people [prophetic perfect = will be given] into the hands of the king of Babylon through sword, starvation, and disease.” The translation attempts to render the broader structure mentioned in the study note and to break the sentence down in a way that conforms more to contemporary English style and that will lead into the speech which does not begin until the next verse. As in v. 28 the third person introduction has been changed to first person for smoother narrative style in a first person speech (i.e., v. 27-44 are all the Lord’s answer to Jeremiah’s prayer). The words “right in” added to “are saying” are intended to reflect the connection between v. 28 and the statement here (which is a repetition of v. 24), i.e., God does not deny that Jeremiah’s assessment is correct; he affirms it but has something further to say in answer to Jeremiah’s prayer.

5 In the verb here should be interpreted as a future perfect; though some of the people have already been exiled (in 605 and 597 B.C.), some have not yet been exiled at the time this prophecy is given (see study note on v. 1 for the date). However, the love and reverence necessary to keep from turning away from him. The new covenant is not based on their past loyalty but on his gracious forgiveness and his gifts.

7 sn The covenant formula setting forth the basic relationship is rephrased along with the new covenant (v. 40). See also 24:7; 30:22; 31:1 and the study note on 30:22.

8 sn The new covenant appears to be similar to the ancient Near Eastern covenants of grants where a great king gave a loyal vassal a grant of land or dynastic dominion over a realm in perpetuity in recognition of past loyalty. The right to such was perpetual as long as the great king exercised dominion, but the actual enjoyment could be forfeited by individual members of the vassal’s dynasty. The best example of such an covenant in the OT is the Davidic covenant where the dynasty was given perpetual right to rule over Israel. Individual kings might be disciplined and their right to enjoy dominion taken away, but the dynasty still maintained the right to rule (see 2 Sam 23:5; Ps 89:26-37 and note especially 1 Kgs 11:33-39). The new covenant appears to be the renewal of God’s promise to Abraham to always be the God of his descendants and for his descendants to be his special people (Gen 17:7) something they appear to have forfeited by their disobedience (see Hos 1:9). However, under the new covenant he promises to never stop doing them good and grants them a new heart, a new spirit, the infusion of his own spirit, and the love and reverence necessary to keep from turning away from him.
never stop doing good to them. I will fill their hearts and minds with respect for me so that they will never again turn away from me. 32:41 I will take delight in doing good to them. I will faithfully and wholeheartedly plant them firmly in the land. 

32:42 “For I, the Lord, say: I will surely bring on these people all the good fortune that I am hereby promising them. I will be just as sure to do that as I have been in bringing all this great disaster on them. 32:43 You and your people are saying that this land will become desolate, uninhabited by either people or animals. You are saying that it will be handed over to the Babylonians. But fields will again be bought in this land. Fields will again be bought with silver, and deeds of purchase signed, sealed, and witnessed. This will happen in the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem, the towns in Judah, the southern hill country, the western foothills, and southern Judah. For I will restore them to their land. I, the Lord, affirm it!”

The Lord Promises a Second Time to Restore Israel and Judah

33:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah a second time while he was still confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse. 33:2 “I, the Lord, do these things. I, the Lord, form the plan to bring them about. I am known as the Lord. I say to you, 33:3 ‘Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and mysterious things which you still do not know about.’ 33:4 For I, the Lord God of Israel, have something more to say about the houses in this city and the royal buildings which have been torn down for defenses against the siege ramps and military

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1 tn Or “stop being gracious to them” or “stop blessing them with good”; Heb “turn back from them to do good to them.”
2 tn Or “I will make them want to fear and respect me so much that”; Heb “I will put the fear of me in their hearts.” However, as has been noted several times, “heart” in Hebrew is more the center of the volition (and intellect) than the center of emotions as it is in English. Both translations are intended to reflect the difference in psychology.
3 tn The words “never again” are not in the text but are implicit from the context and are supplied not only by this translation but by a number of others.
4 tn Heb “will plant them in the land with faithfulness with all my heart and with all my soul.” The latter expressions are, of course, anthropomorphisms (see Deut 6:5).
5 tn Heb “For thus says the Lord.” See the translator’s notes on 32:27, 36.
6 tn Heb “As I have brought all this great disaster on these people so I will bring upon them all the good fortune that I am promising them.” The translation has broken down the longer Hebrew sentence to better conform to English style.
7 sn See the same guarantee in Jer 31:27.
8 tn Heb “you.” However, the pronoun is plural and is addressed to more than just Jeremiah (v. 26). It includes Jeremiah and those who have accepted his prophecy of doom.
9 tn Heb “The Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for further explanation.
10 sn See the same guarantee in Jer 31:27.
11 sn or “I will reverse their fortunes.” For this idiom see the translator’s note on 29:14 and compare the usage in 29:14; 30:3; 18; 31:23.
12 sn Or “I will reverse their fortunes.”
13 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
14 sn The introductory statement here ties this incident in with the preceding chapter which was the first time that the Lord spoke to him about the matters discussed here. There is no indication of how much time passed between the two incidents though it appears that the situation has worsened somewhat (cf. v. 4).
15 tn Or “I, the Lord, made the earth. I formed it in such a way as to firmly establish it”; Heb “Thus says the Lord who makes/does it, I who forms it to establish it, whose name is the Lord.” It is unclear what the antecedent of “it” is. The Greek version supplies the object “the earth.” However, as D. Barthélemy, ed., Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project, 4:269, notes, this is probably a smoothing of a text which had no other object than the pronoun. No other text or version has an object other than the pronoun. The pronoun or the object of the pronoun could be added to the text to be understood as the intended referent from other contexts within the book of Jeremiah (Jer 10:12; 16; 51:15) where these verbs refer to the Lord as creator and from the prior context in 32:17 where the Lord’s power as creator is the basis for the assertion that nothing is too hard for him. This is the object that is supplied in a number of modern English versions as a commentaryandum. However, this clause is very difficult. If the pronoun in other contexts to refer to an indefinite reality which is spelled out in the preceding or following context (cf. 2 Kgs 19:25; Isa 22:11; 37:26; 44:7) lends credence to the suggestion by the committee for the Hebrew Old Testament Project that the pronoun refers to the work or plan of the Lord, a view which is reflected in the NRSV and has been adopted here. The use of the verb “form” here in the sense of “plan” see BDAG 427 s.v. *-v; 2:b and compare the usage in Isa 22:11; 37:26. The best discussion of options is given in G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC), 169-70, who see the pronoun referring ahead to the great and hidden things of v. 3. As in several other cases our translation has opted for a first person introduction rather than the third person of the original because the Lord himself is speaking.
16 tn This passive participle or adjective is normally used to describe cities or walls as “fortified” or “inaccessible.” All the lexicons, however, agree in seeing it used here metaphorically of “secret” or “mysterious” things, things that Jeremiah could not know apart from the Lord’s revelation. G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26-52 [WBC], 170) make the interesting observation that the word is used here in a context in which the fortifications of Jerusalem are about to fall to the Babylonians; the fortified things in God’s secret counsel fall through answer to prayer.
incursions of the Babylonians.\textsuperscript{4} 33:5 ‘The defenders of the city will go out and fight with the Babylonians.\textsuperscript{2} But they will only fill those houses and buildings with the dead bodies of the people that I will kill in my anger and my wrath.\textsuperscript{3} That will happen because I have decided to turn my back on\textsuperscript{4} this city on account of the wicked things they have done.\textsuperscript{5} 33:6 But I will most surely\textsuperscript{6} heal the wounds of this city and restore it and its people to health.\textsuperscript{7} I will show them abundant\textsuperscript{8} peace and security. 33:7 I will restore Judah and Israel\textsuperscript{7} and will rebuild them as they were in days of old.\textsuperscript{10} 33:8 I will purify them from all the sin that they committed against me. I will forgive all their sins which they committed in rebelling against me.\textsuperscript{42} 33:9 All the nations will hear about all the good things which I will do to them. This city will bring me fame, honor, and praise before them for the joy that I bring it. The nations will tremble in awe at all the peace and prosperity that I will provide for it.\textsuperscript{12}

33:10 ‘I, the Lord, say: ‘You and your people are saying\textsuperscript{14} about this place, “It lies in ruins. There are no people or animals in it.” That to see it rather as a gloss. His emendation and interpretation, however, have been justly criticized as violating the usage of both התחלת and הבטחת (hakkaratim) which elsewhere “sieve mound” and הבטחת (hakkerav) with which elsewhere refers only to the latticed opening of a window (Song 2:9). Until a more acceptable explanation of how the difficult Hebrew text could have arisen from the Greek, the Hebrew should be retained, though it is admittedly awkward. G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (\textit{Jeremiah} 26-52 [WBC], 166, 172) have perhaps the best discussion of the issues and the options involved here.

33:11 ‘Behold I am healing.” For the usage of the particle “beholding” indicating certainty see the translator’s note on 1.6. These are the great and hidden things that the Lord promised to reveal. The statements in v. 5 have been somewhat introductory. See the usage of בני (hinnu) after the introductory “Thus says the Lord” in Jer 32:28, 37.

33:12 ‘And it [the city] will be to me for a name for joy and praise and for honor before all the nations of the earth, for the joy that I bring it. The nations will tremble in awe at all the peace and prosperity that I will provide for it.”

33:13 ‘Behold I will reverse [or restore] the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel.” For this idiom see the translator’s note on Jer 29:14 and see the usage in 30:3, 18; 31:23; 32:44.

33:14 ‘This phrase simply means “as formerly” (DBD 911 s.v. נסר 3a). The reference to the “as formerly” must be established from the context. See the usage in Judg 20:32; 1 Kgs 13:6; Isa 1:26.

33:15 ‘Refer…to the reunification of Israel and Judah to the state that they were before the division after Solomon. Compare Jer 3:18; 30:3; 31:27 and see the study note on 30:3.

33:16 ‘And it [the city] will be to me for a name for joy and praise and for honor before all the nations of the earth which will hear of all the good things which I will do for them and which will be in awe and tremble for all the good things and all the peace [or prosperity] which I will do for them.” The long complex Hebrew sentence has been broken down to better conform with contemporary English style.

33:17 ‘Thus says the Lord.” For the first person rendering see the translator’s note at the end of v. 2.

33:18 The phrase here is parallel to that in v. 4 and introduces a further amplification of the “great and mysterious things” of v. 3.

33:19 ‘You.” However, the pronoun is plural as in 32:36, 43. See the translator’s note on 32:36.
is true. The towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem will soon be desolate, uninhabited either by people or by animals. But happy sounds will again be heard in these places. **33:11** Once again there will be sounds of joy and gladness and the glad celebrations of brides and grooms. Once again people will bring their thank offerings to the temple of the Lord and will say, “Give thanks to the Lord who rules over all. For the Lord is good and his unfailing love lasts forever.” For I, the Lord, affirm that I will restore the land to what it was in days of old. **7**

**33:12** “I, the Lord who rules over all, say: This place will indeed remain in ruins. There will be no people or animals in it. But there will again be in it and in its towns sheepfolds where shepherds can rest their sheep. **33:13** I, the Lord, say that shepherds will once again count their sheep as they pass into the fold. They will do this in all the towns in the southern hill country, the western foothills, the southern hill country, the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem, and the towns of Judah.”

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**1** map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**2** tn Heb **33:10** Thus says the Lord, ‘There will again be heard in this place of which you are saying [masc. pl.], “It is a ruin without people and without animals,” [that is] in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem which are desolate without people and without inhabitants and without animals **33:11** the sound of….” The long run-on sentence in Hebrew has been broken down to better conform with contemporary English style.

**3** sn What is predicted here is a reversal of the decimation caused by the Babylonian conquest that had been threatened in 7:34; 16:9; 25:10.

**4** sn This is a common hymnic introduction to both individual songs of thanksgiving (e.g., Ps 118:1) and communal songs of thanksgiving (e.g., Ps 136 where it is a liturgical refrain accompanying a recital of Israel's early history and of the Lord’s continuing providence).

**5** tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

**6** tn Or “I will restore the fortunes of the land.”

**7** sn The phrase simply means “as formerly” (BDAG 911 s.v. יִשְׁתַּחַר “sprig” or “shoot.”)

**8** sn What is predicted here is a reversal of the decimation caused by the Babylonian conquest that had been threatened in 7:34; 16:9; 25:10.

**9** tn This refers to the reunification of Israel and Judah to the state that they were before the division after Solomon. Compare Jer 3:18; 30:3; 31:27 and see the note study on 30:3.

**10** tn Heb “Thus says Yahweh of armies.” For the explanation for the first person introduction see the translator’s notes on 33:2; 10. Verses 4, 10, 12 introduce three oracles, all under the answer to the Lord’s promise to Jeremiah to show him “great and mysterious things which you still do not know about.”

**11** sn Heb “Sheep will again pass under the hands of the counter.” This appears to be a reference to counting the sheep to make sure that none were missing as they returned to the fold. See the same idiom in Lev 27:32 and in the metaphor in Ezek 20:37.

**12** sn Compare Jer 32:44.
‘I have made a covenant with the day4 and with the night that they will always come at their proper times. Only if you people2 could break that covenant 33:21 could my covenant with my servant David and my covenant with the Levites ever be broken. So David will by all means always have a descendant to occupy his throne as king and the Levites will by all means always have priests who will minister before me." 33:22 I will make the children who follow one another in the line of my servant David very numerous. I will also make the Levites who minister before me very numerous. I will make them all as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sands which are on the seashore.

33:23 The Lord spoke still further to Jeremiah.

33:24 ‘You have surely noticed what these people are saying, haven’t you? They are saying,6 ‘The Lord has rejected the two families of Israel and Judah that he chose.’ So they have little regard that my people will ever again be a nation.8 33:25 But I, the Lord, make the following promise:9 I have made a covenant governing the coming of day and night. I have established the fixed laws governing heaven and earth. 33:26 Just as surely as I have done this, so surely will I never reject the descendants of Jacob. Nor will I ever refuse to choose one of my servant David’s descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, I will restore them24 and show mercy to them.”

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1 tn The word יָמִים (yamim) is normally an adverb meaning “daytime, by day, daily.” However, here and in v. 25 and in Jer 15:9 it means “day, daytime” (cf. BDB 410 s.v. יָמִים 1).

2 tn Heb “you.” The pronoun is plural as in 32:36, 43:310.

3 tn The very complex and elliptical syntax of the original Hebrew of vv. 20-21 has been broken down to better conform with contemporary English style. The text reads somewhat literally (after the addition of a couple of phrases which have been left out by ellipsis): “Thus says the Lord, ‘If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night so that there is not to be daytime and night in their proper time then also my covenant can be broken with my servant David so that there is not to him a son reigning upon his throne [and also my covenant can be broken] with the Levites [so there are not] priests who minister to me.’” The two phrases in brackets are elliptical, the first serving double duty for the prepositional phrase “with the Levites” as well as “with David” and the second serving double duty with the noun “priests” which parallels “a son.” The noun “priests” is not serving here as appositional because that phrase is always “the priests, the Levites,” never “the Levites, the priests.”

4 sn This refers to a reaffirmation of the Davidic covenant (cf. 31:31; 33:20; 2 Sam 7:11-16; 25:29; Jer 14:21; 33:15-26) and God’s covenant with the Levites (cf. Num 25:10-13; Mal 2:4-6; Deut 32:8-11).

5 tn Heb “Just as the stars in the sky cannot be numbered or the sand on the seashore cannot be measured, so I will greatly increase [or multiply] the seed of my servant David and the Levites who minister before me.” The word “seed of” does not carry over to the “the Levites” as a noun governing two similar objects “my covenant” and “the regularity of the Davidic dynasty to rule over the nation of Israel for all time (see also v. 26). This is guaranteed by the creation order which is the object of both God’s creative decree (Gen 1:14-19) and his covenant with Noah after the flood (Gen 8:22). (For further discussion on the nature of a decree (Gen 1:14-19) and his covenant with Noah after the flood (Gen 8:22). (For further discussion on the nature of a covenant of grant see the study note on 32:40.) The rejection of the laws of Israel (Jer 36:30 and Jeremiah, 22:30 and the certain captivity and death of Zedekiah (32:4) may have called into question the continuance of the Davidic promise which always had a certain conditional nature to it (cf. 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:5). This promise and this guarantee show that the covenant of grant still stands and will ultimately find its fulfillment. Because this promise never found its fulfillment after the return from exile, it is left to the NT to show how it is fulfilled (cf., e.g., Matt 1:1-17 where it is emphasized that Jesus is the son (and heir) of both Abraham and David).

6 tn Heb “And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying.” See v. 1. This is a continuation of “the second time.”

7 tn Heb “He says you not seen God said, saying.” The question is rhetorical and expects a positive answer. The sentence has been broken in two to better conform with contemporary English style.

8 tn Heb “And my people [i.e., Israel and Judah] they disdain [or look down on] from being again a nation before them.” The phrase “before them” refers to their estimation, their mental view (cf. BDB s.v. יָמִים II.4.a(4)). Hence it means they look with disdain on the people being a nation again (cf. BDB s.v. יָמִים 1.4(b) for the usage of יָמִים [‘yamim here].

9 tn Heb “And my people” (or “my servant”). See the translator’s note at 33:2 at v. 20 for the style adopted here. Here the promise is in v. 26 following the contrary to fact condition in v. 25. The Hebrew text of v. 25-26 reads: “Thus says the Lord, ‘If I have not established my covenant with day and night [and] the laws/statutes of heaven and earth, also I could reject the seed of Jacob and David my servant from taking from his seed as rulers over them, then also my covenant can be broken with my servant David and my covenant with the Levites ever be broken. So David will by all means always have a descendant to occupy his throne as king and the Levites will by all means always have priests who will minister before me. The word “seed of” does not carry over to the “the Levites” as a noun governing two similar objects “my covenant” and “the regularity of the Davidic dynasty to rule over the nation of Israel for all time (see also v. 26). This is guaranteed by the creation order which is the object of both God’s creative decree (Gen 1:14-19) and his covenant with Noah after the flood (Gen 8:22). (For further discussion on the nature of a covenant of grant see the study note on 32:40.) The rejection of the laws of Israel (Jer 36:30 and Jeremiah, 22:30 and the certain captivity and death of Zedekiah (32:4) may have called into question the continuance of the Davidic promise which always had a certain conditional nature to it (cf. 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:5). This promise and this guarantee show that the covenant of grant still stands and will ultimately find its fulfillment. Because this promise never found its fulfillment after the return from exile, it is left to the NT to show how it is fulfilled (cf., e.g., Matt 1:1-17 where it is emphasized that Jesus is the son (and heir) of both Abraham and David).
The Lord Makes an Ominous Promise to Zedekiah

34:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah while King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the towns around it with a large army. This army consisted of troops from his own army and from the kingdoms and peoples of the lands under his dominion.2 The Lord God of Israel told Jeremiah to go and give King Zedekiah of Judah a message. He told Jeremiah to tell him, “The Lord says, ‘I am going to hand this city over to the king of Babylon and he will burn it down.3 You yourself will not escape his clutches, but will certainly be captured and handed over to him. You must confront the king of Babylon face to face and answer to him personally.’ Then you must go to Babylon. 4 However, listen to what I, the Lord, promise you, King Zedekiah of Judah. I, the Lord, promise that you will not die in battle or be executed.5 You will die a peaceful death. They will burn incense at your burial just as they did at the burial of your ancestors, the former kings who preceded you.6 They will mourn for you, saying, “Poor, poor master!”7 Indeed, you have my own word on this. I, the Lord, affirm it.”8

The Lord Threatens to Destroy Those Who Wronged Their Slaves

34:6 The prophet Jeremiah told all this to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem. 9 He did this while the army of the king of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the cities of Lachish and Azekah. He was attacking these cities because they were the only fortified cities of Judah which were still holding out.10

The Lord Threatens to Destroy Those Who Wronged Their Slaves

34:8 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah after King Zedekiah had made a covenant11 with all the

7 tn Heb “However, hear the word of the Lord, Zedekiah king of Judah, ‘Thus says the Lord to you, ‘You will not die by the sword.’” The translation has tried to avoid the complex created by embedding quotes within quotes and has used the first person address within the Lord’s speech as has also been done elsewhere.
8 tn Heb “by the sword.”
9 sn The contrast is between death in battle or by execution and death in the normal course of life. Zedekiah was captured, had to witness the execution of his sons, had his eyes put out, and was taken to Babylon where he died after a lengthy imprisonment (Jer 52:10-11).
10 tn Heb “And like the burning [of incense] for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so will they burn [incense] for you.” The sentence has been reversed for easier style and the technical use of the terms interpreted.
11 sn For the custom referred to compare 2 Chr 16:14; 21:19.
12 sn The intent of this oracle may have been to contrast the fate of Zedekiah with that of Jehoiakim who was apparently executed, went unmourned, and was left unburied (contrast Jer 22:18-19).
13 sn Heb “For [or Indeed] I myself have spoken [this] word,”
14 sn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
15 tn Heb “And the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah which were left. [Namely] against Lachish and against Azekah where were left of the cities of Judah as fortified cities.” The intent of this sentence is to serve as a circumstantial sentence to v. 6 (= “while the army...”). That thought is picked up by “he did this while...” The long complex sentence in v. 7 has been broken down and qualifying material placed in the proper places to convey the same information in shorter English sentences in conformity with contemporary English style.
16 tn Or “agreement.” See the study note on 11:2 for discussion.
17 sn There are no details regarding the nature of this covenant, but it was probably a parity covenant in which the people agreed to free their slaves in exchange for some concessions from the king (see the study note on 11:2 for more detail). The nature of this covenant is outlined in v. 15. More details about this covenant are given in v. 18-19 where it is said to have been made before the Lord in the temple and involved passing between the pieces of a cut-up calf. Hence it involved their swearing an oath invoking the Lord’s name (cf. Gen 21:23; 31:51-53; 1 Sam 20:42) and pronouncing self-maledictory curses on themselves calling down on themselves a fate similar to that of the dead calf if they failed to keep it. (This latter practice is illustrated in treaty documents from the ancient Near East and is reflected in the covenant ceremony in Gen 15:8-16.)
people in Jerusalem to grant their slaves their freedom. 34:9 Everyone was supposed to free their male and female Hebrew slaves. No one was supposed to keep a fellow Judean enslaved. 34:10 All the people and their leaders had agreed to this. They had agreed to free their male and female slaves and not keep them enslaved any longer. They originally complied with the covenant and freed them. 34:11 But later they had changed their minds. They had taken back their male and female slaves that they had freed and forced them to be slaves again. 34:12 That was when the Lord spoke to Jeremiah, 34:13 “The Lord God of Israel has a message for you. I made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt where they had been slaves. It stipulated, 34:14 “Every seven years each of you must free any fellow Hebrews who have sold themselves to you. After they have served you for six years, you shall set them free.” But your ancestors did not obey me or pay any attention to me. 34:15 Recently, however, you yourselves showed a change of heart and did what is pleasing to me. You granted your fellow countrymen their freedom and you made a covenant to that effect in my presence in the house that I have claimed for my own. 34:16 But then you turned right around and showed that you did not honor me. Each of you took back your male and female slaves whom you had freed as they desired, and you forced them to be your slaves again. So, I, the Lord, say: “You have not really obeyed me

1 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
2 tn Heb “after King Zedekiah made a covenant...to proclaim liberty to them [the slaves mentioned in the next verse] so that each would send away free his male slave and his female slave, the Hebrew man and the Hebrew woman, so that a man would not hold them in bondage, namely a Judean, his brother [this latter phrase is explicative of “them” because it repeats the preposition in front of “them”]. The complex Hebrew syntax has been broken down into shorter English sentences but an attempt has been made to retain the proper subordinations.
3 sn Through economic necessity some of the poorer people of the land had on occasion to sell themselves or their children to wealthier Hebrew landowners. The terms of their servitude were strictly regulated under Hebrew law (cf. Exod 21:2-11; Lev 25:39-55; Deut 15:12-18). In brief, no Hebrew was to serve a fellow Hebrew for any longer than six years. In the seventh year he or she was to go free. The period could even be shortened if the year of jubilee intervened since all debts were to be canceled, freedom restored, and indentured property returned in that year. Some see the covenant here coming in conjunction with such a jubilee year since it involved the freedom of all slaves regardless of how long they had served. Others see this covenant as paralleling an old Babylonian practice of a king declaring liberty for slaves and canceling all debts generally at the beginning of his reign (but also at other significant times within it) in order to ingratiate himself with his subjects.
4 tn Heb “And they complied, [that is] all the leaders and all the people who entered into the covenant that they would each let his male slave and his female slave go free so as not to hold them in bondage any longer; they complied and they let [them] go.” The verb “they complied” (Heb “they hearkened”) occurs at the end after the lengthy description of the subject. This is characteristic of Hebrew style. The translation has resolved the complex sentence by making the relative clauses modifying the subject independent sentences describing the situational background before mentioning the main focus, “they had complied and let them go.”
5 sn Most commentators are agreed that the incident referred to here occurred during the period of relief from the siege provided by the Babylonians going off to fight against the Egyptians who were apparently coming to Zedekiah’s aid (compare vv. 21:22 with 37:5, 7). The freeing of the slaves had occurred earlier, under the crisis of the siege while the people were more responsive to the Lord due to the threat of destruction (cf. v. 15).
6 tn Heb “And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying.” This is the resumption of the introduction in v. 8 after the lengthy description of the situation that had precipitated the Lord’s message to Jeremiah. “That was when” is intended to take the reader back to v. 8.
7 tn Heb “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘...’” The style adopted here has been used to avoid a longer, more complex English sentence.
8 tn Heb “brothers” (also in vv. 14, 15).
9 tn Heb “out of the house of bondage.” This refers to the Mosaic covenant, initiated at Mount Sinai and renewed on the plains of Moab. The statement “I brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” functions as the “historical prologue” in the Ten Commandments which is the Lord’s vassal treaty with Israel in miniature. (See the study note on 11:2 and see Exod 20:2; Deut 5:6 and Exod 19.4.)
10 sn This refers to the temple. See Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30 and see the translator’s note on 7:10 and the study note on 10:25 for the explanation of the idiom involved here.
11 sn Compare Deut 15:12-18 for the complete statement of this law. Here only the first part of it is cited.
12 tn The presence of the independent pronoun in the Hebrew text is intended to contrast their actions with those of their ancestors.
13 sn This refers to the temple. See Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30 and see the translator’s note on 7:10 and the study note on 10:25 for the explanation of the idiom involved here.
14 sn The verb at the beginning of v. 15 and v. 16 are the same in the Hebrew. They had two changes of heart (Heb “you turned”), one that was pleasing to him (Heb “right in his eyes”) and one that showed they did not honor him (Heb “profaned” or “belittled” his name”).
15 sn Heb “you profaned my name.” His name had been involved in the oath confirming the covenant. Breaking the covenant involved taking his name in vain (cf. Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11; Jer 5:2). Hence the one who bore the name was not treated with the special honor and reverence due him (see the study note on 23:27 for the significance of “name” in the Hebrew).
16 sn Heb “and you brought them into subjection to be you for male and female slaves.” See the translator’s note on v. 11 for the same redundant repetition which is not carried over into the contemporary English sentence.
and granted freedom to your neighbor and fellow countryman. Therefore, I will grant you freedom, the freedom to die in war, or by starvation or disease. I, the LORD, affirm it. I will make all the kingdoms of the earth horrified at what happens to you. I will punish those people who have violated their covenant with me. I will make them like the calf they cut in two and passed between its pieces. I will do so because they did not keep the terms of the covenant they made in my presence.

I will punish the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the court officials, the priests, and all the other people of the land who passed between the pieces of the calf. I will hand them over to their enemies who want to kill them. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds and the wild animals.

I will also hand King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials over to their enemies who want to kill them. I will hand them over to the army of the king of Babylon, even though they have temporarily withdrawn from attacking you. For I, the LORD, affirm that I will soon give the order and bring them back to this city. They will fight against it and capture it and burn it down. I will also make the towns of Judah desolate so that there will be no one living in them."

Judah’s Unfaithfulness Contrasted with the Rechabites’ Faithfulness

35:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah when Jehoahakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

35:2 “Go to the Rechabite community. Invite them to come into one of the side rooms of the LORD’s temple and offer them some wine to drink. Nothing is known about the Rechabite community other than what is said about them in this chapter. From vv. 7-8 it appears that they were a nomadic tribe that had resisted settling down and taking up farming. They had also agreed to abide by the terms of the covenant their forefathers had made. They appear in the Bible as a people who lived according to their own laws and customs, rather than those of the nation to which they belonged. They were a people who sought freedom and independence from the rule of the kings of Judah. Their faithfulness to the covenant made before them emphasized the importance of individual and community commitment to the principles of the covenant.

10 tn Heb “And Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their lives and into the hands of the army of the king of Babylon which has gone up from against them.” The last two “and into the hand” phrases are each giving further explication of “their enemies” (the conjunction is explicative [cf. BDB 252 s.v. 1 b]). The sentence has been broken down into shorter English sentences in conformity with contemporary English style.

11 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

12 sn The introductory statement here shows that this incident is earlier than those in Jer 32:34–33 which all take place in the reign of Zedekiah. Jehoahakim ruled from 605/6 B.C. until 598/7 B.C. and Jehoiakim was his brother Zedekiah is followed by a brief reign of three months by Jehoiakim’s son who was captured by Nebuchadnezzar and taken to Babylon. Zedekiah ruled from 598/7 B.C. until the kingdom fell in 587/86. The position of this chapter is out of chronological order emphasizing the theme of covenant infidelity (Jer 34; 35:12-17) versus the faithfulness to his commands that God expected from the Rechabites’ faithfulness to the commands of their progenitor. This is thus another one of those symbolic acts in Jeremiah which have significance to the message of the book (compare Jer 13, 19).

This incident likely took place during the time that people living in the countryside like the Rechabites were forced to take shelter in the fortified cities because of the raiding parties that Nebuchadnezzar had sent against Jehoiakim after he had rebelled against him in 603 B.C. (compare v. 11 and Jer 4:5; 2 Kgs 24:1-2).

13 tn Heb “The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,”

14 tn Heb “the house of the Rechabites.” “House” is used here in terms of “household” or “family” (cf. BDB 109 s.v. הָּנָּח [b]).

15 sn Nothing is known about the Rechabite community other than what is said about them in this chapter. From vv. 7-8 it appears that they were a nomadic tribe that had resisted settling down and taking up farming. They had also agreed to abstain from drinking wine. Most scholars agree in equating the Jonadab son of Rechab mentioned as the leader who had instituted these strictures as the same Jonadab who assisted Jehu in his religious purge of Baalism following the reign of Ahab (2 Kgs 10:15; 23:24). If this is the case, the Rechabites followed these same rules for almost 250 years because Jehu’s purge of Baalism and the beginning of his reign was in 841 B.C. and the incident here took place some time after Jehoiakim’s rebellion in 603 B.C. (see the study note on v. 1).

16 sn This refers to one of the rooms built on the outside of the temple that were used as living quarters for the priests and for storage rooms (cf. Neh 1:3-4; 5; 1 Kgs 6:5; 1 Chr 28:12; 2 Chr 31:11 and compare Ezek 41:1-14).

17 sn See this same phrase in Jer 7:33; 16:4; 19:7.
drink.” 35:3 So I went and got Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah the grandson of Habazzimuth, his brothers, all his sons, and all the rest of the Rechabite community. 35:4 I took them to the Lord’s temple. I took them into the room where the disciples of the prophet Hanan son of Igdaliah stayed. 3 That room was next to the one where the temple officers stayed and above the room where Maaseiah son of Shallum, one of the doorkeepers of the temple, stayed. 35:5 Then I set cups and pitchers full of wine in front of the members of the Rechabite community and said to them, “Have some wine.” 35:6 But they answered, “We do not drink wine because our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us not to. He told us, ‘You and your children must never drink wine.’” 35:7 Do not build houses. Do not plant crops. Do not plant a vineyard or own one. 4 Live in tents all your lives. If you do these things you will live a long time in the land that you wander about on. 35:8 We and our wives and our sons and daughters have obeyed every command Jonadab commanded us. We have never drunk wine. 35:9 We have not built any houses to live in. We do not own any vineyards, fields, or crops. 35:10 We have lived in tents. We have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab and done exactly as he commanded us. 35:11 But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded the land we said, “Let’s get up and go to Jerusalem 9 to get away from the Babylonian and Aramean armies. That is why we are staying here in Jerusalem.”

35:12 Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. 35:13 The Lord God of Israel who rules over all told him, “Go and speak to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. Tell them, 35:14 ‘I, the Lord, say: “You must learn a lesson from this about obeying what I say.” 35:15 Jonadab son of Rechab ordered his descendants not to drink wine. His orders have been carried out. 35:16 To this day his descendants have drunk no wine because they have obeyed what their ancestor commanded them. But if you have not obeyed me! 35:17 I sent all my servants the prophets to warn you over and over again. They said, “Every one of you, stop doing the evil things you have been doing and do what is right. Do not pay allegiance to other gods and worship them. Then you can continue to live in this land that I gave to you and your ancestors.” But you did not pay any attention or listen to me. 35:18 Yes, the descendants of Jonadab son of Benjamin 3 who was a member of a nation, state, or principality. In the ancient Near East such people were dependent on the laws of hospitality for protection and provision rather than the laws of state for protection and provision of legal rights. Perhaps the best illustration of this is Abraham who “sojourned” among the Philistines and the Hittites in Canaan and was dependent upon them for grazing and water rights and for a place to bury his wife (cf. Gen 20:24). What is described here is the typical lifestyle of a nomadic tribe.

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1 tn Heb “the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God.” The reference to “sons” and to “man of God” fits the usage of these terms elsewhere to refer to prophets and their disciples (see BDB 43-44 s.v. יָדָהַי 3(b) and compare usage in 2 Kgs 4:40 for the former and BDB 121 s.v. מ and compare the usage in 2 Kgs 4:38 for the latter).

2 sn According to Jer 52:24; 2 Kgs 25:18 there were three officers who carried out this duty. It was their duty to guard the entrance of the temple to keep people out that did not belong there. Such officers were those who were foreigners or ritually unclean (see 2 Kgs 12:9 and compare Ps 118:19-20).

3 tn Heb “Drink wine.”

4 tn Heb “Don’t plant a vineyard and it shall not be to you [i.e. you shall/must not have one].”

5 tn Heb “Don’t...and don’t...but live...in order that you might.”

6 tn Heb “where you are sojourning.” The terms “sojourn” and “sojourner” referred to a person who resided in a country not his own, without the rights and privileges of citizenship as a member of a nation, state, or principality. In the ancient Near East such people were dependent on the laws of hospitality rather than the laws of state for protection and provision of legal rights. Perhaps the best illustration of this is Abraham who “sojourned” among the Philistines and the Hittites in Canaan and was dependent upon them for grazing and water rights and for a place to bury his wife (cf. Gen 20:24). What is described here is the typical lifestyle of a nomadic tribe.

7 tn Heb “We have not drunk wine all our days.” Actually vv. 8b-9a are a series of infinitive constructs plus the negative הָלַךְ (halkh) explaining the particulars of how they have obeyed, i.e., by not drinking wine...and by not building...” The more direct declarative statement is used here to shorten the sentence and is more in keeping with contemporary style.

8 tn Heb “We have obeyed and done according to all which our ancestor Jonadab commanded us.”

9 map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

10 tn Heb “Chaldean.” For explanation see the study note on 21:4.

11 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title see 7:3 and the study note on 2:19.

12 tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

13 tn The words “from this” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity.

14 tn Heb “will you not learn a lesson?…” The rhetorical question here has the force of an imperative, made explicit in the translation.

15 tn Heb “Will you not learn a lesson?…” The rhetorical question here has the force of an imperative, made explicit in the translation.

16 tn Heb “The words of Jonadab son of Rechab which he commanded his descendants not to drink wine have been carried out.” (For the construction of the accusative of subject after a passive verb illustrated here see GKC 381 §121.) The sentence has been broken down and made more direct to better conform to contemporary English style.

17 tn The vav (v) plus the independent pronoun before the verb is intended to mark a sharp contrast. It is difficult, if not impossible to mark this in English other than “But I.”

18 tn On this idiom (which occurs again in the following verse) see the translator’s note on 7:13 for this idiom and compare its use in 7:13, 25; 11:7; 25:3; 4; 26:5; 29:19; 32:33; 35:14, 15; 44:9.

19 tn Heb “Turn, each of you, from his [= your] wicked way and make your deeds.” Compare 18:11 where the same idiom occurs with the added term of “make good your ways.”

20 tn Heb “Don’t go after/follow other gods.” See the translator’s note on 2:5 for an explanation of the idiom and see 11:10; 13:10; 25:6 for the same idiom.

21 tn This is an attempt to represent the particle שָׁנָה (shana) which is probably not really intensive here (cf. BDB 472 s.v. שָׁנָה 1.e) but is one of those causal uses of שָׁנָה which BDB discusses on 473:4 s.v. שָׁנָה 3.c where the cause is really the failure of the people of Judah and Jerusalem to listen/obey. i.e., the causal particle is at the beginning of the sentence so as not to interrupt the contrast drawn.
Rechab have carried out the orders that their ancestor gave them. But you people\(^1\) have not obeyed me! \(35:17\) So I, the Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, say: \(2\) “I will soon bring on Judah and all the citizens of Jerusalem all the disaster that I threatened to bring on them. I will do this because I spoke to them but they did not listen. I called out to them but they did not answer.”\(^3\)

\(35:18\) Then Jeremiah spoke to the Rechabite community, “The Lord God of Israel who rules over all\(^3\) says, ‘You have obeyed the orders of your ancestor Jonadab. You have followed all his instructions. You have done exactly as he commanded you.’ \(35:19\) So the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘Jonadab son of Rechab will never lack a male descendant to serve me.’\(^4\)

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**Jehoiakim Burns the Scroll Containing the Lord’s Messages**

\(36:1\) The Lord spoke to Jeremiah in the fourth year\(^4\) that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.\(^6\) \(36:2\) “Get a scroll. \(7\) Write on it everything I have told you to say\(^6\) about Israel, Judah, and all the other nations since I began to speak to you in the reign of Josiah until now.\(^9\) \(36:3\) Perhaps when the people of Judah hear about all the disaster I intend to bring on them, they will all stop doing the evil things they have been doing.\(^10\) If they do, I will forgive their sins and the wicked things they have done.”\(^11\)

\(36:4\) So Jeremiah summoned Baruch son of Neriah. Then Jeremiah dictated to Baruch everything the Lord had told him to say and Baruch wrote it all down in a scroll.\(^12\) \(36:5\) Then Jeremiah told Baruch, “I am no longer allowed to go\(^13\) into the Lord’s temple. \(36:6\) So you go reminded about what Jeremiah had been saying.

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\(^1\) **tn** Heb “this people.” However, the speech is addressed to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem, so the second person is retained in English. In addition to the stylistic difference that Hebrew exhibits in the rapid shift between persons (second to third and third to second, which have repeatedly been noted and documented from GKC 462 §144. p) there may be a subtle rhetorical reason for the shift here. The shift from direct address to indirect address which characterizes this verse and the next may reflect the Lord’s rejection of the people he is addressing. A similar shift takes place in Wisdom’s address to the simple minded, fools, and mockers in 5:28-32 and in the direct address in 1:12-27.

\(^2\) **tn** Heb “Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of armies, the God of Israel.” For the title see 7:13 and the study note on 2:19. The first person address is again used in the translation because this whole section is a speech from the Lord (see vv. 12-13).

\(^3\) **tn** Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title, which occurs again in the following verse, see the notes on 7:3 and the study note on 2:19.

\(^4\) **tn** Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title, which occurs again in the following verse, see the notes on 7:3 and the study note on 2:19.

\(^5\) **sn** The offer of withdrawal of punishment for sin is consistent with the principles of Jer 18:7-8 and the temple sermon delivered early in the reign of this king (cf. 26:1-3; 7:5-7).

\(^6\) **tn** Heb “This came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah the king of Judah, saying.”

\(^7\) **tn** Heb “a roll [or scroll] of a document.” Scrolls consisted of pieces of leather or parchment sewn together and rolled up on wooden rollers. The writing was written from right to left and from top to bottom in columns and the scroll unrolled from the left roller and rolled onto the right one as the scroll was read. The scroll varied in length depending on the contents. This scroll was probably not all that long since it was read three times in a single day (vv. 10-11, 15-16, 21-23).

\(^8\) **sn** The intent is hardly that of giving a verbatim report of everything that the Lord had told him to say or of everything that he had actually said. What the scroll undoubtedly contained was a synopsis of Jeremiah’s messages as constructed from his memory.

\(^9\) **sn** This refers to the messages that Jeremiah delivered during the last eighteen years of Josiah, the three month reign of Jehoahaz and the first four years of Jehoiakim’s reign (the period between Josiah’s thirteenth year [cf. 1:2] and the fourth year of Jehoiakim [v. 1]). The exact content of this scroll is unknown since many of the messages in the present book are undated. It is also not known what relation this scroll had to the present form of the book of Jeremiah, since this scroll was destroyed and another one written that contained more than this one did (cf. v. 32). Since Jeremiah continued his ministry down to the fall of Jerusalem in 587/6 B.C. (1:2) and beyond (cf. Jer 40-44) much more was added to those two scrolls even later.

\(^10\) **tn** Heb “will turn each one from his wicked way.”

\(^11\) **tn** Heb “their iniquity and their sin.”

\(^12\) **sn** The offer of withdrawal of punishment for sin is consistent with the principles of Jer 18:7-8 and the temple sermon delivered early in the reign of this king (cf. 26:1-3; 7:5-7).

\(^13\) **tn** Heb “Then Baruch wrote down on a scroll from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord which he [the Lord] had spoken to Jeremiah.” The syntax of the Hebrew sentence is awkward and hard to reproduce “literally” in any meaningful way. The English sentence has been restructured to reproduce all the pertinent facts in more simplified language.
there the next time all the people of Judah come in from their towns to fast in the Lord’s temple. Read out loud where all of them can hear you what I told you the Lord said, which you wrote in the scroll. Perhaps then they will ask the Lord for mercy and will all stop doing the evil things they have been doing. For the Lord has threatened to bring great anger and wrath against these people.

36:8 So Baruch son of Neriah did exactly what the prophet Jeremiah had told him to do. He read what the Lord had said from the scroll in the temple of the Lord. All the people living in Jerusalem and all the people who came into Jerusalem from the towns of Judah came to observe a fast before the Lord. The fast took place in the ninth month of the fifth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

36:10 At that time Baruch went into the temple of the Lord. He stood in the entrance of the room of Gemariah the son of Shaphan who had been the royal secretary. That room was in the upper court near the entrance of the New Gate. There, where all the people could hear him, he read from the scroll what Jeremiah had said.

36:11 Micaiah, who was the son of Gemariah and the grandson of Shaphan, heard Baruch read from the scroll everything the Lord had said. He went down to the chamber of the royal

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1 sn Regular fast days were not a part of Israel’s religious calendar. Rather fast days were called on special occasions, i.e., in times of drought or a locust plague (Joel 1:14; 2:15), or during a military crisis (2 Chr 20:3), or after defeat in battle (1 Sam 31:13; 2 Sam 1:12). A fast day was likely chosen for the reading of the scroll because the people would be more mindful of the crisis they were in and be in more of a repentant mood. The events referred to in the study note on v. 1 would have provided the basis for Jeremiah’s anticipation of a fast day when the scroll could be read.

2 tn Heb “So you go and read from the scroll which you have written from my mouth the words of the Lord in the ears of the people in the house of the Lord on a fast day, and in that way [for the explanation of this rendering see below] you will be teaching them in the name of the Lord who come from their towns [i.e., to the temple to fast].” Again the syntax of the original is awkward, separating several of the qualifying phrases from the word or phrase they are intended to modify. In most of the “literal” English versions the emphasis on “what the Lord said” tends to get lost and it looks like two separate groups are to be addressed rather than one. The intent of the phrase is to define who the people are who will hear; the | is used to emphasize the explicative “all Judah who come in from their towns” (cf. BDB 169 s.v. |). If some force were to be given to the “literal” rendering of that particle here it would be “actually. This is the group that is to be addressed according to v. 22, and note especially how sentence has been restructured to include all the relevant information in more comprehensible and shorter English sentences.

3 tn Heb “will turn each one from his wicked way.”

4 tn Heb “For great is the anger and the wrath which the Lord has spoken against this people.” The translation uses the more active form which is more in keeping with contemporary English style.

5 tn Heb “And Baruch son of Neriah did according to all that the prophet Jeremiah commanded him with regard to reading from the scroll the words of the Lord in the temple of the Lord.” The sentence has been broken down and the modifiers placed where they belong to better conform to contemporary English style.

6 map For location see Map5-B1: Map5-F3; Map7-E2: Map6-S2: Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

7 tn There is some debate about the syntax of the words translated “All the people living in Jerusalem and all the people who came into Jerusalem from the towns in Judah.” As the sentence is structured in Hebrew it looks like these words are the subject of “proclaim a fast.” However, most commentators point out that the people themselves would hardly proclaim a fast; they would be summoned to fast (cf. 1 Kgs 21:9, 12; Jonah 3:7). Hence many see these words as the object of the verb which has an impersonal subject “they.” This is most likely unless with J. Bright (Jeremiah, 180) the word “proclaim” is used in a looser sense as “observed.” The translation has chosen to follow this latter tack rather than use the impersomal (or an equivalent passive) construction in English. For a similar problem see Jonah 3:5 which precedes the official proclamation in 3:7. The Hebrew text reads: “In the fifth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month they proclaimed a fast before the Lord, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the cities of Judah into Jerusalem.”

8 sn Shaphan had been the royal secretary under Jehoiakim’s father’s rule. During the course of his official duties the book of the law had been discovered and he had read it and reported its contents to Josiah who instituted sweeping reforms on the basis of his obedience to it. (See 2 Kgs 22 and note especially how sentence has been restructured to include all the relevant information in more comprehensible and shorter English sentences.) In 26:14 is the same person as this, Gemariah would have been the brother of the man who spoke up on Jeremiah’s behalf when the priests and prophets sought to have him killed.

9 sn It is generally agreed that this is the same as the inner court mentioned in 1 Kgs 6:38; 7:12. It is called “upper” here because it stood above (cf. 1 Kgs 7:12) the outer court where all the people were standing.

10 sn The New Gate is the same gate where Jeremiah had been accused of falsely claiming the Lord’s authority for his “treasonous” prophecies according to 26:10-11. See the study note on 26:10 for more details about the location of this gate.

11 tn The syntax of the original is complicated due to all the qualifying terms: Heb “And Baruch read from the scroll the words of Jeremiah in the house of the Lord in (i.e., in the entrance of) the room of Gemariah son of Shaphan the scribe in the upper court at the entrance of the New Gate in the house of the Lord in the ears of all the people.” The sentence has been broken down and restructured to contain all the same information in shorter English sentences that better conform with contemporary English style.

12 sn Heb “Micahiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all the words of the Lord upon the scroll.” The words “heard Baruch read” are implicit and are supplied in the translation for smoothness.
secretary in the king’s palace and found all the court officials in session there. Elishama the royal secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zebediah son of Hananiah, and all the other officials were seated there. 36:13 Micaiah told them everything he had heard Baruch read from the scroll in the hearing of the people. 36:14 All the officials sent Jehudi, who was the son of Nathaniah and the grandson of Cushi, to Baruch. They ordered him to tell Baruch, “Come here and bring with you the scroll you read in the hearing of the people.” 36:15 They said to him, “Please sit down and read it to us.” So Baruch sat down and read it to them. 36:16 When they had heard it all, they expressed their alarm to one another. Then they said to Baruch, “We must certainly give the king a report about everything you have read.” 36:17 Then they asked Baruch, “How did you come to write all these words? Do they actually come from Jeremiah’s mouth?” 36:18 Baruch answered, “Yes, they came from his own mouth. He dictated all these words to me and I wrote them down in ink on this scroll.” 36:19 Then the officials said to Baruch, “You and Jeremiah must go and hide. You must not let anyone know where you are.” 36:20 The officials put the scroll in the room of Elishama, the royal secretary, for safekeeping. 36:21 The king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. He went and got it from the room of Elishama, the royal secretary. Then he himself read it to the king and all the officials who were standing around him. 36:22 Since it was the ninth month of the year, the king was sitting in his winter quarters. A fire was burning in the king’s winter quarters.

1 sn If, as many believe, this man was the same as the Elisha mentioned in Jer 41:1; 2 Kgs 25:25, he was also a member of the royal family.
2 sn This man has already been mentioned in Jer 26:22 as the official who was sent to Egypt to extradite the prophet Uriah that Jehoiakim had executed. Though he was instrumental in the death of that prophet, he appears to have been favorably disposed to Jeremiah or at least impressed by the seriousness of his messages, because he is one of the officials that urged Baruch and Jeremiah to hide (v. 19), and he counseled Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll (v. 25).
3 tn Heb “Micaiah reported to them all the words which he heard when Baruch read from the scroll in the ears of the people.”
4 tn Heb “in your hand.”
5 tn The original has another example of a prepositioned object (called causas pendens in the grammars; cf. GKC 458 §143.b) which is intended to focus attention on “the scroll.” The Hebrew sentence reads: “The scroll which you read from it in the ears of the people take it and come.” Any attempt to carry over this emphasis into the English translation would be awkward. Likewise, the order of the two imperatives has been reversed in the translation for stylistic reasons.
6 tn Heb “So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and went to them.” The clause order has been rearranged in the translation for stylistic reasons.
7 tn Or “to us personally...to them personally”; Heb “...in our ears...in their ears.” Elsewhere this has been rendered “in the hearing of” or “where they could hear.” All three of these idioms sound unnatural in this context. The mere presence of this same word at the beginning of the answer (cf. GKC 476 §150.) which is intended to focus attention on “the scroll.” The presence of this same word at the beginning of the answer in the next verse suggests that this was a question (probably without the he in interrogative to make it more emphatic) since the common way to answer affirmatively is to repeat the emphatic word in the question (cf. GKC 476 §150.n and compare usage in Gen 24:58). The intent of the question is to make sure that these were actually Jeremiah’s words, not Baruch’s own creation (cf. Jer 43:2-3 for a similar suspicion).
8 tn The verbal forms emphasize that each word came from his mouth. The first verb is an imperfect which emphasizes repeated action in past time and the second verb is a participle which emphasizes ongoing action. However, it is a little awkward to try to express this nuance in contemporary English. Even though it is not reflected in the translation, it is noted here for future reference.
9 tn The verbs here are both direct imperatives but it sounds awkward to say “You and Jeremiah, go and hide” in contemporary English. The same force is accomplished by placing the statement as strong advice, using the reflexive pronoun same as the definite article in the end of the preceding word (single writing of a letter followed by including the same letter [haplography]; so the majority of modern commentaries). The word is missing in the Greek version. The presence of this same word at the beginning of the answer in the next verse suggests that this was a question (probably without the he in interrogative to make it more emphatic) since the common way to answer affirmatively is to repeat the emphatic word in the question (cf. GKC 476 §150.n and compare usage in Gen 24:58). The intent of the question is to make sure that these were actually Jeremiah’s words, not Baruch’s own creation (cf. Jer 43:2-3 for a similar suspicion).
10 sn Larger houses, including the palace, were two-storied buildings with a lower quarters better suited for the cold of winter and an upper quarters which was better ventilated to provide cool in the summer. Since this was the ninth month (December) the king had taken up residence in the lower, warmer quarters which were equipped with a portable fire pot or brazier to keep him warm.
ing in the firepot in front of him. 14 36:23 As soon as Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king2 would cut them off with a penknife3 and throw them on the fire in the firepot. He kept doing so until the whole scroll was burned up in the fire. 5 36:24 Neither he nor any of his attendants showed any alarm when they heard all that had been read. Nor did they tear their clothes to show any grief or sorrow. 6 36:25 The king did not even listen to El-

than, Delaiah, and Gemariah, who had urged him not to burn the scroll. 7 36:26 He also ordered Jerahmeel, who was one of the royal princes,8 Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. However, the LORD hid them.

**Baruch and Jeremiah Write Another Scroll**

36:27 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah after Je-

hoakim had burned the scroll containing what Jer-

emiah had spoken and Baruch had written down.9 36:28 “Get another scroll and write on it everything10 that was written on the original scroll11 that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned. 36:29 Tell King Jehoiakim of Judah, ‘The LORD says, ‘You burned the scroll. You asked12 Jeremiah, ‘How dare you write in this scroll that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land and wipe out all the people and animals on it?’ 13 36:30 So the LORD says concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah, “None of his line will occupy the throne of David. 14 His dead body will be thrown out to be exposed to scorching heat by day and frost by night. 15 36:31 I will punish him and his descendants and the of-

ficials who serve him for the wicked things they have done.17 I will bring on them, the citizens of

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1 tn Heb “the fire in the firepot was burning before him.” The translation assumes that the word “fire” (אֵשׁ, 'esh) has dropped out after the particle אֶת (‘et) because of the similar beginnings of the two words. The word “fire” is found in the Greek, Syriac, and Targumic translations according to BHS. The particle אֶת should be retained rather than dropped as an example in chronological writing. Its presence is to be explained as the usage of the sign of the accusative introducing a new subject (cf. BDB 85 s.v. אֶת 3.α and compare the usage in 27:8; 38:16 [in the Kethib]; 45:4).

2 tn Heb “doors.” This is the only time the word “door” is used in this way but all the commentaries and lexicons agree that it means “columns.” The meaning is figurative based on the similarity of shape.

3 tn Heb “he.” The majority of commentaries and English versions are agreed that “he” is the king. However, since a penknife (Heb “a scribe’s razor”) is used to cut the columns off, it is possible that Jehudi himself did it. However, even if Jehudi himself did it, he was acting on the king’s orders.

4 sn Heb “a scribe’s razor.” There is some irony involved here since a scribe’s razor was used to trim the sheets to be sewn together, scribes them in preparation for writing, and to erase errors. What was normally used to prepare the scroll was used to destroy it.

5 tn Heb “until the whole scroll was consumed upon the fire which was in the fire pot.”

6 tn Heb “Neither the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words were afraid or tore their clothes.” The sentence has been broken up into two shorter sentences to better conform to English style and some of the terms explained (e.g., tore their clothes) for the sake of clarity.

7 sn There are some interesting wordplays and contrasts involved here. The action of the king and his attendants should be contrasted with that of the officials who heard the same things read (v. 16). The king and his officials did not tear their garments and sorrow; instead the king cut up the scroll (the words “tear” and “cut off” are the same in Hebrew [שׁוּב, qarna’]). Likewise, the actions of Jehoiakim and his attendants is to be contrasted with that of his father Josiah who some twenty or more years earlier tore his clothes in grief and sorrow (2 Kgs 22:11-20) and led the people in renewing their commitment to the covenant (2 Kgs 23:1-3). That was what the Lord had hoped would happen when he and his people heard the warnings of Jeremiah (Jer 36:2-3). Instead, Jehoiakim expressed his contempt for the word of God by destroying the scroll.

8 tn Heb “And also Elthan, Delaiah, and Gemariah urged [or had urged] the king not to burn the scroll, but he did not listen to them.” The translation attempts to lessen the clash in chronological sequencing with the preceding. This sentence is essentially a flash back to a time before the scroll was totally burned (v. 23).

9 sn This prophesy was not “totally” fulfilled because his son Jehoahaz (Jeconiah) did occupy the throne for three months (2 Kgs 23:8). However, his rule was negligible and after his capitulation and exile to Babylon, he himself was promised that neither he nor his successors would occupy the throne of David (cf. Jer 22:30; and see the study notes on 22:24, 30).

10 sn Compare the more poetic prophecy in Jer 22:18-19 and see the study note on 22:19.

11 sn “for the interrogative ‘why do you’ see the translator’s note on 26:9.

12 tn Heb “Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll and the words [= containing the words] which Baruch wrote down from the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,”

13 tn Heb “Return, take another.” The verb “return” is used in the sense of repetition “take again” (cf. BDB 998 s.v. הָעַר). The idea is already contained in “Get another” so most modern English versions do not represent it.

14 sn Heb “first [or former] scroll.”

15 tn Or “In essence you asked.” For explanation see the translator’s note on the end of the verse.

16 tn Heb “You burned this scroll, saying, ‘Why did you write on it, saying, ‘The king of Babylon will certainly come [the indefinite absolute before the finite verb expresses certainty here as several places elsewhere in Jeremiah] and destroy this land and exterminate it from both man and beast.’” The sentence raises several difficulties for translating literally, i.e., the “you” in “why did you write” is undefined, though it obviously refers to Jeremiah. The gerund “saying” that introduces ‘Why did you write’ does not fit very well with ‘you burned the scroll.” Gerunds of this sort are normally explanatory. Lastly, there is no indication in the narrative that Jehoiakim ever directly asked Jeremiah this question. In fact, he had been the one who had been burning the scroll. So Jehoiakim couldn’t confront him. The question is presented rhetorically, expressing Jehoiakim’s thoughts or intents and giving the rational for burning the scroll, i.e., he questioned Jeremiah’s right to say such things. The translation has attempted to be as literal as possible without resolving some of these difficulties. One level of embedded quotes has been eliminated for greater simplicity. For the rendering of “How dare you” for the interrogative “why do you” see the translator’s note on 26:9.

17 tn “for their iniquity.”
Jeremiah, and the people of Judah all the disaster that I threatened to do to them. I will punish them because I threatened them but they still paid no heed.”

36:32 Then Jeremiah got another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of Neriah. As Jeremiah dictated, Baruch wrote on this scroll everything that had been on the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned in the fire. They also added on this scroll several other messages of the same kind.

Introduction to Incidents During the Reign of Zedekiah

37:1 Zedekiah son of Josiah succeeded Jeho- niah son of Jehoiakim as king. He was elevated to the throne of the land of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. 37:2 Neither he nor the officials who served him nor the people of Judah paid any attention to what the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah.

The Lord Responds to Zedekiah’s Hope for Help

37:3 King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shele- miah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah. He told them to say, “Please pray to the Lord our God on our behalf.” 37:4 (Now Jeremiah had not yet been put in prison.) So he was still free to come and go among the people as he pleased. 37:5 At that time the Babylonian forces had temporarily given up their siege against Jerusalem. 37:6 They had had it under siege, but withdrew when they heard that the army of Pharaoh had set out from Egypt.

1 sn This is the second of two delegations that Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to ask him to pray for a miraculous deliverance. Both of them are against the background of the siege of Jeru- salem which was instigated by Zedekiah’s rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar and sending to Egypt for help (cf. Ezek 17:15). The earlier delegation (21:1-2) had been sent before Nebuchadnezzar had clamped down on Jerusalem because the Judean forces at that time were still fighting against the Babylonian forces in the open field (see 21:4 and the translator’s note there). Here the siege has been lifted because the Babylonian troops had heard a report that the Egyptian army was on the way into Palestine to give the Judeans the promised aid (vv. 5, 7). The request is brief, but the intention is doubtless the same (see also the study note on 21:2).

2 sn This is the second of two delegations that Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to ask him to pray for a miraculous deliverance. Both of them are against the background of the siege of Jerusalem which was instigated by Zedekiah’s rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar and sending to Egypt for help (cf. Ezek 17:15). The earlier delegation (21:1-2) had been sent before Nebuchadnezzar had clamped down on Jerusalem because the Judean forces at that time were still fighting against the Babylonian forces in the open field (see 21:4 and the translator’s note there). Here the siege has been lifted because the Babylonian troops had heard a report that the Egyptian army was on the way into Palestine to give the Judeans the promised aid (vv. 5, 7). The request is brief, but the intention is doubtless the same (see also the study note on 21:2).

3 sn The words “as he pleased” are not in the text but are implicit in the idiom both in Hebrew and in English. They have been supplied in the translation for clarity and the sake of English idiom.

4 sn The text “heb “Coniah.” For explanation of the rendering here see the translator’s note on 22:24.

5 sn Heb “And Zedekiah son of Josiah whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah ruled as king instead of Coniah son of Jehoiakim.” The sentence has been restructured and simplified to better conform to contemporary English style.

6 sn These two verses (37:1-2) are introductory to chs. 37–38 and are intended to characterize Zedekiah and his re- gime as disobedient just like Jehoiakim and his regime had been (Jer 36:27; cf. 2 Kgs 24:19-20). This characterization is important because Zedekiah is portrayed in the incidents that follow in 37–38 as seeking the Lord’s help or seeking a word from the Lord. However though he did send to inquire of Jeremiah three times, he did not pay attention to the warn- ings that he received in reply and was ultimately responsible for the fall of Jerusalem (Jer 39). As elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah, Jeconiah’s reign is passed over in silence because it was negligible and because Jeremiah did not wish to legiti- mize the hopes that many in Israel and Babylon had in his returning from exile and resuming rule over Judah (see further the study notes on 22:24, 30 and 33:30).

7 sn This is the second of two delegations that Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to ask him to pray for a miraculous deliverance. Both of them are against the background of the siege of Jeru- salem which was instigated by Zedekiah’s rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar and sending to Egypt for help (cf. Ezek 17:15). The earlier delegation (21:1-2) had been sent before Nebuchadnezzar had clamped down on Jerusalem because the Judean forces at that time were still fighting against the Babylonian forces in the open field (see 21:4 and the translator’s note there). Here the siege has been lifted because the Babylonian troops had heard a report that the Egyptian army was on the way into Palestine to give the Judeans the promised aid (vv. 5, 7). The request is brief, but the intention is doubtless the same (see also the study note on 21:2).

8 sn Jehucal was one of the officials who later sought to have Jeremiah put to death for what they considered treason (38:1-4).

9 sn The priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah was a member of the earlier delegation (21:2) and the chief of security in the temple to whom the Babylonian false prophet wrote a letter complaining that Jeremiah should be locked up for his treasonous prophecies (29:25-26). See the study notes on 21:2 and 29:25 for further details.

10 sn This statement anticipates v. 15. Verses 3-4 are par- enthetical to the narrative thread which is picked up in v. 5. They provide background information necessary for under- standing the situation at the time the delegation comes to Jeremiah.

11 sn The words “as he pleased” are not in the text but are implicit in the idiom both in Hebrew and in English. They have been supplied in the translation for clarity and the sake of English idiom.

12 sn Heb “the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

13 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

14 sn Heb “and the army of Pharaoh had set out from Egypt and the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard a report about them and they went up from besieging them.” The sentence has been restructured and reworded to give greater emphasis to the most pertinent fact, i.e., that the siege had been temporarily lifted. The word “temporarily” is not in the text but is implicit from the rest of the context. It is supplied in the translation here to better show that the information in vv. 4-5 is all parenthetical, providing a background for the oracle that will follow. For the meaning “given up their siege against” (Heb “had taken themselves away from against”) see BDB 749 s.v. מָשָׂא Niph.1.c(2); 759 s.v. מָשָׂא Niph.1.c(2).

15 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

16 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

17 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

18 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

19 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

20 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.

21 sn The Chaldeans. See the study note on 21:4 for the rendering “Babylonian.” The word “forces” is supplied in the translation here for the sake of clarity.
Jeremiah a message for them. He told him to tell them, 5:37:7 “The Lord God of Israel says, ‘Give a message to the king of Judah who sent you to ask me to help him.’ 6 Tell him, “The army of Pharaoh that was on its way to help you will go back home to Egypt. 7 Then the Babylonian forces will return. They will attack the city and will capture it and burn it down. 8 Moreover, I, the Lord, warn you not to deceive yourselves into thinking that the Babylonian forces will go away and leave you alone. For they will not go away. 9 For even if you were to defeat all the Babylonian forces fighting against you so badly that only wounded men were left lying in their tents, they would get up and burn this city down.” 10

Jeremiah is Charged with Deserting, Arrested, and Imprisoned

37:11 The following events also occurred 11 while the Babylonian forces 12 had temporarily withdrawn from Jerusalem 13 because the army of Pharaoh was coming. 14 Jeremiah started to leave Jerusalem to go to the territory of Benjamin. He wanted to make sure he got his share of the property that was being divided up among his family there. 15 But he only got as far as the Benjamin Gate. 16 There an officer in charge of the guards named Irijah, 17 who was the son of Shelemiah and the grandson of Hananiah,
stopped him. He seized Jeremiah and said, 1 “You are deserting to the Babylonians!” 2 Then Jeremiah answered, “That’s a lie! I am not deserting to the Babylonians.” But Irijah would not listen to him. Irijah put Jeremiah under arrest and took him to the officials. 3:15 The officials were very angry 4 at Jeremiah. They had him flogged and put in prison in the house of Jonathan, the royal secretary, which they had converted into a place for confining prisoners. 5

37:16 So 6 Jeremiah was put in prison in a cell in the dungeon of Jonathan’s house. 7 He 8 was kept there for a long time. 37:17 Then King Zedekiah had him brought to the palace. There he questioned him privately and asked him, 9 “Is there any message from the Lord?” Jeremiah answered, “Yes, there is.” Then he announced, 10 “You will be handed over to the king of Babylon.” 37:18 Then Jeremiah asked King Zedekiah, “What crime have I committed against you, or the officials who serve you, or the people of Judah? What have I done to make you people throw me into prison?” 37:19 Where now are the prophets who prophesied to you that 13 the king of Babylon would not attack you or this land? 37:20 But now please listen, your royal Majesty, 14 and grant my plea for mercy. 15 Do not send me back to the house of Jonathan, the royal secretary. If you do, I will die there.” 37:21 Then King Zedekiah ordered that Jeremiah be committed to the courtyard of the guardhouse. He also ordered that a loaf of bread 23 be given to him every day from the baker’s street until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah was kept 18 in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

Jeremiah Is Charged with Treason and Put in a Cistern to Die

38:1 Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jehucal 19 son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur 20 son of Malkijah had heard 21 the
and put him in the cistern\textsuperscript{13} of Malkijah, one of the royal princes,\textsuperscript{14} that was in the courtyard of the guardhouse. There was no water in the cistern, only mud. So when they lowered Jeremiah into the cistern with ropes he sank in the mud.\textsuperscript{15}

An Ethiopian Official Rescues Jeremiah from the Cistern

38:7 An Ethiopian, Ebed Melech,\textsuperscript{16} a court official in the royal palace, heard that Jeremiah had been put\textsuperscript{17} in the cistern. While the king was holding court\textsuperscript{18} at the Benjamin Gate, 38:8 Ebed Melech departed the palace and went to speak to the king. He said to him, 38:9 "Your royal Majesty, those men have been very wicked in all that they have done to the prophet Jeremiah. They have thrown him into a cistern and he is sure to die of starvation there because there is no food left in the city."\textsuperscript{19} 38:10 Then the king gave Ebed Melech the Ethiopian the following order: "Take

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\textsuperscript{13} sn A cistern was a pear-shaped pit with a narrow opening. Cisterns were cut or dug in the limestone rock and lined with plaster to prevent seepage. They were used to collect and store rain water or water carried up from a spring.

\textsuperscript{14} sn See Jer 39:16-18.

\textsuperscript{15} sn This individual, Ebed Melech, is mentioned only here. Later he will be promised deliverance from destruction when the city falls because he had shown trust in God (see Jer 39:16-18).

\textsuperscript{16} sn Ebed Melech, the Cushite, a man, an eunuch\textsuperscript{17} official, and he was (= who was; a circumstantial clause) in the house of the king. heard that they had put Jeremiah... The passive construction "Jeremiah had been put" has been used to avoid the indefinite subject "they" or the addition of the "officials." For the translation of מִשְׁרָב (mishar), see the translator's note on 29:2 and see also the usage in 34:19. For the translation of "Cushite" as Ethiopian see the study note on 13:27.

\textsuperscript{17} tn Heb "Ebed Melech, the Cushite, a man, an eunuch\textsuperscript{18} official, and he was (= who was; a circumstantial clause) in the house of the king. heard that they had put Jeremiah..."

\textsuperscript{18} sn In the Hebrew text the words "They had also heard him say," are not in the Hebrew text. They are supplied in the translation for clarity so as to avoid any possible confusion that might be created by saying merely "And the Lord says," without any introduction.

\textsuperscript{19} tn This clause is circumstantial to the following clause; thus "while the king was..." Most commentators agree that the reference to sitting in the gate here likely refers to the same kind of judicial context that has been posited for 26:10 (see the translator's note there for further references). Hence the translation "the king was sitting" with the more technical "holding court" to better reflect the probable situation.

\textsuperscript{20} tn "Those men have made evil all they have done to the prophet Jeremiah in that they have thrown him into the cistern and he will die of starvation in the place where he is because there is no more food in the city." The particle מ (mi) before "they have thrown" (יָשַׁב, yashav) is explanatory or further definition of "all they have done to" (i.e., the particle is repeated for emphasis). The verb form "and he is sure to die" is an unusual use of the vav (ו) consecutive + imperfect that the grammars see as giving a logical consequence without a past nuance (cf. GKC 328 §111f. and IBHS 557-58 §33.3.1f).

\textsuperscript{21} sn Because there isn't any food left in the city" is rhetorical exaggeration; the food did not run out until just before the city fell. Perhaps the intent is to refer to the fact that there was no food in the city for people so confined (i.e., in solitary confinement).
thirty men with you from here and go pull the prophet Jeremiah out of the cistern before he dies.”

38:11 So Ebed Melech took the men with him and went to a room under the treasure room in the palace. He got some worn-out clothes and old rags from there and let them down by ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern. 38:12 Ebed Melech called down to Jeremiah, “Put these rags and worn-out clothes under your armpits to pad the ropes.” Jeremiah did as Ebed Melech instructed. 38:13 So they pulled Jeremiah up from the cistern with ropes. Jeremiah, however, still remained confined to the courtyard of the guardhouse.

Jeremiah Responds to Zedekiah’s Request for Secret Advice

38:14 Some time later Zedekiah sent and had Jeremiah brought to him at the third entrance of the LORD’s temple. The king said to Jeremiah, “I would like to ask you a question. Do not hide anything from me when you answer.”

Zedekiah held out this hope of escape until the end and attempted to do so but was unsuccessful (cf. 39:4-5).

10 tn The words “when you answer” are not in the text but are implicit in the connection. They are supplied in the translation for the sake of clarity and expression of style.

11 Or “you will most certainly kill me, won’t you?” Heb “Will you not certainly kill me?” The question is rhetorical and expects a positive answer. In situations like this BDB s.v. נף 4.b(4) says that נף (halo) “has a tendency to become a little more than an affirmative particle, declaring with some rhetorical emphasis what is, or might be, well known.” The idea of certainty is emphasized here by the addition of the infinitive absolute before the finite verb (Jon 2:422 §123.e).

12 Heb “So King Zedekiah secretly swore an oath to Jeremiah, saying.”

13 Heb “who has made this life/soul/breath [נפש, nefesh] for us.” The Hebrew term נפש refers to the living, breathing substance of a person which constitutes his very life (cf. BDB 659 s.v. נפש 1; 3).

14 Heb “who are seeking your life.”

15 Heb “Yahweh, the God of armies, the God of Israel.” Compare 7:3 and 35:17 and see the study note on 2:19.

16 Heb “Your life/soul will live.” The quote is a long condition-consequence sentence with compound consequential clauses. It reads, “If you will only go out to the officers of the king of Babylon, your soul [נתוطنש, nefesh] and this city will not be burned with fire and you and your household will live.” The sentence has been broken down and restructured to better conform with contemporary English style. The infinitive absolute in the condition emphasizes the one condition, i.e., going out or surrendering (cf. Jon 2:423 §123.g, and compare usage in Exod 15:26). For the idiom “go out to” = “surrender to” see the full idiom in 21:9 “go out and fall over to” which is condensed in 38:2 to “go out to.” The expression here is the same as in 38:2.

17 Heb “Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.

18 Heb “will not escape from their hand.”

19 Zedekiah held out this hope of escape until the end and attempted to do so but was unsuccessful (cf. 39:4-5).

20 Or “and they will badly abuse me.” For the usage of this verb in the situation presupposed see Judg 19:25 and 1 Sam 31:4.
Lord by doing what I have been telling you. Then all will go well with you and your life will be spared. 38:21 But if you refuse to surrender, the Lord has shown me a vision of what will happen. Here is what I saw: All the women who are left in the royal palace of Judah will be led out to the officers of the king of Babylon. They will taunt you saying, ‘Your trusted friends misled you; they have gotten the best of you. Now that your feet are stuck in the mud, they have turned their backs on you.’

3 All your wives and your children will be turned over to the Babylonians. You yourself will not escape from them but will be captured by the king of Babylon. This city will be burned down.

38:24 Then Zedekiah told Jeremiah, “Do not let anyone know about the conversation we have had. If you do, you will die. 38:25 The officials may hear that I have talked with you. They may come to you and say, ‘Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you.’ Do not hide anything from us. If you do, we will kill you.” 38:26 If they do this, tell them, ‘I was pleading with the king not to send me back to die in the dungeon of Jonathan’s house.’ 38:27 All the officials did indeed come and question Jeremiah. He told them exactly what the king had instructed him to say. They stopped questioning him any further because no one had actually heard their conversation. 38:28 So Jeremiah remained confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse.
the king of Babylon came and set up quarters⁷ in the Middle Gate.⁸ 39:4 When King Zedekiah of Judah and all his soldiers saw them, they tried to escape. They departed from the city during the night. They took a path through the king’s garden and passed out through the gate between the two walls.⁹ Then they headed for the Jordan Valley.¹⁰

39:5 But the Babylonian army chased after them. They caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho¹² and captured him.¹³ They took him to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at Riblah¹⁴ in the territory of Hamath and Nebuchadnezzar passed sentence on him there. 39:6 There at Riblah the king of Babylon had Zedekiah’s sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. The king of Babylon also had all the nobles of Judah put to death. 39:7 Then he had Zedekiah’s eyes put out and had him bound in chains¹⁵ to be led off to Babylon. 39:8 The Babylonians¹⁶ burned down the royal palace, the temple of the Lord, and the people’s

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1. map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
2. map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
3. tc The precise meaning of this line and its relation to the context are somewhat uncertain. This line is missing from the Greek and Syriac versions and from a few Hebrew ms.
4. sn 2 Kgs 25:1 and Jer 52:4 give the more precise date of the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year which would have been Jan 15, 588 a.c. The reckoning is based on the calendar that begins the year in the spring (Nisan = March/April).
5. sn According to modern reckoning that would have been July 18, 588 a.c. The siege thus lasted almost a full eighteen months.
6. tn English versions and commentaries differ on the number of officers named here and the exact spelling of their names. For a good discussion of the options see B. H. Huey, Jeremiah, Lamentations (NAC), 243-44, n. 71. Most commentators follow the general lead of J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 243) as the present translation has done here. However, the second name is not emended on the basis of v. 13 as Bright does, nor is the second Nergal-Sharezer regarded as the same man as the first and the information on the two combined as he does. The first Nergal-Sharezer is generally identified on the basis of Babylonian records as the man who usurped the throne from Nebuchadnezzar’s son, Nebel-Marduk or Evil-Merodach as he is known in the OT (Jer 52:31; 2 Kgs 25:27). The present translation renders the two technical Babylonian terms “Rab-Saris” (only in Jer 39:3, 13; 2 Kgs 18:17) and “Rab-Mag” (only in Jer 39:3, 13) as “chief officer” and “high official” without knowing precisely what offices they held. This has been done to give the modern reader some feeling of their high position without specifying exactly what their precise positions were (i.e., the generic has been used for the unknown specific).
7. tn Heb “sat.” The precise meaning of this phrase is not altogether clear, but J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 243) is undoubtedly correct in assuming that it had to do with setting up a provisional military government over the city.
8. sn The Hebrew style here is typically full or redundant, giving a general subject first and then listing the specifics. The Hebrew text reads: “Then all the officers of the king of Babylon came and sat in the Middle Gate, Nergal-Sharezer...and all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon.” In the translation the general subject has been eliminated and the list of the “real” subjects used instead; this eliminates the dashes or commas typical of some modern English versions.
9. sn The identification of the location of the Middle Gate is uncertain since it is mentioned nowhere else in the OT.
10. sn The king’s garden is mentioned again in Neh 3:15 in conjunction with the pool of Siloam and the stairs that go down from the City of David. This would have been in the southern part of the city near the Tyropean Valley which agrees with the reference to the “two walls” which were probably the walls on the eastern and western hills.
11. sn Heb “toward the Arabah.” The Arabah was the rift valley north and south of the Dead Sea. Here the intention was undoubtedly to escape across the Jordan to Moab or Ammon. It appears from 40:14; 41:15 that the Ammonites were known to harbor fugitives from the Babylonians.
13. map For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-E3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.
14. sn Riblah was a strategic town on the Orontes River in Syria. It was at a crossing of the major roads between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Pharaoh Necho had earlier received Jehoahaz there and put him in chains (2 Kgs 23:33) prior to taking him captive to Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar had set up his base camp for conducting his campaigns against the Palestinian states there and was now sitting in judgment on prisoners brought to him.
15. tn Hebrew “fetters of bronze.” The more generic “chains” is used in the translation because “fetters” is a word unfamiliar to most modern readers.
16. tn Hebrew “Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.
homes, \(^1\) and they tore down the wall of Jerusa-
lenn.\(^2\) 39:9 Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal
guard,\(^3\) took captive the rest of the people who
were left in the city. He carried them off to Babylon
along with the people who had deserted
to him.\(^4\) 39:10 But he\(^5\) left behind in the land of Ju-
dah some of the poor people who owned nothing.
He gave them fields and vineyards at that time.

39:11 Now King Nebuchadnezzar of Baby-
lon had issued orders concerning Jeremiah. He
had passed them on through Nebuzaradan,
the captain of his royal guard,\(^6\) 39:12 “Find Jer-
emiah\(^7\) and look out for him.”\(^8\) Do not do any-
thing to harm him,\(^9\) but do with him whatever he
tells you.” 39:13 So Nebuzaradan, the captain of
the royal guard, Nebushazban, who was a chief
officer, Nergal-Sherezer, who was a high official,\(^10\)
and all the other officers of the king of Babylon
39:14 sent and had Jeremiah brought from the
courtyard of the house of the guardhouse. They
turned him over to Gedaliah,\(^11\) the son of Ahikam
and the grandson of Shaphan, to take him home with
him.\(^12\) But Jer-
emiah stayed among the people.\(^13\)

\(^{14\text{t}}\) Ebed Melech Is Promised Deliverance because of
His Faith

39:15-16 Now the Lord had spoken to Jer-
emiah while he was still confined in the court-
yard of the guardhouse,\(^15\) 39:16 “Go\(^16\) and

tell Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, ‘The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “I will carry out against this city what I promised. It will mean disaster and not good fortune for it.” When that disaster happens, you will be there to see it. But I will rescue you when it happens. I, the Lord, affirm it! You will not be handed over to those whom you fear. I will certainly save you. You will not fall victim to violence. You will escape with your life because you trust in me. I, the Lord, affirm it!”’

**Jeremiah Is Set Free A Second Time**

40:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan the captain of the royal guard had set him free at Ramah. He had taken him there in chains along with all the people from Jerusalem and Judah who were being carried off to exile to Babylon. 40:2 The captain of the royal guard took Jeremiah aside and said to him, “The Lord your God threatened this place with this disaster. 40:3 Now he has brought it about. The Lord has done just as he threatened to do. This disaster has happened because you people sinned against the Lord and did not obey him. 40:4 But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you

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1 sn Some commentators see this as a reference to the princes from whose clutches Ebed-Melech delivered Jeremiah (39:7-13). However, it is clear that in this context, it refers to those that he would fear when the Lord brings about the threatened disaster, i.e., the Babylonians who are attacking the city.

2 sn Heb “And they [= my words for disaster] will come to pass [= happen] before you on that day [i.e., the day that I bring them to pass/carry them out].”

3 tn Heb “But I will rescue you on that day” (referring to the same day mentioned in the preceding verse).

4 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

5 tn Heb “Behold, I will bring my words against this city for evil/disaster and not for good/good fortune.” For the form of the verb רָבַע (referred to the Kethib, מְרָבַע; Qere) see GKC 206-7 §74.k, where the same form is noted for the Kethib in 2 Sam 5:2; 1 Kgs 21:21; Jer 19:15 all of which occur before a word beginning with נ. For the nuance “carry out” (or “bring to pass”) see BDAG s.v. רָבַע Hiph.2.b.

6 sn Some commentators see this as a reference to the princes from whose clutches Ebed-Melech delivered Jeremiah. But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you...

7 sn Heb “you will not fall by the sword.” In the context this would include death in battle and execution as a prisoner of war.

8 sn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”

9 tn Heb “The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord.” This phrase regularly introduces the Lord’s directions to Jeremiah which immediately follow (cf. 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 30:1; 34:1; 35:1). In 20:1:4:1 it introduces a word of the Lord which Jeremiah communicates to others. However, no directions to Jeremiah follow here nor does any oracle that Jeremiah passes on to the people. Some commentators explain this as a heading parallel to that in 1:1-3 (which refers to messages and incidents in the life of Jeremiah up to the fall of Jerusalem) introducing the oracles that Jeremiah delivered after the fall of Jerusalem. However, no oracles follow until 42:9.

10 sn Some commentators see this as a reference to the princes from whose clutches Ebed-Melech delivered Jeremiah. But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you...

11 map For location see Map 5:1-6:1; Map 6:1-10; Map 7:1-8; Map 9:1-2; Map 12:1-3; JPS map if it can be read is that the word of the Lord is to be understood as a secondary formation with the normal word for “fetter” (יָקִים, qem) according to HALOT 27 s.v. קָם (see GKC 70 §19.m and 235-36 §85.b for the phenomenon).

12 map For location see Map 5:1-6:1; Map 6:1-10; Map 7:1-8; Map 9:1-2; Map 12:1-3; JPS map if it can be read is that the word of the Lord is to be understood as a secondary formation with the normal word for “fetter” (יָקִים, qem) according to HALOT 27 s.v. קָם (see GKC 70 §19.m and 235-36 §85.b for the phenomenon).

13 sn Some commentators see this as a reference to the princes from whose clutches Ebed-Melech delivered Jeremiah. But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you...

14 sn Some commentators see this as a reference to the princes from whose clutches Ebed-Melech delivered Jeremiah. But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you...
free⁴ from the chains on your wrists. If you would like to come to Babylon with me, come along and I will take care of you.² But if you prefer not to come to Babylon with me, you are not required to do so.³ You are free to go anywhere in the land you want to go.⁴ Go wherever you choose."⁵ ⁴⁰:⁵ Before Jeremiah could turn to leave, the captain of the guard added, “Go back⁶ to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed to govern⁷ the towns of Judah. Go back and live with him⁸ among the people. Or go wherever else you choose.⁹ Then the captain of the guard gave Jeremiah some food and a present and let him go. ⁴⁰:⁶ So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah⁹ and lived there with him. He stayed there to live among the people who had been left in the land of Judah.¹⁰

A Small Judean Province is Established at Mizpah ⁴⁰:⁷ Now some of the officers of the Judean army and their troops had been hiding in the countryside. They heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam to govern the country. They also heard that he had been put in charge over the men, women, and children from the poorer classes of the land who had not been carried off into exile in Babylon.¹² ⁴⁰:⁸ So¹² all these officers and their troops came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraijah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite.¹⁴ ⁴⁰:⁹ Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety.¹⁵ “Do not
be afraid to submit to the Babylonians. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you. 40:10 I for my part will stay at Mizpah to represent you before the Babylonians whenever they come to us. You for your part go ahead and harvest the wine, the dates, the figs, and the olive oil, and store them in jars. Go ahead and settle down in the towns that you have taken over. 40:11 Moreover, all the Judeans who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and all the other countries heard what had happened. They heard that the king of Babylon had allowed some people to stay in Judah and that he had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to govern them. 40:12 So all these Judeans returned to the land of Judah from the places where they had been scattered. They came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. Thus they harvested a large amount of wine and dates and figs.

Ishtar of Babylon, “Do not do that because what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”

41:1 But in the seventh month Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama who was a member of the royal family and had been one of Zedekiah’s chief officers, came with ten of his men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating a meal together with him there at Mizpah, 41:2 Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him stood up, pulled out their swords, and killed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Thus Ishmael killed the man that the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country. 41:3 Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Babylonian soldiers who happened to be there. 41:4 On the day after Gedaliah had been murdered, before anyone even knew about it, 41:5 eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards.

40:13 Johanan and all the officers of the troops that had been hiding in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. 40:14 They said to him, “Are you at all aware that King Baal of Ammon has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them. 40:15 Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah there at Mizpah, “Let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah before anyone knows about it. Otherwise he will kill you and all the Judeans who have rallied around you will be scattered. Then what remains of Judah will disappear.” 40:16 But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do that because what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”

8 tn Heb “this thing.” 9 tn Heb “is false” or “is a lie.” 10 sn It is not altogether clear whether this is in the same year that Jerusalem fell or not. The wall was breached in the fourth month (= early July; 39:2) and Nebuzaradan came and burned the palace, the temple, and many of the houses and tore down the wall in the fifth month (= early August; 52:12). That would have left time between the fifth month and the seventh month (October) to gather in the harvest of grapes, dates and figs, and olives (40:12). However, many commentators feel that too much activity takes place in too short a time for this to have been in the same year and posit that it happened the following year or even five years later when a further deportation took place, possibly in retaliation for the murder of Gedaliah and the Babylonian garrison at Mizpah (52:30). The assassination of Gedaliah had momentous consequences and was commemorated in one of the post-exilic fast days lamenting the fall of Jerusalem (Zech 8:19).

11 sn All the Judeans. This can scarcely refer to all the Judeans who had rallied around Gedaliah at Mizpah because v. 10 later speaks of Ishmael carrying off “the rest of the people who were at Mizpah.” Probably what is meant is “all the Judeans and Babylonian soldiers” that were also at the meal. It is possible that this meal was intended to seal a covenant between Gedaliah and Ishmael. This point is made by the parallel of Ishmael’s allegiance to Gedaliah and his Babylonian overlords (cf. Gen 26:30-31; 31:53-54; Exod 24:11). In any case, this act of treachery and deceit was an extreme violation of the customs of hospitality practiced in the ancient Near East.

12 tn Heb “Chaldean.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.

13 sn Some of these cases listed in BDB 554 s.v. יַגְלֶא (yagla’), or יָגְלָא (yaga’la) as the Greek version does here. Hence it is separated from the preceding and translated “otherwise” for the sake of English style.
torn their clothes, and cut themselves to show they were mourning.\(^2\) They were carrying grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem.\(^3\) 41:6 Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet him. He was pretending to cry\(^4\) as he walked along. When he met them, he said to them, “Come with me to meet Gedaliah son of Ahikam.”\(^5\) 41:7 But as soon as they were inside the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw their bodies\(^6\) in a cistern. 41:8 But there were ten men among them who said\(^6\) to Ishmael, “Do not kill us. For we will give you the stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey we have hidden in a field.”\(^7\) So he spared their lives and did not kill\(^7\) them along with the rest.\(^8\) 41:9 Now the cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of those he had killed was a large one\(^9\) that King Asa had constructed as part of his defenses against King Baasha of Israel.\(^5\) Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with dead bodies.\(^10\) 41:10 Then Ishmael took captive all the people who were still left alive in Mizpah. This included the royal princesses\(^11\) and all the rest of the people in Mizpah that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had put under the authority of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took all these people captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites. 41:11 Johanan Rescues the People Ishmael Had Carried Off

41:11 Johanan son of Koreah and all the army officers who were with him heard about all the atrocities\(^12\) that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had committed. 41:12 So they took all their troops and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him near the large pool\(^13\) at Gibeon. 41:13 When all the people that Ishmael had taken captive saw\(^16\) Johanan son of Koreah and all the army officers with him, they were glad. 41:14 All those people that Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned and went over to Johanan son of Koreah. 41:15 But Ishmael son of Nethaniah managed to escape from Johanan along with eight of his men, and he went on over to Ammon.

41:16 Johanan son of Koreah and all the army officers who were with him led off all the people who had been left alive at Mizpah. They had rescued them from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after he killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. They led off the men, women, children, soldiers, and court officials whom they had brought away from Gibeon. 41:17 They set out to go to Egypt to get away from the Babylonians,\(^17\) but stopped

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\(^1\) In The words "to show they were mourning" are not in the text but are implicit in the acts. They are supplied in the translation for clarification for readers who may not be familiar with ancient mourning customs.

\(^2\) In The words "in Jerusalem" are not in the text but are implicit. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^3\) In The words "and threw their bodies" result from the significant use of the preposition \(שׁ\) (\(š\), see GKC 384 §119. \(g\)g and BDB 39 s.v. \(ת\) 1). Hence the suggestion in BHS (fn a) that the Syriac and two Greek \(m\)ss are reading a different text is not really a textual issue but a translational one; the versions are supplying the words for stylistic purposes as has been done here.

\(^4\) In Heb "Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam." The words that are supplied in the translation are implicit to the situation and are added for clarity.

\(^5\) In This sentence is a good example of the elliptical nature of some of the causal connections in the Hebrew Bible. All the Hebrew says literally is "For we have hidden stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey in a field." However, it is obvious that they are using this as their bargaining chip to prevent Ishmael from killing them. For the use of "for" (\(כִּי\) \(kî\)) in place of "because of" (\(בְּיַד\) \(bîyâ\)) is one of several that Asa dug for supplying water as part of the defense system constructed at Mizpah (cf. 1 Kgs 15:22; 2 Chr 16:6).

\(^6\) In Or "So he refrained from killing them"; Heb "he refrained and did not kill them."

\(^7\) In Heb "in the midst of their brothers/fellow countrymen.

\(^8\) In The translation here follows the reading of the Greek version. The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain; some understand it to mean "because of Gedaliah (i.e., to cover up the affair with Gedaliah) and others understand it to mean "alongside of Gedaliah." The translation presupposes that the Hebrew text reads \(יָדָּבֹר גָּדוֹל הוּא\) in place of \(יָדָּבֹר גָּדוֹל יָדָּבֹר\) (\(bîyâ\) \(gîdâ\) \(dîyâ\) \(bîyâ\)). The meaning of \(בְּיַד\) (\(bîyâ\)) does not fit any of the normal ones given for this expression and those who retain the Hebrew text normally explain it as an unnatural use of "because of" or "in the affair of" (so NJPS) or a rare use meaning "near, by the side of" (see BDB 391 s.v. \(יָד\) 5.\(d\)) where only Ps 141:6 and Zech 4:12 are cited. BDB themselves suggest reading with the Greek version as the present translation does (so BDB 391 s.v. \(יָד\) 5.c(3)). For the syntax presupposed by the Greek text which has been followed consult IBHS 299 §16.3.3d and 133 §8.4.2b. The first clause is a qualifying clause with normal order of subject-predicate-copulative pronoun and it is followed by a further qualifying relative clause.

\(^9\) IBHS, Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

\(^10\) In In \(וֹר\) (\(wâ\)) where only Ps 141:6 and Zech 4:12 are cited. BDB themselves suggest reading with the Greek version as the present translation does (so BDB 391 s.v. \(יָד\) 5.c(3))). For the syntax presupposed by the Greek text which has been followed consult IBHS 299 §16.3.3d and 133 §8.4.2b. The first clause is a qualifying clause with normal order of subject-predicate-copulative pronoun and it is followed by a further qualifying relative clause.

\(^11\) In Johanan Rescues the People Ishmael Had Carried Off

\(^12\) In It is generally agreed that the cistern referred to here is one of several that Asa dug for supplying water as part of the defense system constructed at Mizpah (cf. 1 Kgs 15:22; 2 Chr 16:6).

\(^13\) In Or "crimes," or "evil things"; Heb "the evil.

\(^14\) In Heb "the many [or great] waters." This is generally identified with the pool of Gibeon mentioned in 2 Sam 2:13.

\(^15\) In Heb "all the people who were with Ishmael." However, this does not refer to his own troops but to those he had taken with him from Mizpah, i.e., the captives. The phrase is specifically clarified in the next verse, i.e., "the people whom Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah." Hence the phrase is translated here according to sense, not according to the literal wording.

\(^16\) In Heb "Chaldeans." See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.
at Geruth Kimham\(^1\) near Bethlehem.\(^2\) 41:18 They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do\(^3\) because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.

The Survivors Ask the Lord for Advice but Refuse to Follow It

42:1 Then all the army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah\(^4\) and all the people of every class,\(^5\) went to the prophet Jeremiah. 42:2 They said to him, “Please grant our request\(^6\) and pray to the Lord your God for all those of us who are still alive here.\(^7\) For, as you yourself can see, there are only a few of us left out of the many there were before.\(^8\) 42:3 Pray that the Lord your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do.” 42:4 The prophet Jeremiah answered them, “Agreed!\(^9\) I will indeed pray to the Lord your God as you have asked. I will tell you everything the Lord replies in response to you.\(^10\) I will not keep anything back from you.” 42:5 They answered Jeremiah, “May the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not do just as\(^11\) the Lord sends you to tell us to do. 42:6 We will obey what the Lord our God to whom we are sending you tells us to do. It does not matter whether we like what he tells us or not. We will obey what he tells us to do so that things will go well for us.”\(^12\) 42:7 Ten days later the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. 42:8 So Jeremiah summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him and all the people of every class.\(^13\) 42:9 Then Jeremiah said to them, “You sent me to the Lord God of Israel to make your request known to him. Here is what he says to you.\(^14\) 42:10 ‘If you will just stay\(^15\) in this land, I

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\(^1\) sn Geruth Kimham is nowhere else mentioned in the Bible and its precise location is unknown. Many commentators relate the second part of the name to the name of the son of David’s benefactor when he fled from Absalom (2 Sam 19:38-39) and see this as a reference to an estate that David assigned this son as reward for his father’s largess. Gibeon was about six miles northwest of Jerusalem and Benjamin is approximately the same distance southwest of it. Hence, the people mentioned here had not traveled all that far.

\(^2\) map For location see Map5:B1; Map7:E2; Map8:E2; Map10:B4.

\(^3\) tn Verses 16-18a are a long complex sentence in the Hebrew text with some rather awkward placement of qualifying terms. In the Hebrew text these verses read: ‘41:16 And he took, Johanan...and all the army officers with him, all the people who were left alive which he [Johanan] had taken back from Ishmael son of Nethaniah [from Mizzpah] after he [Ishmael] had killed Gedaliah...men, men of war, and women and children and court officials which he [Johanan] had brought back from Gibeon 41:17 and they went and they stayed at Geruth Kimham...to go to enter Egypt 41:18 because of the Chaldean because they were afraid of them because Ishmael...” The sentence has been broken down and restructured to better conform with contemporary English style. There are a couple of places where the text and syntax are debatable. Many modern English versions and commentaries read “They led off/took control of/took all survivors of the people whom Ishmael...” (or “led off”) “or ‘took control of’” “or ‘took all survivors of the people whom Ishmael...”, and “They led off/took control of/took all survivors of the people whom Ishmael...”. This is a decidedly smoother text but there is no manuscript or versional evidence for it and so it has been rejected here. Some commentators and English versions see this sentence as a kind of apposition. So the translation reflects two categories which better conform with contemporary English style. The words “were before” are not in the text.

\(^4\) sn This refers to the small remnant of people who were left of those from Mizzpah who had been taken captive by Ishmael after he had killed Gedaliah and who had been rescued from him at Gibeon. There were other Judeans still left in the land of Judah who had not been killed or deported by the Babylonians.

\(^5\) tn “We” “or ‘those who are left’” (Johanan and his men). The phrase “we” is often expanded to “us” for clarity and smoothness of English style.

\(^6\) tn “Our request” is that Jeremiah would tell them where to go to enter Egypt and what they should do in this land after leaving Jerusalem.

\(^7\) sn This is the introductory element of the phrase “I will tell you everything the Lord replies in response to you.” The form looks like the absolute before the finite verb emphasizing here the condition leading in to the long quote.

\(^8\) sn Please grant our request that you tell us where we should go and what we should do. We will obey whatever you tell us to do.

\(^9\) tn “I will indeed pray to the Lord...” The sentence has been broken down and restructured to cut down on the length of the introduction leading in to the long quote.

\(^10\) sn Their “request” is that Jeremiah would tell them where to go and what to do (v. 3).

\(^11\) tn The word “just” is intended to reflect the infinitive absolute before the finite verb emphasizing here the condition rather than the verb root (see 41:23 §123.g, and compare the usage in Exod 15:26). The form looks like the infinitive absolute of the verb זוה (zohav) which is the root

\(^12\) sn This this is a figure of speech that uses polar opposites as an all-inclusive designation of everyone without exception. It includes all the people from the least important or poorest to the most important or richest.

\(^13\) tn Or “without distinction,” or “All the people from the least important to the most important”; Heb “from the least to the greatest.” This is a figure of speech that uses polar opposites as an all-inclusive designation of everyone without exception (i.e., it included all the people from the least important or poorest to the most important or richest.)

\(^14\) tn “Thus says the Lord God of Israel to whom you sent me to present your petition before him...” The sentence has been restructured to cut down on the length of the introduction leading in to the long quote.

\(^15\) sn Their “request” is that Jeremiah would tell them where to go and what to do (v. 3).
will build you up. I will not tear you down. I will firmly plant you. I will not uproot you. For I am filled with sorrow because of the disaster that I have brought on you. 42:11 Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him because I will be with you to save you and to rescue you from his power. I, the Lord, affirm it! 42:12 I will have compassion on you so that he in turn will have mercy on you and allow you to return to your land.'

42:13 “You must not disobey the Lord your God by saying, ‘We will not stay in this land.’ 42:14 You must not say, ‘No, we will not stay. Instead we will go and live in the land of Egypt where we will not face war, or hear the enemy’s trumpet calls, or starve for lack of food.’ 42:15 If you people who remain in Judah do that, then listen to what the Lord says. The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘If you are so determined to go to Egypt that you go and settle there, 42:16 the wars you fear will catch up with you there in the land of Egypt. The starvation you are worried about will follow you there to Egypt. You will die there. 42:17 All the people of the verb that follows it. Either this is a textual error of the loss of a ‘t (vav)’ or this is one of the cases that GKC 69 §19.i list as the possible loss of a weak consonant at the beginning of a word.

1 sn Or “I will firmly plant you in the land,” or “I will establish you.” This is part of the metaphor that has been used of God (re)establishing Israel in the land. See 24:26; 31:28; 32:41.

2 sn See Jer 41:18 for their reason for fear.

3 tn Heb “oracle of the Lord.”

4 tn Heb “see [or experience] war.”

5 tn Heb “hear the sound of the trumpet.” The trumpet was used to gather the troops and to sound the alarm for battle.

6 tn Jer 42:13-14 are a long complex condition (protatia) whose consequence (apodosis) does not begin until v. 15. The Hebrew text of v. 13-14 reads: ‘But if you say (or continue to say [the form is a participle]), ’We will not stay in this land’ with the result that you do not obey [or “more literally, see the Lord’s words”] or “more literally, do not hearken to the voice of] the Lord your God, 42:14 saying, ’No, but to the land of Egypt we will go where we...and there we will live,’ 42:15 now therefore hear the word of the Lord. The sentence has been broken up and restructured in order to better conform with contemporary English style but an attempt has been made to maintain the contingencies and the qualifiers that are in the longer Hebrew original.

7 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” See the study note on 2:19 for the translation and significance of this title.

8 tn Heb “set your face to.” See Jer 42:17; 44:11; Dan 11:17; 2 Kgs 12:17 (12:18 HT) for parallel usage.

9 tn Or “will follow you right into Egypt,” or “will dog your steps all the way to Egypt”’; Heb “cling after.” This is the only case of this verb with this preposition in the Qal stem. However, it is used with this preposition several times in the Hiphil, all with the meaning of “to pursue closely.” See BDB 180 s.v. קד (‘to pursue closely’).

10 tn The repetition of the adverb “there” in the translation of vv. 14, 16 is to draw attention to the rhetorical emphasis on the locale of Egypt in the original text of both v. 14 and v. 16. In v. 14 they say, “to the land of Egypt we will go...and there we will live.” In v. 16 God says, “war...there will catch up with you...the hunger...there will follow after you...and there you will die.” God rhetorically denies their focus on Egypt as a place of safety and of relative prosperity. That can only be found in Judah under the protective presence of the Lord (vv. 10-12).
very sure of this: You will die from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live." 

43:1 Jeremiah finished telling all the people all these things the Lord their God had sent him to tell them.3 43:2 Then Azariah2 son of Hoshahiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and other arrogant men said to Jeremiah, “You are telling a lie! The Lord our God did not send you to tell us, ‘You must not go to Egypt and settle there.’” 43:3 But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us.3 He wants to hand us over4 to the Babylonians5 so that they will kill us or carry us off into exile in Babylon. 43:4 So Johanan son of Kareah, all the army officers, and all the rest of the people did not obey the Lord’s command to stay in the land. 43:5 Instead Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led off all the Judean remnant who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered.6 43:6 They also led off all the men, women, children, and royal princesses7 that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had left with Gedaliah,8 the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. This included the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah. 43:7 They went on to Egypt9 because they refused to obey the Lord, and came to Tahpanhes.10

Jeremiah Predicts that Nebuchadnezzar Will Plunder Egypt and Its Gods

43:8 At Tahpanhes the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.11 43:9 “Take some large stones12 and bury them in the mortar of the clay pavement13 at the entrance of Pharaoh’s residence14 here in Tahpanhes. Do it while the people of Judah present there are watching.15 43:10 Then tell them,16 ‘The Lord God of Israel who rules over all17 says, “I will bring18 my servant19 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over these stones which I have buried. He will pitch

to imply that a negative response is expected). The use of the perfect here is perhaps to be related to the perfect expressing resolve or determination (see IBHS 489 §30.5.1d). It is also conceivable that these two verses are part of a conditional sentence which has no formal introduction, i.e., “And if you will not obey...then you should know for certain that...” For examples of this kind of conditional clause introduced by two vavs (ו) see Jouon 2:628-29 §167.b, and compare Jer 18:4; Judg 6:13. However, though this interpretation is within the possibilities of Hebrew grammar, I know of no translation or commentary that follows it. So it has not been followed in the translation or given as an alternate translation.

3 tn This sentence contains an emphasis that is impossible to translate into idiomatic English that would not sound redundant. In Hebrew the sentence reads: “When Jeremiah finished [the temporal subordination is left out here because it would make the sentence too long] telling all the people all the words [or all the things] which the Lord their God had sent him [to say] to them, namely all these words...” The last phrase has been left out of the translation as already having been included. Though they have been left out of the translation, attention is called to their presence here. 

2 sn See the study note on 42:1 for the possible identification of this man with Jozaniah son of Hoshahiah and Jozaniah the son of the Maacathite.

3 tn Or “is inciting you against us.” 

4 tn Heb “in order to give us into the hands of the Chaldeans.” The substitution “he wants to” as the equivalent of the purpose clause has been chosen to shorten the sentence to better conform with contemporary English style.

5 tn Heb “Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.

6 sn These are the people who are referred to in Jer 40:11-12.

7 tn Heb “the daughters of the king.” See the translator’s note on 41:10.

8 sn This refers to the group mentioned in Jer 40:7 and 41:10. The two groups together constituted all the people who were at Mizpah when Gedaliah was murdered, had been taken captive by Ishmael, had been rescued by Johanan and the other army officers, and had consulted Jeremiah at Geruth Chimham.

9 sn This had been their intention all along (41:17). Though they consulted the Lord and promised to do what he told them whether they agreed with it or not (42:5-6), it is clear that they had no intention of doing so. Jeremiah could see that (42:19-22). They refused to believe that the Lord had really said what Jeremiah told them (43:4) and feared reprisal from the Babylonians more than any potential destruction from the Lord (43:3).

10 sn Tahpanhes was an important fortress city on the northern border of Egypt in the northeastern Nile delta. It is generally equated with the Greek city of Daphne. It has already been mentioned in 2:16 in conjunction with Memphis (the Hebrew name is “Noph”) as a source of soldiers who did violence to the Israelites in the past.

11 tn Heb “The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah at Tahpanhes, saying,”

12 tn Heb “Take some large stones in your hands.”

13 tn The meaning of the expression “mortar of the clay pavement” is uncertain. The noun translated “mortar” occurs only here and the etymology is debated. Both BDB 572 s.v. מבלן and KBL 529 s.v. מבלן give the meaning “mortar.” The noun translated “clay pavement” is elsewhere used of a “brick mold.” Here BDB 527 s.v. מבלון gives “quadrangle” and KBL 527 s.v. מבלון gives “brick box.” HALOT 558 מבלון and KBL 527 מבלון “loam” for both words, seeing the second noun as a dittography or gloss of the first (see also note c in BHS).

14 sn All the commentaries point out that this was not Pharaoh’s (main) palace but a governor’s residence or other government building that Pharaoh occupied when he was in Tahpanhes.

15 tn Heb “in Tahpanhes in the eyes of the men of Judah.”

16 sn This is another of those symbolic prophecies of Jeremiah which involved an action and an explanation. Compare Jer 19, 27.

17 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” Compare 7:3 and see the study note on 2:19 for explanation of the translation and significance of this title.

18 tn Heb “send and take/fetch.”

19 sn See the study note on Jer 25:9 for the use of this epithet for foreign rulers. The term emphasizes God’s sovereignty over history.

20 tn The Greek version reads the verbs in this sentence as third person, “he will set,” and second person, “you have buried.” This fits the context better but it is difficult to explain how the Hebrew could have arisen from this smoother reading. The figure of substitution (metonymy of cause for effect) is probably involved: “I will have him set” and “I have had you bury.” The effect of these substitutions is to emphasize the sovereignty of God.
his royal tent over them. 43:11 He will come and attack Egypt. Those who are destined to die of disease will die of disease. Those who are destined to be carried off into exile will be carried off into exile. Those who are destined to die in war will die in war. 43:12 He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn their gods or carry them off as captives. He will pick Egypt clean like a shepherd picks the lice from his clothing. He will leave there unharmed. 43:13 He will demolish the sacred pillars in the temple of the sun in Egypt and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.

The Lord Will Punish the Judean Exiles in Egypt for Their Idolatry

44:1 The Lord spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, those in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the region of southern Egypt. 44:2 “The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. Indeed, they now lie in ruins and are deserted. This happened because of the wickedness the people living there did. They made me angry by worshiping and offering sacrifice to other gods whom neither they nor you nor your ancestors previously knew. I sent my servants the prophets to you people over and over again warning you not to do this disgusting thing I hate.’ 44:5 But the people of Jerusalem and Judah would not listen or pay any attention. It occurred elsewhere at 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 21:1; 30:1; 32:1; 34:1, 8; 35:1; 40:1. It is clearly implied from the words that follow. In these other passages, the more active form has been chosen for the translation to better conform with contemporary English style.

Heb "Yahew of armies, the God of Israel." Compare 7:3 and see the study note on 2:19 for explanation and translation of this title.

For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**tn** "by going to offer sacrifice in serving/worshiping." The second "famed" inflexion is epexegetical of the first (cf. IBHS 608-9 §36.2.3e).

**tn** Jeremiah [NICOT], 671). The only other passage that translates this verb is Isa 22:17 according to HAL. The alternate translation follows the more normal meaning of "qum" (‘stand; cf. BDB 741 s.v. L Qal which explains "so completely will it be in his power"). The fact that the subject is a "shepherd" lends more credence to the former view though there may be a deliberate double meaning playing on the homonyms (cf. W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 2:302).

**tn** Heb "in peace/wholeness/well-being/safety [sha’alom]."

**tn** It is generally agreed that the temple of the sun was located in Heliopolis, which is elsewhere referred to as On (cf. Gen 41:45). It was the center for the worship of Amon-Re, the Egyptian sun god, and was famous for its obelisks (conical shaped pillars) that were dedicated to that god. It was located about 6 miles (10 km) northeast of modern-day Cairo.

**tn** Heb “The word came to Jeremiah concerning.” Though the phrase “from the Lord” is missing from this formula which occurs elsewhere at 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 21:1; 30:1; 32:1; 34:1; 8; 35:1; 40:1, it is clearly implied from the words that follow. In these other passages, the more active form has been chosen for the translation to better conform with contemporary English style.

Heb "kept watch over them as easily as a shepherd wraps his cloak around him." The translation follows the interpretation of HALOT 769 s.v. II עָטָה Qal, the Greek translation, and a number of the modern commentaries (e.g., J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 671). The only other passage that translates this verb is Isa 22:17 according to HAL. The alternate translation follows the more normal meaning of "qum" (‘stand; cf. BDB 741 s.v. L Qal which explains "so completely will it be in his power"). The fact that the subject is a "shepherd" lends more credence to the former view though there may be a deliberate double meaning playing on the homonyms (cf. W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 2:302).

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Heb "Yahew of armies, the God of Israel." Compare 7:3 and see the study note on 2:19 for explanation and translation of this title.

**tn** Map for location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.

**tn** Heb "Behold, they are in ruins this day and there is no one living in them."

**tn** Heb "they. The referent must be supplied from the preceding, i.e., Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. They are those who have experienced the disaster and are distinct from those being addressed and their ancestors (44:3b)."

**tn** Heb "by going to offer sacrifice in serving/worshiping." The second "famed" inflexion is epexegetical of the first (cf. IBHS 608-9 §36.2.3e).

**tn** Heb "fathers" (also in vv. 9, 10, 17, 21).

**tn** Compare Jer 19:4 for the same thought and see also 7:9.

**tn** See 7:13 for an explanation of this idiom and compare 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 35:15 for similar references to the persistent warnings of the prophets.

**tn** Heb “sent...over again, saying, ‘Do not do this terrible thing that I hate.’” The indirect quote has been used to shorten the sentence and eliminate one level of embedded quotes.

**sn** This refers to the worship of other gods mentioned in the previous verse.

**tn** There appears to be a deliberate shift in the pronouns used in vv. 2-5. “You” refers to the people living in Egypt who are being addressed (v. 2) and to the people of present and past generations to whom the Loewy persistently sent the prophets (v. 4). “They” refers to the people of Jerusalem and the towns of Judah who have suffered disaster (v. 2) because of the wickedness of sacrificing to other gods (vv. 3, 5). The referents have been explicitly identified in the translation for...
They would not stop the wickedness they were doing nor quit sacrificing to other gods. So my anger and my wrath were poured out and burned like a fire through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. That is why they have become the desolate ruins that they are today.

44:7 “So now the Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, asks, ‘Why will you do such great harm to yourselves? Why should every man, woman, child, and baby of yours be destroyed from the midst of Judah? Why should you leave yourselves without a remnant? That is what will result from your making me angry by what you are doing. You are making me angry by sacrificing to other gods here in the land of Egypt where you live. You will be destroyed for doing that! You will become an example used in curses and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth. Have you forgotten all the wicked things that have been done in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by you and your wives? To this day your people have shown no contrition! They have not revered me nor followed the laws and statutes I commanded you and your ancestors.’

44:11 “Because of this, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘I am determined to bring disaster on you,’ even to the point of destroying all the Judeans here. I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem. None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the sake of clarity.

1 tn Heb “They did not listen or incline their ear [= pay attention] by turning from their wickedness by not sacrificing to other gods.” The עָנֵנָה (ʿānēnāh) + the negative + the infinitive is again epexegetical. The sentence has been restructured and more idiomatic English expressions have been used to better conform with contemporary English style but an attempt has been made to retain the basic relationships of subordination.

2 tn Heb “Yahweh, the God of armies, the God of Israel.” Compare 35:17; 38:17 and for the title “God of armies” see the study note on 2:19.

3 tn Heb “the works of your hands.” Here the phrase is qualified by the epexegetical נָתַן (natan) + infinitive, נָתַן (natan) (Pittaer, “by sacrificing to [other gods]”). For further discussion on the use of this phrase see the translator’s note on 25:6.

4 tn Heb “a curse.” For the meaning of this phrase see the translator’s note on 24:9 and see the usage in 24:9; 25:18; 26:6; 29:22.

5 tn Verses 7b-8 are all one long, complex sentence governed by the interrogative “Why.” The Hebrew text reads: “Why are you doing great harm to your souls [= “yourselves” (cf. BDB 660 s.v. בָּט הַלְּבֵנָה 4.1b[6])) as so as to cut off (= destroy) from yourselves man and woman, child and baby [the terms are collective singulants and are to be interpreted as plural] from the midst of Judah so as not to leave to yourselves a remnant by making me angry with the works of your hands by sacrificing to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have come to live so as to cut off [an example of result rather than purpose after the particle בֶּן (bēn; see the translator’s note on 25:7)] yourselves and so that you may become a curse and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth.” The sentence has been broken down and restructured to better conform with contemporary English style. An attempt has been made to retain an equivalent for all the subordinations and qualifying phrases.

6 tn Heb “his.” This should not be viewed as a textual error but as a distributive singular use of the suffix, i.e., the wives of each of the kings of Judah (cf. GKC 464 §145.J and compare the usage in Isa 2:8; Hos 4:8).

7 tn Heb “they” but as H. Freedman (Jeremiah [SoBB], 284) notes the third person is used here to include the people just referred to as well as the current addressees. Hence “your people” or “the people of Judah.” It is possible that the third person again represents the rhetorical distancing that was referred to earlier in 35:16 (see the translator’s note there for explanation) in which case one might translate “you have shown,” and “you have not revered.”

8 tn Heb “to set before.” According to BDB 817 s.v. נָתַן (natan) II.4.b(g) this refers to “propounding to someone for acceptance or choice.” This is clearly the usage in Deut 30:15, 19; 28:21.8 and is likewise the case here. However, to translate literally would not be good English idiom and “proposed to” might not be correctly understood, so the basic translation of נָתַן (natan) has been used here.

9 tn Heb “Behold I am setting my face against you for evil/disaster.” For the meaning of the idiom “to set the face to/against” see the translator’s note on 42:15 and compare the references listed there.

10 tn Heb “and to destroy all Judah.” However, this statement must be understood within the rhetoric of the passage (see vv. 7-8 and the study note on v. 8) and within the broader context of the Lozi’s promises to restore the remnant who are in Babylon and those scattered in other lands (23:3; 24:5-6; 29:14; 30:3; 32:27). In this context “all Judah” must refer to all the Judeans living in Egypt from Jeremiah is now addressing. This involves the figure of synecdoche where all does not extend to all individuals but to all that are further specified or implied (see E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 616-18, and the comments in H. Freedman, Jeremiah [SoBB], 285). The “and” in front of “to destroy” is to be understood as an example of the epexegetical use of the conjunction יֵצֵא (yēṣe) seen BDB 252 s.v.; 1.1b and compare the translation of J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 260).

11 tn Heb “they set their face to go.” Compare 44:11 and 42:14 and see the translator’s note at 42:15.

12 tn Heb “fall by the sword.”

13 tn Or “All of them without distinction,” or “All of them from the least important to the most important”; Heb “From the least to the greatest.” See the translator’s note on 42:1 for the meaning of this idiom.

14 tn See the study note on 24:9 and the usage in 29:22 for the meaning and significance of this last phrase.

15 sn See Jer 42:18 for parallel usage.
44:15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives were sacrificing to other gods, as well as all their wives, answered Jeremiah. There was a great crowd of them representing all the people who lived in northern and southern Egypt. They answered, 44:16 “We will not listen to what you claim the Lord has spoken to us! Instead we will do everything we vowed we would do. We will sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the goddess called the Queen of Heaven just as we and our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders previously did in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off; and had no troubles. 44:18 But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation.”

44:19 The women added, “We did indeed sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven. But it was with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands that we made cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her.”

1 In Heb “There shall not be an escapee or a survivor to the remnant of Judah who came to sojourn there in the land of Egypt even to return to the land of Judah which they are lifting up their souls (= "longing/desiring" (BDB 672 s.v. רָעֲד; Piel.2)) to return to live there; for none shall return except fugitives.” The long, complex Hebrew original has been broken up and reconstructed to better conform with contemporary English style. Another possible structure would be “None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive. None of them will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah where they long to return to live. Indeed (emphatic use of כִּי [ki]; cf. BDB 472 s.v. כִּי) none of them shall return except a few fugitives.” This verse is a good example of rhetorical hyperbole where a universal negative does not apply to absolutely all the particulars. Though the Lord denies at the outset that any will escape or survive the punishment of v. 12-13 to return to Judah, he says at the end that a few fugitives will return (the two words for fugitive are from the same root and mean the same thing). (E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 6:18-19, might classify this as a rhetorical hyperbole with a universal negative does not apply to absolutely all the particulars.) That this last statement is not a gloss or an afterthought is supported by what is said later in v. 28.

2 In the translation is very interpretive at several key points: Hebr “Then all the men who were aware that their wives were sacrificing to other gods and all their wives who were standing by.” It is probably proper to assume that the phrase “a great crowd” is appositional to “all the men...and their wives...” It is also probably proper to assume that the phrase “who were standing by” is unnecessary to the English translation. What is interpretive is the assumption that the “and all the people who were living in Egypt in Pathros” is descriptive of a second group, i.e., all the Jews from Pathros in Egypt (i.e., southern Egypt [see the study note on 44:1]). Those who follow this interpretation generally see this as a gloss (see Thompson, 678, n. 2, and also W. L. Holladay [Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 2:279, n. 15a]). Holladay, Jeremiah [Hermeneia], 2:279, n. 15a) suggests that these words are missing from the Hebrew text because of haplography, i.e., that the scribe left out עָזָב (vahannashim ὀμνον khi) because his eye jumped from the at the beginning to the (ki) that introduced the temporal clause and left out everything in between. It is, however, just as likely, given the fact that there are several other examples of notes which have not been formally introduced in the book of Jeremiah, that the words were not there and are supplied by these two ancient versions as a translator’s clarification.

3 In Heb “the word [or message] you have spoken to us in the name of the LoRD.” For an explanation of the rendering of “in the name of the LORD” see the study notes on 10:25 and 23:27.

4 In Heb “that went out of our mouth.” I.e., everything we said, promised, or vowed.

5 In Heb “sacrificed to the Queen of Heaven and pour out drink offerings to her.” The expressions have been combined to simplify and shorten the sentence. The same combination also occurs in v. 18, 19.

6 See the translator’s note and the study note on 7:18 for the problem of translation and identification of the term translated here “the goddess called the Queen of Heaven.”

7 In Heb “saw [or experienced] no disaster/trouble/harm.”

8 In Heb “we have been consumed/destroyed by sword or famine, or with starvation” and “we cannot be taken literally here since they are still alive.

9 sn What is being contrasted here is the relative peace and prosperity under the reign of Manasseh, who promoted all kinds of pagan cults including the worship of astral deities (2 Kgs 21:2-9), and the disasters that befell Judah after the reforms of Josiah, which included the removal of all the cult images and altars from Jerusalem and Judah (2 Kgs 23:4-15). The disasters included the death of Josiah himself at the battle of Megiddo, the deportation of his son Jehoahaz to Egypt, the death of Jehoiakim, the deportation of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) and many other Judeans in 597 B.C.E., the death by war, starvation, and disease of many Judeans during the siege of Jerusalem in 588-86 B.C.E., and the capture of many of those who survived. Instead of seeing these as punishments for their disobedience to the LORD as Jeremiah had preached to them, they saw these as consequences of their failure to continue the worship of the foreign gods.

10 sn The words “And the women added” are not in the Hebrew text. They are, however, implicit in what is said. They are found in the Syriac version and in one recension of the Greek version, and the Jeremiad (Hermeneia), 2:279, n. 15a) suggests that these words are missing from the Hebrew text because of haplography, i.e., that the scribe left out עָזָב (vahannashim ὀμνον khi) because his eye jumped from the at the beginning to the (ki) that introduced the temporal clause and left out everything in between. It is, however, just as likely, given the fact that there are several other examples of notes which have not been formally introduced in the book of Jeremiah, that the words were not there and are supplied by these two ancient versions as a translator’s clarification.

11 sn Or “When we sacrificed and poured out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven and made cakes in her image, wasn’t it with the knowledge and approval of our husbands?” Hebr “When we sacrificed to the Queen of Heaven and poured out drink offerings after the use of hand and a broken cup to construct to carry on the tense of the preceding verb see BDB 518 s.v. ב (7b) to her, did we make cakes to make an image of her and pour out drink offerings apart from [i.e., “without the knowledge and consent of,” so BDB 116 s.v. רָעֲד (b)a] our husbands?” The question expects a positive answer and has been rendered as an affirmation in the translation. The long, complex Hebrew sentence has again been broken in two and restructured to better conform with contemporary English style.

12 sn According to Jer 7:18-19 it was not only with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands but also with their active participation. Most of the commentaries call attention to the fact that what is being alluded to here is that a woman’s vow had to have her husband’s approval to have any validity (cf. Num 30:7-16 and see the reference to the vow in v. 17).
44:20 Then Jeremiah replied to all the people, both men and women, who responded to him in this way: 
44:21 "The Lord did indeed remember and call to mind what you did! He remembered the sacrifices you and your ancestors, your kings, your leaders, and all the rest of the people of the land offered to other gods in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Finally the Lord could no longer endure your wicked deeds and the disgusting things you did. That is why your land has become the desolate, uninhabited ruin that it is today. That is why it has become a proverbial example used in curses.

44:22 You have sacrificed to other gods! You have sinned against the Lord! You have not obeyed the Lord! You have not followed his laws, his statutes, and his decrees! That is why this disaster that is evident to this day has happened to you.

44:23 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people, particularly to all the women. "Listen to what the Lord has to say to all you people of Judah who are in Egypt. The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You women' have confirmed by your actions what you vowed with your lips! You said, "We will certainly carry out our vows to sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven." Well, then fulfill your vows! Carry them out! But listen to what the Lord has to say, all you people of Judah who are living in the land of Egypt. The Lord says, 'I hereby swear by my own great name that none of the people of Judah who are living anywhere in Egypt will ever again invoke my name in their oaths! Never again will any of them use it in an oath saying, "As surely as the Lord God lives..."'

44:27 I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left. Some who survive in battle will return to the land of Judah from the land of Egypt. But they will be very few indeed! Then the Judean remnant who have
come to live in the land of Egypt will know whose word proves true, mine or theirs.’ 44:29 Moreover the Lord says, ‘I will make something happen to prove that I will punish you in this place. I will do it so that you will know that my threats to bring disaster on you will prove true. 44:30 I, the Lord, promise that I will hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who are seeking to kill him. I will do that just as surely as I handed King Zedekiah of Judah over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking to kill him.’”

Baruch is Rebutted but also Comforted

45:1 The prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah while he was writing down in a scroll the words that Jeremiah spoke to him. 2 This happened in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah. 45:2 ‘The Lord God of Israel has a message for you, Baruch. 45:3 ‘You have said, “I feel so hopeless! For the Lord has added sorrow to my suffering.” I am worn out from groaning. I can’t find any rest.’”

45:4 The Lord told Jeremiah, 10 ‘Tell Baruch, 11 ‘The Lord says, “I am about to tear down what I have built and to uproot what I have planted. I will do this throughout the whole earth.” 45:5 Are you looking for great things for yourself? Do not look for such things. For I, the Lord, affirm that I am about to bring disaster on all humanity. 14 But I will allow you to escape with your life wherever you go.”’

again,” “all” in vv. 26-27 are rhetorical hyperbole. Not all but almost all; very few would survive. The following statement implies that the reason that they are left alive is to bear witness to the fact that the Lord’s threats were indeed carried out. See vv. 11-14 for a parallel use of “all” and “none” qualified by a “few.”

1 sn Hophra ruled over Egypt from 589-570 B.C. He was the Pharaoh who incited Zedekiah to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar and whose army proved ineffective in providing any long-term relief to Jerusalem when it was under siege (see Jer 37:14-10; 2 Kgs 25:29). The best way to convey that idea across the context seems to be “I will make something happen to prove [or portend].” Another possibility would be “I will give you a pre-omen that,” but many readers would probably not understand this as the concept of as the pharaoh and the indirect quote eliminates an extra level of embedded quotes.

4 sn It is unclear whether this refers to the first scroll (36:4) or the second (36:32). Perhaps from the reactions of Baruch this refers to the second scroll which was written after he had seen how the leaders had responded to the first (36:19). Baruch was from a well-placed family; his grandfather, Mahseiah (32:12) had been governor of Jerusalem under Josiah (2 Chr 34:8) and his brother was a high-ranking official in Zedekiah’s court (Jer 51:59). He himself appears to have had some personal aspirations that he could see were being or going to be jeopardized (v. 5). The passage is both a rebuke to Baruch and an encouragement that his life will be spared wherever he goes. This latter promise is perhaps the reason that the passage is placed where it is, i.e., after the seemingly universal threat of destruction of all who have gone to Egypt in Jer 44.
Prophecies Against Foreign Nations

46:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah about the nations.

The Prophecy about Egypt’s Defeat at Carchemish

46:2 He spoke about Egypt and the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt which was encamped along the Euphrates River at Carchemish. Now this was the army that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

46:3 “Fall into ranks with your shields ready!”

46:4 Prepare to march into battle! Harness the horses to the chariots! Mount your horses! Put on your helmets and take your positions! Sharpen your spears! Put on your armor!

46:5 What do I see?” says the LORD. “The soldiers are terrified. They are retreating. They have been defeated. They are overcome with terror; they desert quickly without looking back.

46:6 But even the swiftest cannot get away. Even the strongest cannot escape.

There in the north by the Euphrates River they stumble and fall in defeat.

46:7 “Who is this that rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage? It is the one who is coming 

1 sn Jeremiah was called to be a prophet not only to Judah and Jerusalem but to the nations (1:5, 10). The prophecies or oracles that are collected here in Jer 46-51 are found after 25:13a in the Greek version where they are also found in a different order and with several textual differences. The issue of which represents the original placement is part of the broader issue of the editorial or redactional history of the book of Jeremiah which went through several editions, two of which are referred to in Jer 36, i.e., the two scrolls written in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.), a third which included all the preceding plus the material down to the time of the fall of Jerusalem (cf., the introduction in 1:1-3) and a fourth which included all the preceding plus the materials in Jer 40-44. The oracles against the foreign nations collected here are consistent with the note of judgment sounded against all nations (including some not mentioned in Jer 46-51) in Jer 25. See the translator’s note on 25:13 for further details regarding the possible relationship of the oracles to the foreign nations to the judgment speeches in Jer 25.

2 tn Heb “Concerning Egypt: Regarding the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt which was beside the Euphrates River at Carchemish which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim king of Judah.” The sentence has been broken up, restructured, and introductory words supplied in the translation to make the sentences better conform with contemporary English style. The dating formula is placed in brackets because the passage better conforms with contemporary English style.

3 sn The fourth year of Jehoiakim’s reign proved very significant in the prophecies of Jeremiah. It was in that same year that he issued the prophecies against the foreign nations recorded in Jer 25 (and probably the prophecies recorded here in Jer 46-51) which he had Baruch record and read to the people gathered in the temple all the prophecies he had uttered against Judah and Jerusalem up to that point in the hopes that they would repent and the nation would be spared. The fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C.) marked a significant shift in the balance of power in Palestine. With the defeat of Necho at Carchemish in that year the area came under control of Nebuchadnezzar and Judah and the surrounding nations had two options, submit to Babylon and pay tribute or suffer the consequences of death in war or exile in Babylon for failure to submit.

4 tn Heb “Conceming the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt which was beside the Euphrates River at Carchemish which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim king of Judah.” The sentence has been broken up, restructured, and introductory words supplied in the translation to make the sentences better conform with contemporary English style. The dating formula is placed in brackets because the passage is prophetic about the battle, but the bracketed words were superscription or introduction and thus were added after the outcome was known.

5 tn This is often translated “prepare your shields, both small and large.” However, the idea of “prepare” is misleading because the Hebrew word here (תַּפְּרֵד, ‘arakh) refers in various senses to arranging or setting things in order, such as altars in a row, dishes on a table, soldiers in ranks. Here it refers to the soldiers lining up in rank with ranks of soldiers holding at the ready the long oval or rectangular “shield” (צהֵן, tsinnah); cf. Jgs 5:15. It protected the whole body and the smaller round “buckler” (מָגֵן, magen) which only protected the torso (the relative size of these two kinds of shields can be seen from the weight of each in 1 Kgs 10:16-17). These were to be arranged in solid ranks to advance into battle. It would be pedantic and misleading to translate here “Fall into ranks with your large and small shields at the ready” because that might suggest that soldiers had more than one kind. It is uncertain who is issuing the commands here. TEV adds “The Egyptian officers shout,” which is the interpretation of J. A. Thompson (Jeremiah [NICOT], 688).

6 tn Heb “Why do I see?” The rendering is that of J. A. Thompson (Jeremiah [NICOT], 685, 88) and J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 301; TEV; NIV). The question is not asking for information but is expressing surprise or wonder (see E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 951).

7 tn Heb “oracle of the LORD.” This phrase, which is part of a messenger formula (i.e., that the words that are spoken are from him), are actually at the end of the verse. They have been put here for better poetic balance and to better identify the article.

8 tn Heb “Their soldiers.” These words are actually at the midpoint of the stanza as the subject of the third of the three verbs. However, as G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26-52 [WBC], 291) note, this is the subject of all five verbs “are terrified,” “are retreating,” “have been defeated,” “have run away,” and “have not looked back.” The subject is then put at the end of the stanza and all five verbs are then identified as without an unidentified “they.”

9 tn Heb “terror is all around.”

10 tn The translation assumes that the adjectives with the article are functioning as superlatives in this context (cf. GKC 431 §133.g). It also assumes that כַּל (‘al) with the jussive is expressing here an emphatic negative rather than a negative wish (cf. GKC 317 §107.p and compare the usage in Ps 59:3).

11 tn Heb “they stumble and fall.” However, the verbs here are used of a fatal fall, of a violent death in battle (see BDB 657 s.v. צִוַּה Qal, Qal,2.a), and a literal translation might not be understood by some readers.

12 tn The word translated “streams” here refers to the streams of the Nile (cf. Exod 7:19; 8:1) for parallel usage.

sn The hubris of the Egyptian Pharaoh is referred to in vv. 7-8 as he compares his might to that of the Nile River whose annual flooding was responsible for the fertility of Egypt. A very similar picture of the armies of Assyria overcoming everything in its path is presented in Isa 8:7-8.
46:8 Egypt rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage. Egypt says, ‘I will arise and cover the earth. I will destroy cities and the people who inhabit them.’

46:9 Go ahead and charge into battle, you horsemen! Drive furiously, you charioeteers! Let the soldiers march out into battle, those from Ethiopia and Libya who carry shields, and those from Lydia who are armed with the bow.

46:10 But that day belongs to the Lord God who rules over all. It is the day when he will pay back his enemies. His sword will devour them until its appetite is satisfied! It will drink their blood until it is full! For the Lord God who rules over all will offer them up as a sacrifice in the land of the north by the Euphrates River.

46:11 Go up to Gilead and get medicinal ointment; you dear poor people of Egypt.

But it will prove useless no matter how much medicine you use, there will be no healing for you.

46:12 The nations will hear of your devastating defeat, your cries of distress will echo throughout the earth. In the panic of their flight one soldier will trip over another and both of them will fall down defeated.

The Lord Predicts that Nebuchadnezzar Will Attack and Plunder Egypt

46:13 The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Nebuchadnezzar coming to attack the land of Egypt.

46:14 “Make an announcement throughout Egypt. Proclaim it in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes. ‘Take your positions and prepare to do battle. For the enemy army is destroying all the nations around you.’

1 tn The words “Go ahead and” are not in the text but are intended to suggest the ironical nature of the commands here. The Lord is again setting them up for a fall (v. 10). See the translator’s note on v. 4.
2 sn The peoples that are referred to here are all known to have been mercenaries in the army of Egypt (see Nah 3:9; Ezek 30:5). The place names in Hebrew are actually Cush, Put, and Lud. “Cush” has already been identified in Jer 13:23 as the region along the Nile south of Egypt most commonly referred to as Ethiopia. The identification of “Put” and “Lud” are both debated though it is generally felt that Put was a part of Libya and Lud is to be identified with Lydias in Asia Minor. For further discussion see M. J. Mellink, “Lud, Ludim” IDB 3:178, and T. O. Lambdin, “Put,” IDB 3:971.
3 tn Heb “who grasp and bend the bow.”
4 tn Heb “the Lord Yahweh of armies.” See the study note at 2:19 for the translation and significance of this title for God.
5 sn Most commentators think that this is a reference to the Lord exacting vengeance on Pharaoh Necho for killing Josiah, carrying Jehoahaz off into captivity, and exacting heavy tribute on Judah in 609 B.C. (2 Kgs 23:29, 33-35).
6 tn Or more paraphrastically, “he will kill them/ until he has exacted full vengeance”; Heb “The sword will eat and be sated; it will drink its fill of their blood.”
7 sn This passage is, of course, highly figurative. The Lord does not have a literal “sword,” but he uses agents of destruction like the Assyrian armies (called his “rod” in Isa 10:5-6) and the Babylonian armies (called his war club in Jer 51:20) to wreak vengeance on his foes. Likewise, swords do not “eat” or “drink.” What is meant here is that God will use this battle against the Egyptians to kill off many Egyptians until his vengeance is fully satisfied.
8 sn Heb “the Lord Yahweh of armies.” See the study note at 2:19 for the translation and significance of this title for God.
9 sn Heb “balm.” See 8:22 and the notes on this phrase there.
10 sn Heb “Virgin Daughter of Egypt.” See the study note on Jer 14:17 for the significance of the use of this figure. The use of the figure here perhaps refers to the fact that Egypt’s geographical isolation allowed her safety and protection that a virgin living at home would enjoy under her father’s protection (so F. B. Huey, Jeremiah, Lamentations [NAC], 379). By her involvement in the politics of Palestine she had forfeited that safety and protection and was now suffering for it.
11 sn For the location of the cities of Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes see the note on Jer 44:1. These were all cities in Lower or northern Egypt that would have been the first affected by an invasion.
12 sn For the words “Go ahead and” and “defeated” are not in the text but are supplied in the translation to give clarity to the metaphor for the average reader. The verbs in this verse are all in the tense that emphasizes that the action is viewed as already having been accomplished (i.e., the Hebrew prophetic perfect), This is consistent with the vav consecutive perfects in v. 10 which look to the future.
13 tn Heb “of your shame.” The “shame,” however, applies to the devastating defeat they will suffer.
14 sn Though there is much debate in the commentaries regarding the dating and reference of this prophecy, it most likely refers to a time shortly after 604 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar followed up his successful battle against Necho at Carchemish with a campaign into the Philistine plain which resulted in the conquest and sacking of Ashkelon. Nebuchadnezzar now moved northward on the border of Egypt to invade it. See J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah (NICOT), 691, and for a fuller discussion including the other main options see G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC), 287-88.
15 tn Heb “Declare in Egypt and announce in Migdol and announce in Noph [= Memphis] and in Tahpanhes.” The sentence has been restructured to reflect the fact that the first command is a general one, followed by announcements in specific (representative?) cities.
They will say, ‘Get up! Let’s go back to our own people. Let’s go back to our homelands because the enemy is coming to destroy us.’

46:17 There at home they will say, ‘Pharaoh king of Egypt is just a big noise!’ He has let the most opportune moment pass by.

46:18 I the King, whose name is the Lord who rules over all, 9 swear this: I swear as surely as I live that a conqueror is coming.

He will be as imposing as Mount Tabor is among the mountains, as Mount Carmel is against the backdrop of the sea.

46:19 Pack your bags for exile, you inhabitants of poor dear Egypt. 12 For Memphis will be laid waste. It will lie in ruins and be uninhabited.

46:20 Egypt is like a beautiful young cow.
But northern armies will attack her like swarms of stinging flies.\(^3\)  
46:21 Even her mercenaries\(^2\) will prove to be like pampered,\(^3\) well-fed calves.  
For they too will turn and run away.  
They will not stand their ground when\(^4\) the time for them to be destroyed comes, the time for them to be punished.  
46:22 Egypt will run away, hissing like a snake\(^5\) as the enemy comes marching up in force.  
They will come against her with axes as if they were woodsmen chopping down trees.  
46:23 The population of Egypt is like a vast, impenetrable forest.  
But I, the LORD, affirm\(^6\) that the enemy will cut them down.  
For those who chop them down will be more numerous than locusts.  
They will be too numerous to count.\(^7\)

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\(^3\) tn Heb “Egypt is a beautiful heifer. A gadfly from the north will come against her.” The metaphors have been turned into similes for the sake of clarity. The exact meaning of the word translated “stinging fly” is uncertain due to the fact that it occurs nowhere else in Hebrew literature. For a discussion of the meaning of the word which probably refers to the “gadfly,” which bites and annoys livestock, see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 2:331, who also suggests, probably correctly, that the word is a collective referring to swarms of such insects (cf. the singular יַעַר [’arbeh] in v. 23 which always refers to swarms of locusts). The translation presupposes the emendation of the second חֶרֶב (‘herēb) to צֶרֶב (‘zerēb) with a number of Hebrew witnesses and a number of the versions (cf. BHS, fn b).

\(^2\) tn Heb “her hirelings in her midst.”

\(^4\) tn The word “pampered” is not in the text. It is supplied in the translation to explain the probable meaning of the simile. The mercenaries were well cared for like stall-fed calves, but in the face of the danger they will prove no help because they will turn and run away without standing their ground. Some see the point of the simile to be that they too are fattened for slaughter. However, the next two lines do not fit that interpretation too well.

\(^5\) tn Or “Egypt will rustle away like a snake”; Heb “her sound goes like the snake,” or “her sound [is] like the snake [when it goes].” The meaning of the simile is debated. Some see a reference to the impotent hiss of a fleeing serpent (F. B. Huey, Jeremiah, Lamentations [NAC], 382), others the sound of a serpent slithering away when it is disturbed (H. Freedman, Jeremiah [SoBB], 297-98). The translation follows the former interpretation because of the irony involved.

\(^6\) sn Several commentators point out the irony of the snake slithering away (or hissing away) in retreat. The coiled serpent was a part of the royal insignia, signifying its readiness to strike. Pharaoh had boasted of great things (v. 8) but was just a big noise (v. 17); now all he could do was hiss as he beat his retreat (v. 22).

\(^7\) tn The precise meaning of this verse is uncertain. The Hebrew text reads: “They [those who enter in great force] will cut down her forest, oracle of the Lord, though it [the forest] cannot be searched out/through for they [those who come in great force] are more numerous than locusts and there is no number to them.” Some see the reference to the forest as metaphorical of Egypt’s population which the Babylonian army decimates (H. Freedman, Jeremiah [SoBB], 298, and see BDB 420 s.v. חֶרֶב 1a which refers to the forest as a figure of foes to be cut down and destroyed and compare Isa 10:34). Others see the reference to literal trees and see the decimation of Egypt in general (C. von Orelli, Jeremiah, 329). And some see it as a continuation of the simile of the snake fleeing, the soldiers cutting down the trees because they cannot find it (J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 693). However, the simile of v. 22a has already been dropped in v. 22b; they come against her. Hence it is probably best to see this as a continuation of the simile in v. 22c-d and see the reference to the Babylonian army coming against her, i.e., Egypt (the nation or people of Egypt), like woodcutters cutting down trees.

\(^8\) tn Heb “Daughter Egypt.” See the translator’s note on v. 19.

\(^9\) tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For the significance of this title see the note at 2:19.

\(^10\) tn Heb “Amon of No.”

\(^11\) sn The Egyptian city called No (隩�, no) in Hebrew was Thebes. It is located about 400 miles (666 km) south of modern-day Cairo. It was the capital of Upper or southern Egypt and the center for the worship of the god Amon who became the state god of Egypt. Thebes is perhaps best known today for the magnificent temples at Karnak and Luxor on the east bank of the Nile.

\(^12\) tn Heb “Behold I will punish Amon of No and Pharaoh and Egypt and its gods and its kings and Pharaoh and all who trust in him.” There appears to be a cryptic slip involving a double writing of יִשְׂרָאֵל הָעָרֶבֶּה ([’isra‘ēl ‘ah’rebēh] “Israel of the east”). The present translation has followed the suggestion of BHS and deleted the first one since the second is necessary for the syntactical connection, “Pharaoh and all who trust in him.”

\(^13\) tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

\(^14\) sn Jer 46:27-28 are virtually the same as 30:10-11. The verses are more closely related to that context than to this. But the presence of a note of future hope for the Egyptians may have led to a note of encouragement also to the Judeans who were under threat of judgment at the same time (cf. the study notes on 46:2, 13 and 25:1-2 for the possible relative dating of these prophecies).

\(^15\) tn Heb “And/or But you do not be afraid, my servant Jacob.” Here and elsewhere in the verse the terms Jacob and Israel are poetic for the people of Israel descended from the patriarch Jacob. The terms have been supplied throughout with plural referents for greater clarity.
Judgment on the Philistine Cities

47:1 The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

47:2 “Look! Enemies are gathering in the north like water rising in a river. They will be like an overflowing stream. They will overwhelm the whole country and everything in it like a flood. They will overwhelm the cities and their inhabitants. People will cry out in alarm. Everyone living in the country will cry out in pain.

47:3 Fathers will hear the hoofbeats of the enemies’ horses, the clatter of their chariots and the rumbling of their wheels. They will not turn back to save their children because they will be paralyzed with fear.

47:4 For the time has come to destroy all the Philistines. The time has come to destroy all the help that remains for Tyre and Sidon.

47:5 The people of Gaza will shave their heads in mourning. The people of Ashkelon will be struck dumb.

How long will you gash yourselves to show your sorrow, you who remain of Philistia’s power?

47:6 How long will you cry out, ‘Oh, sword of the Lord, children of Jacob will return to their land and enjoy peace. They will be secure and no one will terrify them.

46:28 I, the Lord, tell you not to be afraid, you descendants of Jacob, my servant, for I am with you. Though I completely destroy all the nations where I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will indeed discipline you but only in due measure. I will not allow you to go entirely unpunished.”

2 tn Heb “For I will rescue you from far away, your descendants from the land of their captivity.”

3 tn The translation “entirely unpunished” is intended to reflect the emphatic construction of the infinitive absolute before the finite verb.

4 tn Heb “That which came [as] the word of the Lord to Jeremiah.” For this same construction see 14:1; 46:1 and see the translator’s note at 14:1 for explanation.

5 sn The precise dating of this prophecy is uncertain. Several proposals have been suggested, the most likely of which is that the prophecy was delivered in 609 B.C. in conjunction with Pharaoh Necho’s advance into Palestine to aid the Assyrians. That was the same year that Josiah was killed by Necho at the battle of Megiddo and four years before Necho was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, the foe from the north. The prophecy presupposes that Ashkelon is still in existence (v. 5) hence it must be before 604 B.C. For a fairly complete discussion of the options see G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC), 299-300.

6 tn Heb “Behold! Waters are rising from the north.” The metaphor of enemy armies compared to overflowing water is seen also in Isa 8:8-9 (Assyria) and 46:7-8 (Egypt). Here it refers to the foe from the north (Jer 1:14; 4:6; etc) which is specifically identified with Babylon in Jer 25. The metaphor has been turned into a simile in the translation to help the average reader identify that a figure is involved and to hint at the referent.

7 tn Heb “From the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his stallions, from the rattling of his chariots at the rumbling of their wheels, fathers will not turn to their children from sinking of hands.” According to BDB 952 s.v. הַרְפָּיוֹן the “sinking of the hands” is figurative of helplessness caused by terror. A very similar figure is seen with a related expression in Isa 35:3-4. The sentence has been restructured to put the subject up front and to suggest through shorter sentences more in keeping with contemporary English style the same causal connections. The figures have been interpreted for the sake of clarity for the average reader.

8 tn For location see Map 1A:2; Map 2A:2; Map 4A:1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

9 map For location see Map 1A:1; JP3-F3; JP4-F3.

10 tn Heb “For the Lord will.” The first person style has been adopted because the Lord is speaking (cf. v. 2).

11 sn All the help that remains for Tyre and Sidon and that remnant that came from the island of Crete appear to be two qualifying phrases that refer to the Philistines, the last with regard to their origin and the first with regard to the fact that they were allies that Tyre and Sidon depended on. “Crete” is literally “Caphtor” which is generally identified with the island of Crete. The Philistines had come from there (Amos 9:7) in the wave of migration from the Aegean Islands during the twelfth and eleventh century and had settled on the Philistine plain after having been repulsed from trying to enter Egypt.

12 sn Shaving one’s head and gashing one’s body were customs to show mourning or sadness for the dead (cf. Deut 14:1; Mic 1:16; Ezek 27:31; Jer 16:6; 48:37).

13 tn Or “you who are left alive on the Philistine plain.” Or “you who remain of the Anakim.” The translation follows the suggestion of several of the modern commentators that the word כִּנֹּף (keno) means “strength” or “power” here (see J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 608; J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 310; and see also HALOT כִּנֹּף). It is a rare homonym of the word that normally means “valley” that seems to be an inappropriate designation of the Philistine plain. Many of the modern English versions and commentaries follow the Greek version which reads here “remnant of the Anakim” (kunai instead of keno) a confusion of basically one letter. This emendation is followed by both BDB 771 s.v. כִּנֵּף and KBL 716 s.v. כנו. The Anakim were generally associated with the southern region around Hebron but an enclave of them was known to have settled in Gaza, Gath, and Ekron, three of the Philistine cities (cf. Josh 11:22). However, the fact that this judgment is directed against the Philistines not the Anakim and that this homonym apparently appears also in Jer 49:4 makes this reading of “power” more likely here.

14 tn The words “How long will you cry out” are not in the text but some such introduction seems necessary because the rest of the speech assumes a personal subject.
how long will it be before you stop killing? Go back into your sheath! Stay there and rest! 47:7 But how can it rest? when I, the LORD, have given it orders? I have ordered it to attack the people of Ashkelon and the seacoast.

Judgment Against Moab

48:1 The LORD God of Israel who rules over all spoke about Moab. 7 “Sure to be judged is Nebo! Indeed, it will be destroyed! Kiriathaim will suffer disgrace. It will be captured!

Its fortress will suffer disgrace. It will be torn down! 48:2 People will not praise Moab any more. The enemy will capture Heshbon and plot how to destroy Moab, saying, ‘Come, let’s put an end to that nation!’ City of Madmen, you will also be destroyed. A destructive army will march against you. 48:3 Cries of anguish will arise in Horonaim, ‘Oh, the ruin and great destruction!’ 48:4 “Moab will be crushed. Her children will cry out in distress.

4 tn Heb “before you are quiet/at rest.”
2 sn The passage is highly figurative. The sword of the LORD, which is itself a figure of the destructive agency of the enemy armies, is here addressed as a person and is encouraged in rhetorical questions (the questions are designed to dissuade) to be quiet, be at rest, be silent, all of which is designed to get the Lord to call off the destruction against the Philistines.
3 tn The reading here follows the Greek, Syriac, and Latin versions. The Hebrew text reads “how can you rest” as a continuation of the second person in v. 6.
4 tn Heb “When the Lord has.”
5 tn Heb “Against Ashkelon and the sea coast, there he has appointed it.” For the switch to the first person see the preceding translator’s note. “There” is poetical and redundant as a place name. However, the fact that the verbs that accompany it are feminine while the noun for “fortress” is masculine causes some pause.
6 tn Heb “Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel.” For this title continuity of the second person in v. 6.
7 sn Moab was a country east of the Dead Sea whose boundaries varied greatly over time. Basically, it was the tableland between the Arnon River about halfway up the Dead Sea and the Zered River which is roughly at the southern tip of the Dead Sea. When the Israelites entered Palestine they were forbidden to take any of the Moabite territory but they did capture the kingdom of Sihon north of the Arnon which Sihon had taken from Moab. Several of the towns mentioned in the oracles of judgment against Moab here are in this territory north of the Arnon and were assigned to Reuben and Gad. Several are mentioned on the famous Moabite Stone which details how Mesha king of Moab recovered from Israel many of these cities during the reign of Joram (852-841 b.c.; cf. 2 Kgs 3:4-5). It is usually assumed that Moab submitted to Nebuchadnezzar after the battle of Carchemish and that they remained loyal to him throughout most of this period, though representatives were present at Jerusalem in 594 b.c. when plans for revolt were apparently being discussed (Jer 27:3). Moabite contingents were used by Nebuchadnezzar in 598 b.c. to harass Jehoiakim after he rebelled (2 Kgs 24:2) so they must have remained loyal at that time. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Moab in 582 b.c. and destroyed many of its cities.
8 tn Heb “Woe to Nebo for it is destroyed.” For the use of the Hebrew particle “Woe” (ךְָה, ṣ̄ow) see the translator’s note on 22:13. The translation has taken this form because the phrase “Woe to” probably does not convey the proper meaning or significance to the modern reader. The verbs again are in the tense (Hebrew prophetic perfect) that views the action as if it were as good as done. The particle וְ (ḵi) probably is causal but the asseverative works better in the modified translation.
9 sn Nebo and Kiriathaim were both north of the Arnon and were assigned to Reuben (Num 32:3; Josh 13:19). They are both mentioned on the Moabite Stone as having been recovered from Israel.
48:5 Indeed they will climb the slopes of Luhith, weeping continually as they go.⁵ For on the road down to Horonaim they will hear the cries of distress over the destruction.⁶

48:6 They will hear, ‘Run! Save yourselves! Even if you must be like a lonely shrub in the desert!’³

48:7 ‘Moab, you trust in the things you do and in your riches. So you too will be conquered.

48:8 The destroyer will come against every town. Not one town will escape. The towns in the valley will be destroyed. The cities on the high plain will be laid waste.⁷ I, the LORD, have spoken!⁸

48:9 Set up a gravestone for Moab, for it will certainly be laid in ruins!⁹

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1 tn Or “Indeed her fugitives will...” It is unclear what the subject of the verbs are in this verse. The verb in the first two lines “climb” (יָצֹא, ya’aleh) is third masculine singular and the verb in the second two lines “will hear” (תִּשְׁמָע, shanemu) is third common plural. The causal particles at the beginning of the two halves of the verse suggest some connection with the preceding “run” or “high plateau or plain north of the Arnon.” The rest of the passage indicates that the children are still the subject. In this case the singular verb would be a case of the distributive singular already referred to in the translator’s note on 46:15. The parallel passage in Isa 15:5 refers to the “fugitives” (וּבְרִיחֶהָ, b’rikehenu) with the same singular verb as here and that may be the implied subject here.

2 tn Heb “the distresses of the cry of destruction.” Many commentaries want to leave out the word “distresses” because it is missing from the Greek version and the parallel passage in Isa 15:5. However, it is in all the Hebrew versions and in the other early versions, and it is hard to see why it would be added here if it were not original.

3 tc The meaning of this line is uncertain. The translation follows one reading of the Hebrew text. The Greek version reads “Be like a wild donkey in the desert!” There are three points of debate in this line: the syntax of the verb form “be” (יָצֹא, yatsa‘), (תיָהוֹ, tiyahow) and the text and meaning of the word translated “shrub.” This word occurs only once with this meaning here and in Jer 17:6. A related word occurs in Ps 102:17 (102:18 HT). Elsewhere this spelling refers to the place name Aror which was a place in Moab on the edge of the Arnon River. Most commentators do not feel that a reference to that place is appropriate here because it was not in the desert. The Greek version reads “like a wild donkey” (reading ἵαρκ[α] ἵαρκ[α] or ἵαρκ[α] ἵαρκ[α]) in place of כיָרָה (ku’ro’ra). That would make an appropriate simile here because the wild donkey enjoys its freedom and is hard to capture. G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26-52 [WBC], 312) explain the simile of the “shrub” as referring to the marginal and rudimentary existence of a displaced person. That may not be as optimistic as the reference to the wild donkey but it does give an appropriate meaning. The third feminine plural has been explained as the singular noun + suffix = “yourselfs” (אֲנָפִים, nafshi’hem) used as a collective (so S. R. Driver, Jeremiah, 368, with cross reference to GKC 462-63 §145.c). J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 314, n. e-e) follows a suggestion of D. N. Freedman in seeing the form (תיָהוֹ, tiyahow) as a mistake for the 2nd masculine plural plus energetic (תיָהוֹ, tiyuh). Given the number of other textual corruptions in this passage, this is possible. The resultant meaning in either case is the same.

4 sn Chemosh was the national god of Moab (see also Num 21:29). Child sacrifice appears to have been a part of his worship (2 Kgs 3:27). Solomon built a high place in Jerusalem for him (1 Kgs 11:7), and he appears to have been worshiped in Israel until Josiah tore that high place down (2 Kgs 23:13).

5 sn The practice of carrying off the gods of captive nations has already been mentioned in the study note on 43:12. See also Isa 46:1-2 noted there.

6 tn Heb “The valley will be destroyed and the tableland be laid waste.” However, in the context this surely refers to the towns and not to the valley and the tableland itself.

7 sn Most commentaries see a reference to the towns in the Jordan valley referred to in Josh 13:27 and the towns mentioned in Josh 13:15-17 which were on the high tableland ir high plateau or plain north of the Arnon. This makes sense because the towns in the first half of the verse is broader than that because it would include all the towns in the southern half of Moab between the Arnon and Zered as well as those mentioned in the second half in conjunction with the valley and the high plateau north of the Arnon.

8 tn Heb “which/for/as the LORD has spoken.” The first person form has again been adopted because the LORD is the speaker throughout (cf. v. 1).

9 tn Or “Scatter salt over Moab for it will certainly be laid in ruins.” The meaning of these two lines is very uncertain. The Hebrew of these two lines presents several difficulties. It reads יָצֹא יָצֹא יָצֹא (ヤツオヨヤツオヨヤツオ) and the text and meaning of the word translated “shrub” is uncertain, though, from their connection with Zoar in Isa 15:5, they appear to be located in southern Moab. Zoar was at the southern tip of the Dead Sea.

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Please note that the above text is a natural reading of the document.
Its cities will be laid waste and become uninhabited.”

48:10 A curse on anyone who is lax in doing the LORD’s work!
A curse on anyone who keeps from carrying out his destruction!¹

48:11 “From its earliest days Moab has lived undisturbed.
It has never been taken into exile.
Its people are like wine allowed to settle undisturbed on its dregs,
ever poured out from one jar to another.
They are like wine which tastes like it always did,
whose aroma has remained unchanged.²

48:12 But the time is coming when I will send men against Moab who will empty it out.
They will empty the towns of their people,
then will lay those towns in ruins.³

I, the LORD, affirm it!⁴

48:13 The people of Moab will be disappointed by their god Chemosh.
They will be as disappointed as the people of Israel were
when they put their trust in the calf god at Bethel.⁵

48:14 How can you men of Moab say, ‘We are heroes,
men who are mighty in battle?’

48:15 Moab will be destroyed. Its towns will be invaded.
Its finest young men will be slaughtered.⁶
I, the King, the LORD who rules over all,⁷ affirm it!⁸

48:16 Moab’s destruction is at hand.
Disaster will come on it quickly.

48:17 Mourn for that nation, all you nations living around it,
all of you nations that know of its fame.⁹
Mourn and say, ‘Alas, its powerful influence has been broken!
Its glory and power have been done away!’¹⁰

48:18 Come down from your place of honor;
sit on the dry ground,¹¹ you who live in Dibon.¹²
For the one who will destroy Moab will attack you;
he will destroy your fortifications.

48:19 You who live in Aroer,¹³ stand by the road and watch.

¹ tn Heb “who withholds his sword from bloodshed.” This verse is an editorial aside (or apostrophe) addressed to the Babylonian destroyers to be diligent in carrying out the work of the LORD in destroying Moab.
² tn Heb “Therefore his taste remains in him and his aroma is not changed.” The metaphor is changed into a simile in an attempt to help the reader understand the figure in the context.
³ sn The picture is that of undisturbed complacency (cf. Zeph 1:12). Because Moab had never known the discipline of exile she had remained as she always was.
⁴ tn Heb “Oracle of the King whose name is Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of the translation and meaning of this title see the study note on 2:19.
⁵ sn This refers to both the nearby nations and those who lived further away who had heard of Moab’s power and might only by repute.
⁶ tn Heb “will go down to the slaughter.”
⁷ tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of the translation and meaning of this title see the study note on 2:19.
⁸ sn “Oracle of the King whose name is Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of the translation and meaning of this title see the study note on 2:19.
⁹ tn For the use of the word “name” (שֵׁם, shem) to “fame” or “repute” see BDB 1028 s.v. שֵׁם 2.b and compare the usage in Ezek 16:14; 2 Chr 26:15.
¹⁰ sn This is used here as often in Jeremiah for the personification of a city, a country, or its inhabitants. The word “inhabitant” is to be understood as a collective as also in v. 19.
¹¹ sn Dibon was an important fortified city located on the “King’s Highway,” the main north-south road in Transjordan.
It was the site at which the Moabite Stone was found in 1868 and was one of the cities mentioned on it. It was four miles north of the Arnon River and thirteen miles east of the Dead Sea. It was one of the main cities on the northern plateau and had been conquered from Sihon and allotted to the tribe of Reuben (Josh 13:17).
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¹³ sn Aroer is probably the Aroer that was located a few miles south and west of Dibon on the edge of the Arnon River. It had earlier been the southern border of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and had been allotted to the tribe of Reuben (Josh 13:16). However, this whole territory had earlier been taken over by the Arameans (2 Kgs 10:33), later by the Assyrians, and at this time was in the hands of the Moabites.
high on the sides of a ravine.

48:29 I have heard how proud the people of Moab are, I know how haughty they are. I have heard how arrogant, proud, and haughty they are, what a high opinion they have of themselves.

48:30 I, the Lord, affirm that I know how arrogant they are. But their pride is ill-founded. Their boastings will prove to be false.

48:31 So I will weep with sorrow for Moab. I will cry out in sadness for all of Moab. I will moan for the people of Kir Heres.

48:32 I will weep for the grapevines of Sibmah just like the town of Jazer weeps over them.

1 See the study note on Jer 48:8 for reference to this tableland or high plain that lay between the Arnon and Heshbon.

2 "Horn" and "arm" are both symbols of strength (see BDB 902 s.v. קֶרֶן 2 [and compare usage in Lam 2:3] and BDB 284 s.v. arm 2 [and compare usage in 1 Sam 2:31]). The figures have been interpreted for the sake of clarity.

3 See the commentaries relate the figure of drunkenness to the figure of drinking the cup of God's wrath spelled out in Jer 25 where reference is made at one point to the nations drinking, staggering, vomiting, and falling (25:27 and see G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52, 316, for a full list of references to this figure including this passage and 49:12-13; 51:6-10, 39, 57).

4 The meaning of this word is uncertain. It is usually used of clapping of the hands or the thigh in helpless anger or disgust. Hence J. Bright (Jeremiah [AB], 321) paraphrases "shall vomit helplessly." HALOT 722 s.v. יִסָּפֵק relates this to an Aramaic word and see a homonym meaning "vomit" or "spew out." The translation is that of BDB 706 s.v. יִסָּפֵק Qal.3, "splash (fall with a splash)." from the same root that refers to slopping or clapping the thigh.

5 The meaning here presupposes the emendation of יִסָּפֵק (יִשָּפֵק, "your words") to יִשָּפֵק (דָּשְׁבָרָק, "your speaking"), suggested by BHS (cf. fn c) on the basis of one of the Greek versions (Symmachus). For the idiom cf. BDB 191 s.v. יִשָּפֵק 2.c.a.

6 See the study note on Jer 48:8 for reference to this tableland or high plain that lay between the Arnon and Heshbon.

7 "Oracle of the Lord," Most understand the reference to be to Jeremiah and his fellow Judeans.

8 The translation is based on the emendation of the Hebrew third masculine singular (יִשָּפֵק, יִשָּפֵק) to the first singular (יִשָּפֵק, יִשָּפֵק). This emendation is assumed by almost all of the modern English versions and commentators even though the textual evidence for it is weak (only one Hebrew text and the Eastern Qere according to BHS).

9 Or "I will weep for the grapevines of Sibmah more than I will weep over the towns of Moab, both far and near.

48:0 The reading here presupposes the emendation of לֹא (לֹא, "you shook your head in contempt" [or "laughed at the people of Israel"] to לֹא (לֹא, "your arrogance and [that it is?] not true; // his boastings accomplish that which is not true." Several of the modern English versions and commentators redivide the verse and read something like, "I know his insolence...his boastings are false; his deeds are false (NRSV, REB)."

10 The word translated "deeds" in the last line is a verb in the third person plural and can only have as its logical grammatical subject the word "boastings." The adjective יִשָּפֵק (קָרָה) + the negative לֹא ("lo") is evidently repeated here and applied to two different subjects "arrogance" and "boasting" to emphasize that Moab's arrogant boasts will prove "untrue" for Moab. The Hebrew is read "I know how haughty they are, their boastings will prove to be false" for both this passage and the parallel one in Isa 16:6). There is some difference of opinion about the identification of the "I" in this verse. Most commentators see it as referring to the prophet. However, F. B. Huey (Jeremiah, Interpretations [NAC], 395) is probably correct in seeing it as referring to the Lord. He points to the fact that the "I" in vv. 33, 35, 38 can only refer to God. The "I know" in v. 30 also clearly has the Lord as its subject. There are other cases in the book of Jeremiah where the Lord expresses his lament over the fate of a people (cf. 14:1-6, 17-18).

11 The translation is based on the emendation of the Hebrew third masculine singular (יִשָּפֵק, יִשָּפֵק) to the first singular (יִשָּפֵק, יִשָּפֵק). This emendation is assumed by almost all of the modern English versions and commentators even though the textual evidence for it is weak (only one Hebrew text and the Eastern Qere according to BHS).

12 The translation here assumes that there has been a graphic confusion of יִשָּפֵק (ינַנָּה) with יִשָּפֵק (יקָמָה) or יִשָּפֵק (יקָמָה). The parallel passage in Isa 16:9 has the preposition ל (with) and the Greek version presupposes a comparative idea as in "worse than." Many of the modern English versions render the passage with the comparative יִשָּפֵק (ינַנָּה) as in the alternate translation, but it is unclear what the force of the com-
Their branches once spread as far as the Dead Sea.¹
They reached as far as the town of Jazer.²
The destroyer will ravage her fig, date,³ and grape crops.

48:33 Joy and gladness will disappear from the fruitful land of Moab.⁴
I will stop the flow of wine from the winepresses.
No one will stomp on the grapes there and shout for joy,⁵
The shouts there will be shouts of soldiers, not the shouts of those making wine.⁶

48:34 Cries of anguish raised from Heshbon and Elealeh will be sounded as far as Jahaz.⁷

The word is missing from two Hebrew manuscripts and a number of versions. The words “in mourning” and “to show their sorrow” are not in the text. They have been supplied as an editorial conjecture.

tn The actions referred to here were all acts that were used in pagan worship.

sn The section concludes with a theophoric term “the LORD”.

1 tn Heb “crossed over to the Sea.”
2 tn Or “reached the sea of Jazer.” The Sea is generally taken to be a reference to the Dead Sea. The translation presupposes that the word “sea” is to be omitted before “Jazer.”
3 tn Heb “her summer fruit.” See the translator’s note on 40:10 for a discussion of this expression.
4 tn Heb “from the garden land, even from the land of Moab.” Comparison with the parallel passage in Isa 16:10 and the translation of the Greek text here (which has only “the land of Moab”) suggest that the second phrase is appositional to the first.
5 tn Heb “no one will tread [the grapes] with shout of joy.”
6 tn Heb “shouts will not be shouts.” The text has been expanded contextually to explain that the shouts of those treading grapes in winepresses will come to an end (v. 33a-d) and be replaced by the shouts of the soldiers who trample down the vineyards (v. 32e-f). Compare 25:30 and 51:41 for the idiom.
7 tn The meaning of this verse is very uncertain. The ambiguity of the syntax and the apparent elliptical nature of this text makes the meaning of this verse uncertain. The Hebrew text reads: “From the cry of Heshbon unto Elealeh unto Jahaz they utter their voice from Zoor unto Horonaim Eglath Shelishiyah.” The translation and interpretation here are based on interpreting the elliptical syntax here by the parallel passage in Isaiah 15:4-6 where cries of anguish rise from Heshbon and Elealeh which are heard all the way to Jahaz. The people flee southward arriving at Zoor and Eglath Shelishiyah where they voice the news of the destruction in the north. Hence, the present translation interprets the phrase “from the cry of Heshbon unto Elealeh” to be parallel to “Heshbon and Elealeh cry out” and take the preposition “from” in the verb “they utter their voice,” i.e., with the cry of Heshbon and Elealeh. The impersonal “they raise their voice” is then treated as a passive and made the subject of the whole verse. There is some debate about the identification of the waters of Nimrim. They may refer to the waters of the Wadi Nimrim which enters the Jordan about eight miles north of the Dead Sea or the Wadi en-Numeirah which flows into the southern tip of the Dead Sea from about ten miles south. Most commentators take the reference to be the latter because of association with Zoor. However, if the passage is talking about the destruction in the north which is reported in the south by the fleeing refugees, the reference is probably to the Wadi Nimrim in the north.

sn Elealeh was about two miles (3.3 km) north of Heshbon. Jahaz was about twenty miles (33 km) south of it. These three cities were in the north and Zoor, Horonaim, and Eglath Shelishiyah were apparently in the south. The verse is speaking about the news of destruction in the north spreading to the south. Comparison should be made with the parallel passage in Isa 15:4-6.
8 tn Heb “high place[s].” For the meaning and significance of this term see the study note on 7:31.
9 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
10 tn Heb “upon every loin [there is] sackcloth.” The word “all” is restored here before “join” with a number of Hebrew manuscripts and a number of versions. The words “in mourning” and “to show their sorrow” are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to give the average reader some idea of the significance of these acts.
11 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
48:39 Oh, how shattered Moab will be! Oh, how her people will wail! Oh, how she will turn away in shame! Moab will become an object of ridicule, a terrifying sight to all the nations that surround her.

48:40 For the Lord says, “Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings a nation will swoop down on Moab. Her towns will be captured. Her fortresses will be taken. At that time the soldiers of Moab will be frightened like a woman in labor.

48:41 Moab will be destroyed and no longer be a nation, because she has vaunted herself against the Lord.

48:43 Terror, pits, and traps are in store for the people who live in Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

48:44 Anyone who flies at the sound of terror will fall into a pit. Anyone who climbs out of the pit will be caught in a trap. For the time is coming when I will punish the people of Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

12 tn Or “of those noisy boasters.” Or “They will burn up the frontiers of Moab. They will burn up the mountain heights of those war-loving people.” The meaning of this verse is not entirely certain because of the highly figurative nature of the last two lines. The Hebrew text has been translated somewhat literally here. The Hebrew text reads: “In the shadow of Heshbon those fleeing stand without strength. For a fire goes forth from Heshbon, a flame from the midst of Sihon. And it devours the forehead of Moab and the skull of the sons of noise.” The meaning of the first part is fairly clear because verse 2 has already spoken of the conquest of Heshbon and a plot formed there to conquer the rest of the nation. The fire going forth from Heshbon would hence refer here to the conflagrations of war spreading from Heshbon to the rest of the country. The reference to the “midst of Sihon” is to be understood metaphorically as a reference for the ruler to what he once ruled (cf. E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 583). The last two lines must refer to more than the fugitives who stopped at Heshbon for protection because it refers to the forehead of Moab (a personification of the whole land or nation). It is unclear, however, why reference is made to the foreheads and skulls of the Moabites, other than the fact that this verse seems to be a readaptation or reuse of Num 24:17 where the verb used with them is “smite” which fits nicely in the sense of martial destruction. Translated rather literally, it appears here to refer to the destruction by the fires of war of the Moabites, just as part (forehead and skulls) put for the whole. TEV sees a reference here to the “frontiers” and “mountain heights” of Moab and this would work nicely for “foreheads” which is elsewhere used of the corner or border of a land in Neh 9:22. The word “crown” or “skull” might be a picturesque metaphor for the mountain heights of a land, but the word is never used elsewhere in such a figurative way. TEV (and CEV) which follows it might be correct here but there is no way to validate it. The meaning “war-loving people” for the phrase “sons of noise” is based on the suggestion of BDB 981 s.v. קִרְיָה 1 which relates the phrase to the dominant use for קִרְיָה (sha’on) and is adopted also by TEV, CEV, and C. von Orelli, Jeremiah, 341. REB “braggarts” and NIV “noisy boasters” seem to base the nuance on the usage of קִרְיָה (sha’on) in Jer 46:17 where Pharaoh is referred to as an empty noise and the reference to Moab’s arrogance and boasting in 48:29. This verse and the next are an apparent adaptation and reuse of a victory song in Num 21:28-29 and a prophecy in Num 24:17. That explains the reference to Sihon who was the Amorite king who captured Heshbon and proceeded from there to capture most of northern Moab (the area between Heshbon and the Arnon) which has been referred to earlier in this prophecy. This prophecy appears to speak of the destruction of Moab beginning from the same place under the picture of a destructive fire which burns up all the people. The fire is a reference to the conflagrations of war in which the enemy captures the cities and sets them on fire and burns all the people in them. What Sihon once did (Num 21:28-29) and what Balaam prophesied would happen to Moab in the future (by David? Num 24:17) are being reapplied to a new situation.
48:46 Moab, you are doomed!1 You people who worship Chemosh will be destroyed. Your sons will be taken away captive. Your daughters will be carried away into exile.2

48:47 Yet in days to come I will reverse Moab's ill fortune;3 says the LORD.4 The judgment against Moab ends here.

Judgment Against Ammon

49:1 The LORD spoke about the Ammonites.5 “Do you think there are not any people of the nation of Israel remaining? Do you think there are not any of them remaining to reinherit their land? Is that why you people who worship the god Milcom6 have taken possession of the territory of Gad and live in his cities?7

1 sn Heb “Woe to you, Moab.” For the usage of this expression see 4:13; 31: 13:17 and the translator’s note on 4:13 and 10:19.
2 tn See 29:14; 30:3 and the translator’s note on 29:14 for the idiom used here.
3 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”
4 sn Ammonites. Ammon was a small kingdom to the north and east of Moab which was in constant conflict with the Transjordanian tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh over territory to the north and south of the Jabbok River. Ammon mainly centered on the city of Rabbah which is modern Amman. According toJudg 11:13 the Ammonites claimed the land between the Jabbok and the Arnon but this land was taken from them by Sihon and Og and land that the Israelites captured from the latter two kings. The Ammonites attempted to expand into the territory of Israel in the Transjordan that figure is a little odd in a context which speaks of mourning for those in Ammon. The Ammonites were evidently in rebellion against him in 588 b.c. when he had to decide whether to attack Rabbah or Jerusalem first (Ezek 21:18-23; 21:23-28 HT). They appear to have remained in rebellion after the destruction of Jerusalem because their king Baalis was behind the plot to assassinate Gedaliah and offered refuge to Ishmael after he did it (Jer 40:13; 41:15). According to the Jewish historian Josephus they were conquered in 582 b.c. by Nebuchadnezzar.
5 sn Heb “Does Israel have not any sons? Does not he have any heir [or “heirs” as a collective]? Why [then] has Malcom taken possession of Gad and [why] do his [Malcom’s] people live in his [Gad’s] land?” A literal translation here will not produce any meaning without major commentary. Hence the meaning that is generally agreed on is reflected in an admittedly paraphrastic translation. The reference is to the fact that the Ammonites had taken possession of the cities that had been deserted when the Assyrians carried off the Transjordanian tribes in 733 b.c. assuming that the Israelites would not return in sufficient numbers to regain control of it. The thought underlying the expression “Why has Milcom taken possession…” reflects the idea, common in the OT and the ancient Near East, that the god of a people drove out the previous inhabitants, gave their land to his worshippers to possess, and took up residence with them there (cf., e.g., Deut 11:21; Judg 5:1 and line 33-34 of the Moabite Stone: “Che- mosh said to me, ‘Go down, fight against Hauronen.’ And I went down (and I fought against the town and took it), and Chemosh dwelt there in my time.” [ANET 321]).
6 tn Heb “oracle of the LORD.”
7 tn Heb “a desolate tel.” For the explanation of what a “tel” is see the study note on 30:18.
8 tn Heb “its daughters will be burned with fire.” For the use of the word “daughters” to refer to the villages surrounding a larger city see BDB 123 s.v. לֵשָׁה 4 and compare the usage in Judg 1:27.
9 tn Heb “says the LORD.” The first person is used to maintain the first person address throughout.
10 sn Or “you women of Rabbah”; Heb “daughters of Rabbah.” It is difficult to tell whether the word “daughters” is used here in the same sense that it has in v. 2 (see the translator’s note there) or in the literal sense of “daughters.” The former has been preferred because the cities themselves (e.g., Heshbon) are called to wail in the earlier part of the verse and the term “daughters” has been used in the previous verse of the surrounding villages.
11 tc Or “Run back and forth inside the walls of your towns.” “slash yourselves with gashes.” The meaning of this line is uncertain. The Hebrew text reads “run back and forth among the walls.” The word “run back and forth” is generally taken as a Hitpolel of a verb that means to “go about” in the Qal and to “go back and forth” in the Polel (cf. BDB 1002 s.v. בַּשָּׂט). The noun that follows in the Hebrew means “wall,” hedge” and is quite commonly modified by the noun הַגְּדֻדוֹת (רֹאשׁ, “sheep”) referring to sheepfolds (cf., e.g., Num 32:36; 1 Sam 24:3). But the phrase “run back and forth among the sheepfolds” yields little meaning here. In Ps 89:40 (89:41 HT) the word “wall” is used in parallelism with fortified cities and refers to the walls of the city. That is the sense that is assumed in one of the alternate translations with the words “of your towns” being supplied in the translation for clarification. However, that figure is a little odd in a context which speaks of mourning rites. Hence some emend the word “walls” (הַגְּדֻדוֹת, g’dudot) to “gashes” (_remainders, g’dudot), a word that has occurred in a similar context in Jer 48:37. That would involve only the common confusion of נ (beis, “house”) and נ (beis, “house”). That is the reading adopted here and fits the context nicely. NRSV appears to go one step further and read the verb as a Hitpolel from a root that is otherwise used only as a noun to mean “whip” or “scourge.” NRSV reads “slash yourselves with whips” which also makes excellent sense in the context but is not supported by any parallel use of the verb.
For your god Milcom will go into exile along with his priests and officials. 

49:4 Why do you brag about your great power? Your power is ebbing away, you rebellious people of Ammon, who trust in your riches and say, ‘Who would dare to attack us?’ I will bring terror on you from every side,” says the Lord God who rules over all. 

49:5 You will be scattered in every direction. No one will gather the fugitives back together. 

49:6 Yet in days to come I will reverse Ammon’s ill fortune.” says the Lord.

Judgment Against Edom  

49:7 The Lord who rules over all spoke about Edom. 

1 sn Compare Jer 48:7 and the study note there. 

2 tn Or “Why do you brag about your valleys, about the fruitfulness of your valleys.” The meaning of the first two lines of this verse are uncertain primarily due to the ambiguity of the Akkad expression 𒉗养猪𒉗 (zazû ni) in the Akkadian text. The form 𒉗 (zazû) is either a Qal perfect or Qal participle of a verb meaning flow. It is common in the expression “a land flowing with milk and honey” and is also common to refer to the seminal discharge which makes a man or woman unclean. BDB 264 s.v. 𒉗 sees it as an abbreviation of the idea “flowing with milk and honey” and sees it as referring to the fertility of Ammon’s valley. However, there are no other examples of such an ellipsis. Several of the modern English versions and commentaries have taken the word 𒉗 (zazû) not as a reference to a valley but to the homonym cited in the note on 47:5 and see the reference here to the flowing away of Ammon’s strength. That interpretation is followed here. Instead of explaining the plural ending on 𒉗 (zazû) as an enclitic 𒉗 (zazû) as others who follow this interpretation (e.g., J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 325), the present translation understands the plural as a plural of amplification (cf. GKC 397-98 §124.e and compare the noun “might” in Isa 40:26).

3 tn Heb “apostate daughter.” This same term is applied to Israel in Jer 31:22 but seems inappropriate here to Ammon because Ammon had never been loyal to the Lord and could not hence be called “apostate.” However, if it is used of the fact that she rebelled against the Lord’s servant, Nebuchadnezzar, it might be appropriate (cf. Jer 27:6, 8). Hence the term “rebellious” is used in the translation to represent it. The word “daughter” is again a personification of the land (cf. BDB 123 s.v. 𒉗) and is here translated “people of Ammon” to make it easier for the modern reader to identify the referent.

4 tn Heb “The Lord Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of the rendering here and of the significance of this title see note on 47:5 and see the reference here to the flowing away of Ammon’s strength.

5 tn Heb “You will be scattered” and BDB 519 s.v. 𒉗 “to steal.” Here the verb is the imperfect of 𒉗 (zazû) “to steal.” Hence the verb is the perfect of a verb which means to “ruin” or “spoil.” The English versions and commentaries, however, almost all render the verb here in much the same way as in Obad 5. The question can still be assumed because questions can be asked in Hebrew without a formal marker (cf. GKC 473 §150.a and BDB 519 s.v. 𒉗 1.a[e] and compare usage in 2 Kgs 5:26).

6 tn The tense and nuance of the verb translated “pillage” are both different than the verb in Obad 5. There the verb is the imperfect of 𒉗 (zazû) “to pillage.” Here the verb is the perfect of a verb which means to “ruin” or “spoil.” The English versions and commentaries, however, almost all render the verb here in much the same way as in Obad 5. The nuance must mean they only “ruin, destroy” (by stealing) only as much as they need (Heb “their sufficiency”), and the verb is used as metonymical substitute, effect for cause. The perfect must be some kind of a future perfect: “they would not have destroyed only...” The negative question is carried over by ellipsis from the preceding lines.

7 sn Edom was a kingdom to the south and east of Judah. Its borders varied over time but basically Edom lay in the hundred mile strip between the Gulf of Aqaba on the south and the Zered River on the north. It straddled the Arabah leading down from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, having as its northern neighbors both Judah and Moab. A long history of hostility existed between Israel and Edom, making Edom one of the favorite objects of the prophets’ oracles of judgment (cf., e.g., Isa 21:11-12; 34:5-15; 63:1-6; Amos 1:11-12; Ezek 25:12-14; 35:1:15; Obad 1:16). Not much is known about Edom at this time other than the fact that they participated in the discussions regarding rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar in 594 b.c. According to Obadiah 10-16 they not only gloated over Judah’s downfall in 586 b.c. but participated in its plunder and killed some of those who were fleeing the country.

8 sn Teman was the name of one of Esau’s descendants, the name of an Edomite clan and the name of the district where they lived (Gen 36:11, 15, 34). Like the name Bozrah, it is used poetically for all of Edom (Jer 49:20; Ezek 25:13).

9 tn Heb “Has counsel perished from men of understanding?”

10 tn The meaning of this last word is based on the definition given in KBL 686 s.v. 𒉗 Niph and HALOT 726 s.v. 𒉗 Niph, which give the nuance “to be [or become] corrupt” rather than that of BDB 710 s.v. 𒉗 Niph who give the nuance “let loose (i.e., to be dismissed; to be gone)” from a verb that is elsewhere used of the overhanging of a curtains or a cliff.

11 tn Heb “make deep to dwell.” The meaning of this phrase is debated. Some take it as a reference for the Dedanites who were not native to Edom but go down from the heights of Edom and go back home (so G. L. Keane, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26:52 [WBC], 330). The majority of commentaries, however, take it as a reference to the Dedanites disassociating themselves from the Edomites and finding remote hiding places to live in (so J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 718). For the options see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Herme- neutics), 2:375.

12 tn The Lord Yahweh of armies.

13 tn Heb “They will not pillage any only what they needed.”

14 sn Dedan. The Dedanites were an Arabian tribe who lived to the southeast of Edom. They are warned here to disassociate themselves from Edom because Edom is about to suffer disaster.

15 tn Heb “For I will bring the disaster of Esau upon him, the time when I will punish him.” Esau was the progenitor of the tribes and nation of Edom (cf. Gen 36:1, 8, 9, 19).

16 tn The translation of this verse is generally based on the parallels in Obad 5. There the second line has a נ interrogative in front of it. The question can still be assumed because questions can be asked in Hebrew without a formal marker (cf. GKC 473 §150.a and BDB 519 s.v. 𒉗 1.a[e] and compare usage in 2 Kgs 5:26).

17 tn The tense and nuance of the verb translated “pillage” are both different than the verb in Obad 5. There the verb is the imperfect of 𒉗 (zazû) “to pillage.” Here the verb is the perfect of a verb which means to “ruin” or “spoil.” The English versions and commentaries, however, almost all render the verb here in much the same way as in Obad 5. The nuance must mean they only “ruin, destroy” (by stealing) only as much as they need (Heb “their sufficiency”), and the verb is used as metonymical substitute, effect for cause. The perfect must be some kind of a future perfect: “they would not have destroyed only...” The negative question is carried over by ellipsis from the preceding lines.
49:10 But I will strip everything away from Esau’s descendants. I will uncover their hiding places so they cannot hide. Their children, relatives, and neighbors will all be destroyed. Not one of them will be left! 49:11 Leave your orphans behind and I will keep them alive. Your widows too can depend on me."

49:12 For the LORD says, “If even those who did not deserve to drink from the cup of my wrath must drink from it, do you think you will go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, but must certainly drink from the cup of my wrath.”

49:13 For I solemnly swear,“I says to Edom,” that Bozrah will become a pile of ruins. It will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example to be used in curses. All the towns around it will lie in ruins forever.”

49:14 I said, “I have heard a message from the LORD. A messenger has been sent among the nations to say, “

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4 sn The reference here is to the cup of God’s wrath which is connected with the punishment of war at the hands of the Babylonians referred to already in Jer 25:15-29. Those who do not deserve to drink from the innocent victims of war who get swept away with the guilty. Edom was certainly not one of the innocent victims as is clear from this judgment speech and those referred to in the study note on 49:7.

3 tn Heb “I swear by myself.” See 22:5 and the study note there.

4 sn Bozrah appears to have been the chief city in Edom, its capital city (see its parallelism with Edom in Isa 34:6; 63:1; Jer 49:22). The reference to “its towns” (translated here “all the towns around it”) could then be a reference to all the towns in Edom. It was located about twenty-five miles south-east of the southern end of the Dead Sea apparently in the district of Teman (see the parallelism in Amos 1:12).

5 sn See the study note on 24:9 for the rendering of this term.

6 tn The words “I said” are not in the text but it is generally agreed that the words that follow are Jeremiah’s. These words are supplied in the translation to make clear that the speaker has shifted from the LORD to Jeremiah.

‘Gather your armies and march out against her! Prepare to do battle with her!’”

49:15 The LORD says to Edom, “I will certainly make you small among nations. I will make you despised by all humanity.

49:16 The terror you inspire in others and the arrogance of your heart have deceived you. You may make your home in the clefts of the rocks; you may occupy the highest places in the hills. But even if you made your home where the eagles nest, I would bring you down from there,” says the LORD.

49:17 “Edom will become an object of horror. All who pass by it will be filled with horror; they will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

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7 tn Heb “Rise up for battle.” The idea “against her” is implicit from the context and has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

8 tn The words “The LORD says to Edom” are not in the text. They have been supplied in the translation to mark the shift from the address of the messenger summoning the nations to prepare to do battle against Edom. The LORD is clearly the speaker (see the end of v. 16) and Edom is clearly the addressee. Such sudden shifts are common in Hebrew poetry, particularly Hebrew prophecy, but are extremely disruptive to a modern reader trying to follow the argument of a passage. TEV adds “The LORD said” and then retains third person throughout. CEV puts all of vv. 14-16 in the second person and uses indirect discourse in v. 15.

9 tn The meaning of this Hebrew word (תִּבְטָתָךְ, tibṭatkh) is uncertain because it occurs only here. However, it is related to a verb root that refers to the shaking of the pillars (of the earth) in Job 9:6 and a noun (מִפְלֶצֶת, milset) that refers to “horror” or “shuddering” used in Job 21:6; Isa 21:4; Ezek 7:18; Ps 55:6. This is the nuance that is accepted by DBB, KBL, HAL and a majority of the modern English versions. The suffix is an objective genitive. The fact that the following verb is masculine singular suggests that the text here (תִּבְטָתָךְ, hishi’takht) is in error for תִּפְלֶצֶת (hishi’takht) as G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC), 327, n. 16.a.

10 tn The Hebrew text of the first four lines reads: “Your terror [= the terror you inspire] has deceived you, [and] the arrogation of your heart, you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, who occupy the heights of the hill.” The sentence is broken up and restructured to better conform with English style.

11 sn This verse is very similar to Jer 19:8 where the same judgment is pronounced on Jerusalem. For the meaning of some of the terms here (“hiss out their scorn” and “all the disasters that have happened to it”) see the notes on that verse.
49:18 Edom will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns that were around them. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it,” says the Lord.

49:19 “A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Edomites off their land. Then I will appoint over it whom I choose. For there is no one like me, and there is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler who can stand up against me.

49:20 So listen to what I, the Lord, have planned against Edom, what I intend to do to the people who live in Teman. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

49:21 The people of the earth will quake when they hear of their downfall. Their cries of anguish will be heard all the way to the Gulf of Aqaba.

49:22 Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings, a nation will soar up and swoop down on Bozrah. At that time the soldiers of Edom will be as fearful as a woman in labor.”

Judgment Against Damascus

49:23 The Lord spoke about Damascus: “The people of Hamath and Arpad will be dismayed
because they have heard bad news. Their courage will melt away because of worry. Their hearts will not be able to rest.  
49:24 The people of Damascus will lose their heart and turn to flee. Panic will grip them. Pain and anguish will seize them like a woman in labor.  
49:25 How desolate will that once-famous city be, that city that was once filled with joy!  
49:26 For her young men will fall in her city squares. All her soldiers will be destroyed at that time, says the LORD who rules over all.  
49:27 “I will set fire to the walls of Damascus; it will burn up the palaces of Ben Hadad.”  

Judgment Against Kedar and Hazor

49:29 Their tents and their flocks will be taken away. Their tent curtains, equipment, and camels will be carried off. People will shout to them, ‘Terror is all around you!’  
49:30 The LORD says, “Flee quickly, you who live in Hazor. Take up refuge in remote places. For King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has laid out plans to attack you. He has formed his strategy on how to defeat you.”

*sn Kedar appears to refer to an Arabic tribe of nomads descended from Ishmael (Gen 25:13). They are associated here with the people who live in the eastern desert (Heb “the children of the east” (םֵאָדֶם, ʿAḏāḏ). In Isa 21:16 they are associated with the Temanites and the Dedanites, Arabic tribes in the north Arabian desert. They were sheep breeders (Isa 58:7) who lived in tents (Ps 120:5) and unwalled villages (Isa 42:11). According to Assyrian records they clashed with Assiya from the time of Shalmaneser in 850 until the time of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal in the late seventh century. According to the Babylonian Chronicles, Nebuchadnezzar defeated them in 599 B.C.  

*sn Hazor. Nothing is known about this Hazor other than what is said here in vv. 28, 30, 33. They appear to be also nomadic tent dwellers who had a loose association with the Kedarites.

2 tc The meaning of this verse is very uncertain. The Hebrew text apparently reads “Hamath and Arpad are dismayed. The battle of Carchemish. They would have been in the midst of the army of the Egyptians at Carchemish.” The translation follows the versions for clarity. For the phenomenon of the major victory of Nebuchadnezzar over the armies of the Medes and the Egyptians (see the background discussion for these events in chapter 47), the armies of the Medes and Egyptians that were defeated at the battle of Carchemish. It describes the terrors of war awaiting the people of Israel and Judah.  

10 tn The words “Army of Babylon” are not in the Hebrew text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

11 sn Or “Let their tents…be taken….Let their tent…be carried….Let people shout.” This expression is a favorite theme in the book of Jeremiah. It describes the terrors of war awaiting the people of Judah and Jerusalem (6:25), the Egyptians at Carchemish (46:5), and here the Kedarites.

12 sn “Oracle of the LORD.”

13 map For location see Map3-D2; Map2-D3; Map3-A2; Map4-C1.

14 sn “Make deep to dwell.” See Jer 49:8 and the translator’s note there. The use of this phrase here argues against the alternative there of going down from a height and going back home.

16 sn Heb “has counseled a counsel against you, has planned a plan against you.”

7 sn Kedar appears to refer to an Arabic tribe of nomads descended from Ishmael (Gen 25:13). They are associated here with the people who live in the eastern desert (Heb “the children of the east”). In Isa 21:16 they are associated with the Temanites and the Dedanites, Arabic tribes in the north Arabian desert. They were sheep breeders (Isa 60:7) who lived in tents (Ps 120:5) and unwalled villages (Isa 42:11). According to Assyrian records they clashed with Assiya from the time of Shalmaneser in 850 until the time of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal in the late seventh century. According to the Babylonian Chronicles, Nebuchadnezzar defeated them in 599 B.C.

8 sn Hazor. Nothing is known about this Hazor other than what is said here in vv. 28, 30, 33. They appear to be also nomadic tent dwellers who had a loose association with the Kedarites.

9 tn The words “Army of Babylon” are not in the Hebrew text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

10 sn Heb “the children of the east.” Nothing much is known about them other than their association with the Midianites and Amalekites in their attack on Israel in the time of Gideon (Judg 6:3, 33) and the fact that God would let tribes from the eastern desert capture Moab and Ammon in the future (Ezek 25:4, 10). Midian and Amalek were considered to be located in the region in northern Arabia east of Edom. That would put them in the same general locality as the region of Kedar. The parallelism here suggests that they are the same as the people of Kedar. The words here are apparently addressed to the armies of Nebuchadnezzar.

11 tn Or “Let their tents…be taken….Let their tent…be carried….Let people shout.” This expression is a favorite theme in the book of Jeremiah. It describes the terrors of war awaiting the people of Judah and Jerusalem (6:25), the Egyptians at Carchemish (46:5), and here the Kedarites.

12 sn “Oracle of the LORD.”

13 map For location see Map3-D2; Map2-D3; Map3-A2; Map4-C1.

14 sn “Make deep to dwell.” See Jer 49:8 and the translator’s note there. The use of this phrase here argues against the alternative there of going down from a height and going back home.

16 sn Heb “has counseled a counsel against you, has planned a plan against you.”
49:31 The LORD says, 1 “Army of Babylon, 2 go and attack a nation that lives in peace and security. They have no gates or walls to protect them. 3 They live all alone.

49:32 Their camels will be taken as plunder. Their vast herds will be taken as spoil. I will scatter to the four winds those desert peoples who cut their hair short at the temples. 4 I will bring disaster against them from every direction,” says the LORD. 5

49:33 “Hazor will become a permanent wasteland, a place where only jackals live. 6 No one will live there. No human being will settle in it.” 7

Judgment Against Elam

49:34 Early in the reign 8 of King Zedekiah of Judah, the LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam. 9

49:35 The LORD who rules over all said, “I will kill all the archers of Elam, who are the chief source of her military might.10

49:36 I will cause enemies to blow through Elam from every direction like the winds blowing in from the four quarters of heaven. I will scatter the people of Elam to the four winds. There will not be any nation where the refugees of Elam will not go.11

49:37 I will make the people of Elam terrified of their enemies, who are seeking to kill them. I will vent my fierce anger and bring disaster upon them.” 12 says the LORD. 13

49:38 I will send armies chasing after them 14 until I have completely destroyed them. I will destroy their king and their leaders.” 15 says the LORD. 16

49:39 “Yet in days to come I will reverse Elam’s ill fortune.” 17 says the LORD. 18

Judgment Against Babylon

50:1 The LORD spoke concerning Babylon and the land of Babylonia 19 through the prophet Jeremiah. 20

50:2 “Announce22 the news among the nations! Proclaim it!

Signal for people to pay attention!23

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1 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
2 tn The words “Army of Babylon” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
3 tn Heb “no gates and no bar,” i.e., “that lives securely without gates or bars.” The phrase is used by the figure of species for genus (synecdoche) to refer to the fact that they have no defenses, i.e., no walls, gates, or bars on the gates. The figure has been interpreted in the translation for the benefit of the average reader.
4 tn See the translator’s note at Jer 9:26 and compare the usage in 9:26 and 25:23.
5 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
6 sn Compare Jer 9:11.
7 sn Compare Jer 48:8 and 50:40 where the same thing is said about Edom and Babylon.
8 tn Or “In the beginning of the reign.” For a discussion of the usage of the terms here see the translator’s note on 28:1. If this refers to the accession year the dating would be 598/97 b.c.
9 tn Heb “That which came [as] the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet about the Elam.” See the translator’s note on 14:1 for the construction here and compare also 46:1; 47:1; 50:1.
10 sn Elam was a country on the eastern side of the Tigris River in what is now southwestern Iran. Its capital city was Susa. It was destroyed in 640 b.c. by Ashurbanipal after a long period of conflict with the Assyrian kings. It appears from Babylonian records to have regained its independence shortly thereafter, perhaps as early as 625 b.c., and was involved in the fall of Assyria in 612 b.c. If the date refers to the first year of Zedekiah’s rule (597 b.c.), this prophecy appears to be later than the previous ones (cf. the study notes on 46:2 and 47:1).
11 tn Or more simply, “I will bring enemies against Elam from every direction. / And I will scatter the people of Elam to the four winds. // There won’t be any nation / where the refugees of Elam will not go.” Or more literally, “I will bring the four winds against Elam / from the four quarters of heaven, / I will scatter...” However, the winds are not to be understood literally here. God isn’t going to “blow the Elamites” out of Elam with natural forces. The winds must figuratively represent enemy forces that God will use to drive them out. Translating literally would be misleading at this point.
12 tn Heb “I will bring disaster upon them, even my fierce anger.”
13 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
14 tn Heb “I will send the sword after them.”
15 tn Or “I will sit in judgment over Elam”; Heb “I will set up my throne in Elam.” Commentators are divided over whether this refers to a king sitting in judgment over his captured enemies or whether it refers to formally establishing his rule over the country. Those who argue for the former idea point to the supposed parallels in 1:15 (which the present translation understands not to refer to this but to setting up siege) and 43:8-13. The parallelism in the verse here, however, argues that it refers to the LORD taking over the reins of government by destroying their former leaders.
16 tn Heb “I will destroy king and leaders from there.”
17 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
18 tn See Jer 29:14; 30:3 and the translator’s note on 29:14 for the idiom used here.
19 tn Heb “Oracle of the Lord.”
20 tn Heb “the land of the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.
21 tn Heb “The word which the Lord spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet.”
22 tn The verbs are masculine plural. Jeremiah is calling on other unnamed messengers to spread the news.
23 tn Heb “Raise a signal flag.”
Declare the news! Do not hide it! Say: 
Babylon will be captured. 
Bel will be put to shame. 
Marduk will be dismayed. 
Babylon’s idols will be put to shame. 
Her disgusting images will be dismayed.3

50:3 For a nation from the north will attack Babylon. 
It will lay her land waste. 
People and animals will flee out of it. 
No one will inhabit it.1

50:4 “When that time comes,” says the LORD,5 
“the people of Israel and Judah will return to the land together. 
They will come back with tears of repentance as they seek the LORD their God.6

50:5 They will ask the way to Zion; they will turn their faces toward it. 
They will come7 and bind themselves to the LORD in a lasting covenant that will never be forgotten.8

50:6 “My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds9 have allowed them to go astray. 
They have wandered around in the mountains. 
They have roamed from one mountain and hill to another.10 
They have forgotten their resting place. 
50:7 All who encountered them devoured them. 
Their enemies who did this said, ‘We are not liable for punishment!’ For those people have sinned against the LORD, their true pasture.11 
They have sinned against the LORD in whom their ancestors12 trusted.13

50:8 “People of Judah,14 get out of Babylon quickly! 
Leave the land of Babylonia15 Be the first to depart!16 
Be like the male goats that lead the herd. 
50:9 For I will rouse into action and bring against Babylon guerr (see BHS note a, which mistakenly assumes that the form must be imperfect).

8 sn See Jer 32:40 and the study note there for the nature of this lasting agreement.
9 sn The shepherds are the priests, prophets, and leaders who have led Israel into idolatry (2:8).
10 sn The allusion here, if it is not merely a part of the metaphor of the wandering sheep, is to the worship of the false gods on the high hills (2:20, 3:2).
11 tn This same Hebrew phrase “the habitation of righteousness” is found in Jer 31:23 in relation to Jerusalem in the future as “the place where righteousness dwells.” Here, however, it refers to the same entity as “their resting place” in v. 6 and means “true pasture.” For the meaning of “pasture” for the word נחל (naveh) see 2 Sam 7:8 and especially Isa 65:10: where it is parallel with “resting place” for the flocks. For the meaning of “true” for נחל (naveh) see BDB 841 s.v. נחל 1. For the interpretation adopted here see G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, T. G. Smothers, Jeremiah 26-52 (WBC), 365. The same basic interpretation is reflected in NRSV, NJPS, and God’s Word.
12 tn Heb “fathers.”
13 sn These two verses appear to be a poetical summary of the argument of Jer 2 where the nation is accused of abandoning its loyalty to God and worshipping idols. Whereas those who tried to devour Israel were liable for punishment when Israel was loyal to God (2:3), the enemies of Israel who destroyed them (i.e., the Babylonians [but also the Assyrians], 50:17) argue that they are not liable for punishment because the Israelites have sinned against the LORD and thus deserve their fate.
14 tn The words “People of Judah” are not in the Hebrew text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation to clarify the subject of the address.
15 sn Heb “the land of the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for further information.
16 sn The words “Be the first to leave” are not in the text but spell out the significance of the simile that follows. They have been supplied in the translation for clarity.
a host of mighty nations\(^4\) from the land of the north. They will set up their battle lines against her. They will come from the north and capture her.\(^5\) Their arrows will be like a skilled soldier\(^6\) who does not return from the battle empty-handed.\(^7\)

50:10 Babylonia\(^8\) will be plundered. Those who plunder it will take all they want,\(^9\) says the LORD.\(^10\)

50:11 “People of Babylonia, you plundered my people.\(^11\) That made you happy and glad. You frolic about like calves in a pasture.\(^12\) Your joyous sounds are like the neighs of a stallion.\(^13\) But Babylonia will be put to great shame. The land where you were born\(^14\) will be disgraced. Indeed,\(^15\) Babylonia will become the least important of all nations. It will become a dry and barren desert. 50:13 After I vent my wrath on it Babylon will be uninhabited.\(^16\) It will be totally desolate. All who pass by will be filled with horror and will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.\(^17\)

50:14 “Take up your battle positions all around Babylon, all you soldiers who are armed with bows.\(^18\) Shoot\(^19\) all your arrows at her! Do not hold any back!\(^20\) For she has sinned against the LORD. 50:15 Shout the battle cry from all around the city. She will throw up her hands in surrender.\(^21\) Her towers\(^22\) will fall. Her walls will be torn down. Because I, the LORD, am wreaking revenge,\(^23\) take out your vengeance on her! Do to her as she has done!”
50:16 Kill all the farmers who sow the seed in the land of Babylon. Kill all those who wield the sickle at harvest time. Let all the foreigners return to their own people. Let them hurry back to their own lands to escape destruction by that enemy army.

50:17 "The people of Israel are like scattered sheep which lions have chased away. First the king of Assyria devoured them. Now last of all King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has gawned their bones. So I, the LORD God of Israel who rules over all, say: 'I will punish the king of Babylon and his land just as I punished the king of Assyria. But I will restore the flock of Israel and the land of Gilead.'

50:20 When that time comes, no guilt will be found in Israel. No sin will be found in Judah.

50:21 The LORD says, "Attack the land of Merathaim and the people who live in Pekod! Pursue, kill, and completely destroy them!"

and in the Transjordan, lands that were lost to the Assyrians in the period 738-722 B.C. All of these places were known for their fertility, for their woods and their pastures. The hills (hill country) of Ephraim formed the center of Northern Israel. Mount Carmel lies on the seacoast of the Mediterranean north and west of the hill country of Ephraim. Gilead formed the central part of Transjordan and was used to refer at times to the territory between the Yarmuk and Jabok Rivers, at times to the territory between the Yarmuk and the Arnon Rivers, and at times for all of Israel in the Transjordan. Bashan refers to the territory north of Gilead.

In those days and at that time, oracle of the LORD, the iniquity [or guilt] of Israel will be sought but there will be none and the sins of Judah but they will not be found. The passive construction "will be sought" raises the question of who is doing the seeking which is not really the main point. The translation has avoided this question by simply referring to the result which is the main point.

Compare Jer 31:34 and 33:8.

The king of Assyria devoured them. This refers to the devastation wrought on northern Israel by the kings of Assyria beginning in 738 B.C. when Tiglath Pileser took Galilee and the Transjordanian territories and ending with the destruction and exile of the people of Samaria by Sargon in 722 B.C.

The verb used here only occurs this one time in the Hebrew Bible. It is a denominative from the Hebrew word for "bones" until the fourth year of Zedekiah (594 B.C.). If, on the other hand, the prophecy related there refers to something less than this final form, the destruction of 587/6 B.C. could be referred to as well.

Therefore thus says Yahweh of armies, the God of Israel. The first person is again adopted because the LORD is speaking. For this title, "Yahweh of armies," compare 7:3 and the study note on 7:15.

Their soul [or hunger/appetite] will be satisfied.

The metaphor of Israel as a flock of sheep (v. 17) is continued here. The places named were all in Northern Israel.
For I, the Lord God who rules over all, have work to carry out in the land of Babylonia.

Open up the places where she stores her grain!

Pile her up in ruins! Destroy her completely!

Do not leave anyone alive!

Let them be slaughtered!

They are doomed, for their day of reckoning has come, the time for them to be punished.

Listen! Fugitives and refugees are coming from the land of Babylon.

They are coming to Zion to declare there how the Lord our God is getting revenge.

Do just as I have commanded you!

The noise of battle can be heard in the land of Babylonia.

Babylon hammered the whole world to pieces. But see how that ‘hammer’ has been broken and shattered!

See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!

I set a trap for you, Babylon; you were caught before you knew it. You fought against me, so you were found and captured.

I have brought out the weapons for carrying out my wrath.

1 tn Heb “Do according to all I have commanded you.”

2 tn The words “of Babylonia” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation to clarify the referent.

sn The verbs in vv. 22-25 are all descriptive of the present, but all of this is really to take place in the future. Hebrew poetry has a way of rendering future actions as though they were already accomplished. The poetry of this section makes it difficult, however, to render the verbs as future, as has been done regularly in the present translation.

3 tn Heb “How broken and shattered is the hammer of all the earth!” The “hammer” is a metaphor for Babylon who was God’s war club to shatter the nations and destroy kingdoms just like Assyria is represented in Is 10:5 as a rod and a war club. Some readers, however, might not pick up on the metaphor or identify the referent, so the translation has incorporated an identification of the metaphor and the referent within it. “See how” and “See what” are an attempt to capture the nuance of the Hebrew particle ekh (ekh) which here expresses an exclamation of satisfaction in a taunt song (cf. BDB 32 s.v. ekh).

4 tn Heb “You were found [or found out] and captured."

5 sn Or “I have opened up my armory.”

6 sn The Lord has opened up his armory and has brought out the weapons of his wrath. The problem of the Lord referring to himself in the third person (or of the prophet speaking on his behalf) is again raised here and is again resolved by using the first person throughout. The construction “weapons of my wrath” would not convey any meaning if “I set” and then in the third. The first person has been maintained throughout. Though it would be awkward, perhaps one could retain the reference to the Lord by translating “I, the Lord.”

7 tn Heb “the Lord Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of this rendering and the significance of this title see the study note on 2:19.

8 tn The words “of Babylonia” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation to clarify the referent.

sn The verbs in vv. 22-25 are all descriptive of the present but, all of this is really to take place in the future. Hebrew poetry has a way of rendering future actions as though they were already accomplished. The poetry of this section makes it difficult, however, to render the verbs as future as they present translation has regularly done.

9 tn Heb “Come against her from the end.” There is a great deal of debate about the meaning of “from the end” (mqqets). Some follow the suggestion of F. Giesebrecht in BDB 892 s.v. ṣaq and emend the text to ṣaqiq (mqqatsi) on the basis of the presumed parallel in Jer 51:31 which is interpreted as “on all sides,” i.e., “from every quarter/side.” However, the phrase does not mean that in Jer 51:31 but is used as it is elsewhere of “from one end to another,” i.e., in its entirety (so Gen 19:4). The only real parallel here is the use of the noun ṣaqiq (qets) with a suffix in Isa 37:24 referring to the remotest part, hence something like from the end (of the earth), i.e., from a far away place. The referent “her” has been clarified here to refer to Babylonia in case someone might not see the connection between v. 25d and v. 26.

10 tn Heb “Pile her up like heaps.” Many commentators understand the comparison to be to heaps of grain (compare usage of ṣaqiq (aremáh) in Hag 2:16; Neh 13:15; Ruth 3:7). However, BDB 790 s.v. ṣaqiq is more likely correct that this refers to heaps of ruins (compare the usage in Neh 4:2; 3:34 HT).

11 sn Compare Jer 50:21 and see the study note on 25:9.

12 tn Heb “Do not let there be to her a remnant.” According to BDB 984 s.v. ṣaqiq this refers to the last remnant of people, i.e., there won’t be any survivors. Compare the usage in Jer 11:23.

13 tn Heb “Kill all her young bulls.” Commentators are almost unanimously agreed that the reference to “young bulls” is figurative here for the princes and warriors (cf. BDB 831 s.v. ṣaqiq 2.f, which compares Isa 34:7 and Ezek 39:18). This is virtually certain because of the reference to the time coming for them to be punished; this would scarcely fit literal bulls. For the verb rendered “kill” here see the translator’s note on v. 21.

14 tn Heb “Let them go down to the slaughter.”

15 sn Or “How terrible it will be for them”; Heb “Woe to them.” See the study note on 22:13 and compare the usage in 23:1; 48:1.

16 tn The words “of reckoning” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.
Indeed, your day of reckoning has come, the time when I will punish you.

You will stumble and fall, you proud city; no one will help you get up. I will set fire to your towns; it will burn up everything that surrounds you.

The Lord who rules over all says the Lord God who rules over all.

Listen! I am opposed to you, you proud city, says the Lord.

And the proud one will fall and there will be no one to help him up. I will start a fire in his towns and it will consume all that surround him.

The words of reckoning are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

The particle הָקֵי (ki) is probably asseverative here (so J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 739, n. 13, and cf. BDB 472 s.v. 1.e for other examples). This has been a common use of this particle in the book of Jeremiah.

The words “of reckoning” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They are supplied in the translation for clarity.

The Hebrew term “redeemer” referred in Israelite family law to the nearest male relative who was responsible for securing the freedom of a relative who had been sold into slavery. For further discussion of this term as well as its metaphorical use to refer to God as the one who frees Israel from bondage in Egypt and from exile in Assyria and Babylonia see the study note on 31:11.

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inhabit Babylonia.  

50:35 “Destructive forces will come against the Babylonians,” says the LORD. They will come against the people who inhabit Babylonia, against her leaders and her men of wisdom.

50:36 Destructive forces will come against her false prophets; they will be shown to be fools! Destructive forces will come against her soldiers; they will be filled with terror!  

50:37 Destructive forces will come against her horses and her chariots. Destructive forces will come against all the foreign troops within her; they will be as frightened as women! Destructive forces will come against her treasures; they will be taken away as plunder! A drought will come upon her land; her rivers and canals will be dried up. All of this will happen because her land is filled with idols.  

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1 tn This translation again reflects the problem often encountered in these prophecies where the LORD appears to be speaking but refers to himself in the third person. It would be possible to translate here using the first person as CEV and NJV do. However, to sustain that over the whole verse results in a considerably greater degree of paraphrase. The verse could be rendered “But I am strong and I will rescue them. I am the LORD who rules over all. I will champion their cause. And I will bring peace and rest to…”  

2 tn Heb “the Chaldeans.” For explanation of the rendering see the study note on 21:4. There is no verb in this clause. Therefore it is difficult to determine whether this should be understood as a command or as a prediction. The presence of vav (׀) consecutive perfects after a similar construction in vv. 36b, d, 37c, 38a and the imperfects after “therefore” (יָלַק, lukhen) all suggest the predictive or future nuance. However, the vav consecutive perfect could be used to carry on the nuance of command (cf. GKC 333 §112.a) but not in the sense of purpose as NRSV, NJPS render them.

3 sn Heb “A sword against the Chaldeans.” The “sword” here is metaphorical for destructive forces in the persons of the armies of the north (vv. 3, 9) which the LORD is marshaling against Babylon and which he has addressed by way of command several times (e.g., vv. 14, 21, 26, 27–29). Compare 46:14 and the study note there.  

4 tn The meaning and the derivation of the word translated “false prophets” is uncertain. The same word appears in conjunction with the word for “diviners” in Isa 44:25 and probably also in Hos 11:6 in conjunction with the sword consuming them “because of their counsel.” BDB 95 s.v. לָשׁוֹן b sees this as a substitution of “empty talk” for “empty talkers” (the figure of metonymy) and refer to them as false prophets. KBL 108b s.v. לָשׁוֹן emends the form in both places to read בָּרִים (barim) in place of בָּרִים (baddim) and defines the word on the basis of Akkadian to mean “soothsayer” (KBL 146 s.v. בָּרִים). HALOT 105 s.v. B לָשׁוֹן retains the pointing, derives it from an Amorite word found in the Mari letters, and defines it as “oracle priest.” However, G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalise, and T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26–52 [WBC], 368) call this identification into question because the word only occurs in one letter from Mari and its meaning is uncertain there. It is hazardous to emend the text in two places, perhaps even three, in light of no textual evidence in any of the passages and to define the word on the basis of an uncertain parallel. Hence the present translation opts here for the derivation and extended definition given in BDB.

5 tn This translation follows the suggestion of BDB 383 s.v. בַּד. Niph.2. Compare the usage in Isa 19:13 and Jer 5:4.

6 tn The verb here (בָּרִים, khatat) could also be rendered “be destroyed” (cf. BDB 369 s.v. בָּרִים Qal.1 and compare the usage in Jer 48:20, 39). However, the parallelism with “shown to be fools” argues for the more dominant usage of “be dismayed” or “be filled with terror.” The verb is found in parallelism with both בָּשָׁה (bosh, “be ashamed, dismayed”) and אָרְנָה (arne, “be afraid”) and can refer to either emotion. Here it is more likely that they are filled with terror because of the approaching armies.

7 tn Hebrew has “his” in both cases here whereas the rest of the possessive pronouns throughout v. 35-37 are “her.” There is no explanation for this switch unless the third masculine singular refers as a distributive singular to the soldiers mentioned in the preceding verse (cf. GKC 464 §145.b). This is probably the case here, but to refer to “their horses and their chariots” in the midst of it all the “her…” might create more confusion than what it is worth to be that pedantic.

8 tn Or “in the country,” or “in her armies”; Heb “in her midst.”

9 tn Heb “A sword against his horses and his chariots and against all the mixed company [or mixed multitude] in her midst and they will become like women.” The sentence had to be split up because it is too long and the continuation of the second half with its consequential statement would not fit together with the first half very well. Hence the subject and verb have been repeated. The Hebrew word translated “foreign troops” (בָּרִים, ‘erov) is the same word that is used in 25:20 to refer to the foreign peoples living in Egypt and in Exod 12:38 for the foreign people that accompanied Israel out of Egypt. Here the word is translated contextually to refer to foreign mercenaries, an identification that most of the commentaries and many of the modern English versions accept (see, e.g., J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 355; NRSV; NIV). The significance of the simile “they will become like women” has been spelled out for the sake of clarity.

10 tc Heb “a drought against her waters and they will dry up.” Several of the commentators and modern English versions accept the emendation proposed by BHS and read here “sword” (כָּרֶן, kheren) in place of כָּרֶן (kheren), the change of only one vowel) in keeping with the rest of the context. According to BHS this reading is supported by the Lucianic and Hexaplaric recensions of the LXX (the Greek version) and the Syriac version. In this case the drying up of the waters (of the canals) is attributed to neglect brought about by war conditions. However, it is just as likely that these versions are influenced by the repetition of the word “sword” as the Hebrew and the other versions are influenced by the concept of “drying up” of the waters to read “drought.” Hence the present translation, along with the majority of modern English versions, retains the Hebrew “drought.”

11 tn Heb “for it is a land of idols.” The “for,” however, goes back to the whole context not just to the preceding prediction (cf. BDB 473-74 s.v. כ and compare usage in Isa 21:6 listed there).
Her people act like madmen because of those idols they fear.  
50:39 Therefore desert creatures and jackals will live there. Ostriches will dwell in it too. But no people will ever live there again. No one will dwell there for all time to come.  
50:40 I will destroy Babylonia just like I did Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring towns. No one will live there.  
50:41 “Look! An army is about to come from the north. A mighty nation and many kings are stirring into action in faraway parts of the earth.  
50:42 Its soldiers are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride forth on their horses. Lined up in formation like men going into battle, they are coming against you, fair Babylonia!  
50:43 The king of Babylon will become paralyzed with fear when he hears news of their coming. Anguish will grip him, agony like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.  
50:44 “A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Babylonians off of their land. Then I will appoint over it whomever I choose. For there is no one like me. There is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler that can stand up against me.  
50:45 So listen to what I, the LORD, have planned against Babylon, what I intend to do to the people who inhabit the land of Babylonia. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

1 tc Or “Her people boast in.” This translation is based on the reading of the majority of Hebrew MSS which read יִתְהַלָּלוּ (yithallalu; cf. usage in Jer 46:9 and see also 25:16; 51:7). Two Hebrew MSS and the versions read יִתְהֹלָלוּ (yithholalu; cf. usage in 4:2; 9:23, 24 and Ps 97:7 where a parallel expression is found with “idols”). The reading is again basically the difference in one Hebrew vowel. All of the modern commentaries consulted and all the modern English versions except NEB, REB follow the Hebrew text here rather than the versions.  
2 tn Heb “by the terrors.” However, as HALOT 40 s.v. יִתְהַלָּלוּ indicates these are “images that cause terror” (a substitution of the effect for the cause). The translation of this line follows the interpretation of the majority of modern English versions and all the commentaries consulted. NIV, NCV, and God’s Word reflect a different syntax, understanding the subject to be the idols just mentioned rather than “her people” which is supplied here for the sake of clarity (the Hebrew text merely says “they.”) Following that lead, one could render “but those idols will go mad with terror.” This makes excellent sense in the context which often refers to effects (vv. 36b, d, 37c, 38b) of the war that is coming, however, that interpretation does not fit as well with the following “therefore/so,” which basically introduces a judgment or consequence after an accusation of sin.  
3 tn The identification of this bird has been called into question by G. R. Driver, “Birds in the Old Testament,” PEQ 87 (1955): 137-38. He refers to this bird as an owl. That identification, however, is not reflected in any of the lexicons including the most recent, which still gives “ostrich” (HALOT 402 s.v. יִתְהַלָּלוּ) as does W. S. McCullough, “Ostrich,” IDB 3:611. REB, NIV, NCV, and God’s Word all identify this bird as “owl/desert owl.”  
4 tn Heb “Therefore desert creatures will live with jackals and ostriches will live in it.”  
5 tn Heb “It will never again be inhabited nor dwelt in unto generation and generation.” For the meaning of this last phrase compare the usage in Ps 100:5 and Isaiah 13:20. Since the first half of the verse has spoken of animals living there, it is necessary to add “people” and turn the passive verbs into active ones.  
6 tn Heb “Like [when] God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring towns,” oracle of the LORD, ‘no man will live there.’” The LORD is speaking so the first person has been substituted for “God.” The sentence has again been broken up to better conform with contemporary English style.  
7 sn A mighty nation and many kings is an allusion to the Medo-Persian empire and the vassal kings who provided forces for the Medo-Persian armies.

8 sn Compare Jer 49:18 where the same prophecy is applied to Edom.

9 tn Heb “daughter Babylonia.” The word “daughter” is a personification of the city of Babylon and its inhabitants.

10 tn Heb “his hands will drop/hang limp.” For the meaning of this idiom see the translator’s note on 6:24.

11 tn Heb “The king of Babylonia hears report of them and his hands hang limp.” For the meaning of this idiom see the translator’s note on 6:24. This makes excellent sense in the context which often refers to effects (vv. 36b, d, 37c, 38b) of the war that is coming, however, that interpretation does not fit as well with the following “therefore/so,” which basically introduces a judgment or consequence after an accusation of sin.

12 sn Compare Jer 6:22-24 where almost the same exact words as 50:41-43 are applied to the people of Judah. The repetition of prophecies here and in the following verses emphasizes the tactual nature of God’s punishment of Babylon; as they have done to others, so it will be done to them (cf. 25:14; 50:15).

13 tn The words “of Babylonia” are not in the text but are implicit from the context. They have been supplied in the translation to clarify the referent.

14 sn The verbs in vv. 22-25 are all descriptive of the present, but all of this is really to take place in the future. Hebrew poetry has a way of rendering future actions as though they were already accomplished. The poetry of this section makes it difficult, however, to render the verbs as future as the present translation has regularly done.
JEREMIAH 50:46

50:46 The people of the earth will quake when they hear Babylon has been captured. Her cries of anguish will be heard by the other nations.1

51:1 The Lord says, “I will cause a destructive wind2 to blow against3 Babylon and the people who inhabit Babylonia.4

51:2 I will send people to winnow Babylonia like a wind blowing away chaff.5

They will winnow her and strip her land bare.6 This will happen when they come against her from every direction, when it is time to destroy her.8

51:3 Do not give her archers time to string their bows or to put on their coats of armor.9 Do not spare any of her young men. Completely destroy her whole army.

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1 tn Heb “among the nations.” With the exception of this phrase, the different verb in v. 46a, the absence of a suffix on the word for “land” in v. 45d, the third plural suffix instead of the third singular suffix on the verb for “chase…off of,” this passage is identical with 49:19-21 with the replacement of Babylon or the land of the Chaldeans for Edom. For the translation notes explaining the details of the translation here see the translator’s notes on 49:19-21.

2 sn This passage is virtually identical with Jer 49:19-21 with the replacement of Babylon, land of Babylonia for Edom. As God used Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians to destroy Edom, so he would use Cyrus and the Medes and Persians and their allies to destroy Babylon (cf. 25:13, 14). As Nebuchadnezzar was God’s servant to whom all would be subject (25:9; 27:6), so Cyrus is called in Isaiah “his anointed one,” i.e., his chosen king whom he will use to shatter other nations and set Israel free (Isa 45:1-4).

3 sn The destructive wind is a figurative reference to the “foreign people” who will “winnow” Babylon and drive out all the people (v. 2). This figure has already been used in 4:11-12 and in 49:36. See the study note on 4:11-12 and the translator’s notes on 22:22 and 49:36.

4 tn Or “I will arouse the spirit of hostility of a destroying nation against Babylon…a destroying wind [or the spirit of a destroyer].” The word שׁוּחַ (shuakh) can refer to either a wind (BDB 924 s.v. שׁוּחַ 2.a) or a spirit (BDB 925 s.v. שׁוּחַ 2.g). It can be construed as either a noun followed by an adjectival particle (so, “a destroying wind”) or a noun followed by another noun in the “of” relationship (a construct or genitive relationship; so, “spirit of a destroyer”). The same noun with the participle form שׁוּחַ (shuakh) is translated “the spirit of the wind” in 51:11 where the same particle appears. The majority of the exegetical tradition (all the commentaries consulted and all the English versions except NASB and NIV) opt for the “destructive wind” primarily because of the figure of winnowing that is found in the next verse. The translation follows the main line exegetical tradition here for that same reason.

5 sn Heb “the people who live in Leb-qamai.” “Leb-qamai” is a code name for “Chaldeans” formed on the principle of substituting the last letter of the alphabet for the first, the second for the last, and so on. This same principle is used in referring to Babylon in 25:26 and 51:41 as “Sheshach.” See the study note on 51:11 where further details are given. There is no consensus on why the code name is used because the terms Babylon and Chaldeans (= Babylo- nians) have appeared regularly in this prophecy or collection of prophecies.

6 tn Or “I will send foreign people against Babylonia.” This reading follows the translation of the Greek recensions of Aquila and Symmachus and the Latin version (the Vulgate). That reading is accepted by the majority of modern commentators and several of the modern versions (e.g., NRSV, REB, NAB, and God’s Word). It fits better with the verb that follows it than the reading of the Hebrew text and the rest of the verses. The difference in the two readings is again only the difference in vocalization, the Hebrew text reading שׁוּחַ (shuakh) and the versions cited reading שׁוּחַ (shuakh). If the Hebrew text is followed, there is a wordplay between the two words, “foreigners” and “winnow.” The words “like a wind blowing away chaff” have been supplied in the translation to clarify for the reader what “winnow” means.

7 sn Winnowing involved throwing a mixture of grain and chaff (or straw) into the air and letting the wind blow away the lighter chaff, leaving the grain to fall on the ground. Since God considered all the Babylonians chaff, they would all be “blown away.”

8 tn Or “They will strip her land bare like a wind blowing away chaff.” The alternate translation would be necessary if one were to adopt the alternate reading of the first line (the reading of the Hebrew text). The explanation of “winnow” would then be necessary in the second line. The verb translated “strip…bare” means literally “to empty out” (see BDB 132 s.v. כִּמְנָה) and thus read “Let the archer not string the bow and let him raise himself up in his coat of armor.” This makes absolutely no sense and the ancient versions and Hebrew text left off the suffix on the preposition twice in a row. Many of the modern English versions merely ignore it. Reading it as temporal makes it unnecessary to emend the following verb as Bright and Thompson do (from כִּמְנָה [havak] to כִּמְנָה [vilyahu]).

9 tn Heb “in the day of disaster.”

10 sn The text and consequent meaning of these first two lines are uncertain. Literally the Masoretic reads “against let him string his bow and against let him raise himself up in his coat of armor.” This makes absolutely no sense and the ancient versions and Hebrew text did not agree in reading this same text. Many Hebrew mss and all the versions as well as the Masoretes themselves (the text is left unpointed with a marginal note not to read it) delete the second “let him string.” The LXX (or Greek version) left out the words “against” at the beginning of the first two lines. It reads “Let the archer bend his bow and let the one who has armor put it on.” The Lucianic recension of the LXX and some Targum mss supplied the missing object “it” and thus read “Let the archer ready his bow against it and let him array himself against it in his coat of mail.” This makes good sense but does not answer the question of why the Hebrew text left that out and why one were to adopt the alternate reading of the first line (the text is left unpointed with a marginal note not to read it) delete the second “let him string.” The LXX (or Greek version) against let him raise himself up in his coat of armor. This will happen when it is time to destroy her. The LXX (or Greek version) left out the words “against” at the beginning of the first two lines. It reads “Let the archer bend his bow and let the one who has armor put it on.” The Lucianic recension of the LXX and some Targum mss supplied the missing object “it” and thus read “Let the archer ready his bow against it and let him array himself against it in his coat of mail.” This makes good sense but does not answer the question of why the Hebrew text left that out and why one were to adopt the alternate reading of the first line (the text is left unpointed with a marginal note not to read it) delete the second “let him string.” The LXX (or Greek version) left out the words “against” at the beginning of the first two lines. It reads “Let the archer bend his bow and let the one who has armor put it on.” The Lucianic recension of the LXX and some Targum mss supplied the missing object “it” and thus read “Let the archer ready his bow against it and let him array himself against it in his coat of mail.”
51:4 Let them fall\(^1\) slain in the land of Babylonia,\(^2\) mortally wounded in the streets of her cities.\(^3\)

51:5 “For Israel and Judah will not be forsaken\(^4\) by their God, the Lord who rules over all.\(^5\)

For the land of Babylonia is\(^6\) full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel.\(^7\)

51:6 Get out of Babylonia quickly, you foreign people.\(^8\)

Flee to save your lives.
Do not let yourselves be killed because of her sins,
For it is time for the Lord to wreak his revenge.
He will pay Babylonia\(^9\) back for what she has done.\(^10\)

51:7 Babylonia had been a gold cup in the Lord’s hand.
She had made the world drunk.
The nations had drunk from the wine of her wrath.\(^11\)
So they have all gone mad.\(^12\)

51:8 But suddenly Babylonia will fall and be destroyed.\(^13\)

Cry out in mourning over it!
Get medicine for her wounds!
Perhaps she can be healed!

51:9 Foreigners living there will say,\(^14\)
‘We tried to heal her, but she could not be healed.
Let’s leave Babylonia\(^15\) and each go back to his own country.
For judgment on her will be vast in its proportions.
It will be like it is piled up to heaven, stacked up into the clouds.\(^16\)

51:10 The exiles from Judah will say,\(^17\)

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\(^1\) tn The majority of English versions and the commentaries understand the vav (ָ) consecutive + perfect as a future here “They will fall.” However, it makes better sense in the light of the commands in the previous verse to understand this as an indirect third person command (= a jussive; see GKC 333 §2.d, r) as REB and NIV do.

\(^2\) tn Heb “the land of the Chaldeans.” See the study note on 21:4 for explanation.

\(^3\) tn The words “cities” is not in the text. The text merely says “in her streets” but the antecedent is “land” and must then refer to the streets of the cities in the land.

\(^4\) tn Heb “widowed” (cf. DBD 48 s.v. כִּרְנֶנָה, an adjective occurring only here but related to the common word for “widow” It is commonly translated as has been done here.

\(^5\) sn The verses from v. 5 to v. 19 all speak of the Lord in the third person. The prophet who is the spokesman for the Lord (50:1) thus is speaking. However, the message is still from God because this was all what he spoke “through the prophet Jeremiah.”

\(^6\) tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of this rendering see the study note on 2:19.

\(^7\) tn Or “all, though their land was...” The majority of the modern English versions understand the land here to refer to the land of Israel and Judah (the text reads “their land” and modern English versions understand the land here to refer to Israel and Judah as one entity. However, it need not be viewed as logically out of place. It is parallel to the preceding and gives a second reason why they are to be destroyed. It also forms an excellent transition to the next lines where the exiles and other foreigners are urged to flee and not get caught up in the destruction which is coming “because of her sin.” It might be helpful to notice that both the adjective “widowed” and the suffix on “their God” are masculine singular, looking at Israel and Judah as one entity. The “their” then goes back not to Israel and Judah of the preceding lines but to the “them” in v. 4. This makes for a better connection with the following and understands the particle יָהָוָה (לְ) in its dominant usage not an extremely rare one (see the comment in DBD 473 s.v. יָהָוָה). This interpretation is also reflected in RSV.

\(^8\) sn See the note on the phrase “the Holy One of Israel” in 50:29.

\(^9\) tn The words “you foreign people” are not in the text and many think the referent is the exiles of Judah. While this is clearly the case in v. 45 the referent seems broader here when the context speaks of every man going to his own country (v. 9).

\(^10\) tn Heb “her.”

\(^11\) tn The words “of her wrath” are not in the Hebrew text but are supplied in the translation to help those readers who are not familiar with the figure of the “cup of the Lord’s wrath.”

\(^12\) sn The figure of the cup of the Lord’s wrath invoked in Jer 25:15-29 is invoked again here and Babylon is identified as the agent through which the wrath of the Lord is visited on the nations. See the study note on 25:15 for explanation and further references.

\(^13\) tn Heb “upon the grounds of such conditions the nations have gone mad.”

\(^14\) tn The verbs in this verse and the following are all in the Hebrew perfect tense, a tense that often refers to a past action or a past action with present results. However, as the translator’s notes have indicated, the prophets use this tense to view the actions as if they were as good as done (the Hebrew prophetic perfect). The stance here is ideal, viewed as already accomplished.

\(^15\) tn Heb “Leave/abandon her.” However, it is smoother in the English translation to make this verb equivalent to the correlative that follows.

\(^16\) tn This is an admittedly very paraphrastic translation that tries to make the figurative nuance of the Hebrew original understandable for the average reader. The Hebrew text reads: “For her judgment (or punishment (cf. DBD 1078 s.v. מְשֹׁכֶך) ֲָהָוָה’s wrath invoked in Jer 51:7.) touches the heavens, and is lifted up as far as the clouds.” The figure of hyperbole or exaggeration is being used here to indicate the vastness of Babylon’s punishment which is the reason to escape (v. 6, 9c). For this figure see Deut 1:28 in comparison with Num 13:28 and see also Deut 9:1. In both of the passages in Deut it refers to an exaggeration about the height of the walls of fortified cities. The figure also may be a play on Gen 11:4 where the nations gather in Babylon to build a tower that reaches to the skies. The present translation has interpreted the perfects here as prophetic because it has not happened yet or they would not be encouraging one another to leave and escape. For the idea here compare 50:16.

\(^17\) tn The words “the exiles from Judah will say” are not in the text but are implicit from the words that follow. They are supplied in the translation to clearly identify for the reader the referent of “us.”
Come on, let’s go and proclaim in Zion what the Lord our God has done!

51:11 “Sharpen² your arrows! Fill your quivers!³ The Lord will arouse a spirit of hostility in⁴ the kings of Media.⁵ For he intends to destroy Babylon. For that is how the Lord will get his revenge — how he will get his revenge for the Babylonians’ destruction of his temple.⁶

51:12 Give the signal to attack Babylon’s wall!⁷ Bring more guards!⁸ Post them all around the city!⁹ Put men in ambush!¹⁰ For the Lord will do what he has planned. He will do what he said he would do to the people of Babylon.¹¹

51:13 “You who live along the rivers of Babylon,²² the time of your end has come. You who are rich in plundered treasure, it is time for your lives to be cut off.¹³ 51:14 The Lord who rules over all has solemnly sworn,¹⁵ ‘I will fill your land with enemy soldiers. They will swarm over it like locusts.¹⁶ They will raise up shouts of victory over it.’

tn There is some difference of opinion as to the best way to render the Hebrew expression here. Literally it means ‘brought forth our righteousnesses.’ BDB 842 s.v. צדקה 7.b interprets this of the “righteous acts” of the people of Judah and compares the usage in Isa 64:6; Ezek 3:20; 18:24; 33:13. However, Judah’s acts of righteousness (or more simply, their righteousness) was scarcely recorded in their Deliverance. Most of the English versions and commentaries refer to “vindication” i.e., that the Lord has exonerated or proven Israel’s claims to be true. However, that would require more explanation than the idea of “delivered” which is a perfectly legitimate usage of the term (cf. BDB 842 s.v. צדקה 6.a and compare the usage in Isa 46:13; 51:6, 8; 56:1). The present translation interprets the plural form here as a plural of intension or amplification (GKC 397-98 §124.c) and the suffix as a genitive of advantage (IBHS 147 §9.5.2.e). This interpretation is also reflected in REB and God’s Word.

tn The imperatives here and in v. 12 are directed to the soldiers in the armies of the kings from the north (here identified as the kings of Media [see also 50:3, 9; 51:27-28]). They have often been addressed in this manner as though they were a present force (see 50:14-16; 50:21 and the study note there); 50:26; 29:51:3 though the passage as a whole is prophetic of the future. This gives some idea of the ideal stance that the prophets adopted when they spoke of the future as though already past (the use of the Hebrew prophetic perfect which has been referred to often in the translator’s notes).

tn The meaning of this word is debated. The most thorough discussion of this word including etymology and usage in the OT and Qur’an is in HALOT 1409-11 s.v. בֶּטֶח, where the rendering “quiver” is accepted for all the uses of this word in the OT. For a more readily accessible discussion for English readers see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 2:422-23. The meaning “quiver” fits better with the verb “fill” than the meaning “shield” which is adopted in BDB 1020 s.v. בֶּטֶח. “Quiver” is the meaning adopted also in NRSV, REB, NAS, and NJPS.

tn Heb “The Lord has stirred up the spirit of...” The verb is rendered here as a prophetic perfect. The rendering “arouse a spirit of hostility” is an attempt to render some meaning to the phrase and not simply ignore the word “spirit” as many of the modern versions do. For a fuller discussion including cross references see the translator’s note on v. 1.

tn Media was a country in what is now northwestern Iran. At the time this prophecy was probably written they were the dominating force in the northern region, the most likely enemy to Babylon. By the time Babylon fell in 538 B.C.E. the Medes had been conquered and incorporated in the Persian empire by Cyrus. However, several times in the Bible this entity is known under the combined entity of Media and Persia (Esth 1:3, 4, 18, 19; 10:2; Dan 5:28; 6:8, 12, 15; 8:20). Dan 5:31 credits the capture of Babylon to Darius the Mede, which may have been another name for Cyrus or the name by which Daniel refers to a Median general named Gobryas.

tn Heb “For it is the vengeance of the Lord, vengeance for his temple.” As in the parallel passage in 50:28, the genitive construction has been expanded in the translation to clarify for the English reader what the commentaries in general agree is involved.

tn Verse 11c-f appears to be a parenthetical or editorial comment by Jeremiah to give some background for the attack which is summoned in v. 11-12.

tn Heb “Raise a banner against the walls of Babylon.”

tn Heb “Strengthen the watch.”

tn Heb “Station the guards.”

tn Heb “Prepare ambushes.”

tn The commands are here addressed to the kings of the Medes to fully blockade the city by posting watchmen and setting men in ambush to prevent people from escaping from the city (cf. 2 Kgs 25:4).

tn Heb “For the Lord has both planned and done what he said concerning the people living in Babylon,” i.e., “he has carried out what he planned.” Here is an obvious case where the perfects are to be interpreted as prophetic; the commands imply that the attack is still future.

tn Babylon was situated on the Euphrates River and was surrounded by canals (also called “rivers”).

tn Heb “You who live upon [or beside] many waters, rich in treasures, your end has come, the cubit of your cutting off.” The sentence has been restructured and paraphrased to provide the reader with clarity in the translation. The first part of the phrase is debated. For a discussion of the two options see W. L. Holladay, Jeremiah (Hermeneia), 2:423. Most modern commentaries and English versions see an allusion to the fig tree which is suddenly cut off from the loom. Hence, NRSV renders the last line as “the thread of your life is cut” and TEV renders “its thread of life is cut.” That idea is accepted also in HALOT 141 s.v. זֶלַל Qal.

tn Heb “Yahweh of armies.” For an explanation of this rendering see the study note on 2:19.

tn Heb “has sworn by himself.” See the study note on 2:25 for background.

tn Heb “I will fill you with men like locusts.” The “you” refers to Babylon (Babylon is both the city and the land it ruled, Babylonia) which has been alluded to in the preceding verses under descriptive titles. The words “your land” have been used because of the way the preceding verse has been rendered, alluding to people rather than to the land or city. The allusion of “men” is, of course, to enemy soldiers and they are here compared to locusts both for their quantity and their destructiveness (see Joel 1:4). For the use of the particles הִשָּׁלֵךְ (‘l’tm) to introduce an oath see BDB 475 s.v. הבשׁ 2.c and compare usage in 2 Kgs 5:20; one would normally expect הבשׁ (cf. BDB 50 s.v. הבשׁ 1.b).
51:15 He is the one who⁴ by his power made the earth.
He is the one who by his wisdom fixed the world in place, by his understanding he spread out the heavens.
51:16 When his voice thunders, the waters in the heavens roar.
He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons.
He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of the rain.
He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.
51:17 All idolaters will prove to be stupid and ignorant.
Every goldsmith will be disgraced by the idol he made.
For the image he forges is merely a sham.
There is no breath in any of those idols.
51:18 They are worthless, objects to be ridiculed.
When the time comes to punish them, they will be destroyed.
51:19 The Lord, who is the portion of the descendants of Jacob, is not like them.
For he is the one who created everything, including the people of Israel whom he claims as his own.²
He is known as the Lord who rules over all.³

51:20 “Babylon,⁴ you are my war club,⁵
my weapon for battle.
I used you to smash nations.⁶
I used you to destroy kingdoms.
51:21 I used you to smash horses and their riders.⁷
I used you to smash chariots and their drivers.
51:22 I used you to smash men and women.
I used you to smash old men and young men.
I used you to smash young men and young women.
51:23 I used you to smash shepherds and their flocks.
I used you to smash farmers and their teams of oxen.
I used you to smash governors and leaders.⁸
51:24 “But I will repay Babylon and all who live in Babylonia

⁴ tn Or “Media.” The referent is not identified in the text; the text merely says “you are my war club.” Commentators in general identify the referent as Babylonia because Babylon has been referred to as a hammer in 50:23 and Babylon is referred to in v. 25 as a “destroying mountain” (compare v. 20d). However, S. R. Driver, Jeremiah, 317, n. c maintains that v. 24 speaks against this. It does seem a little inconsistent to render the vav consecutive perfect at the beginning of v. 24 as future while rendering those in vv. 20b-23 as customary past. However, change in person from second masculine singular (vv. 20b-23) to the second masculine plural in “before your eyes” and its position at the end of the verse after “which they did in Zion” argue that a change in address occurs there. Driver has to ignore the change in person and take “before your eyes” with the verb “repay” at the beginning to maintain the kind of consistency he seeks. The vav (v) consecutive imperfect can be used for either the customary past (GKC 335-36 §112. dd with cross reference back to GKC 331-32 §112.e) or the future (GKC 334 §112.x). Hence the present translation has followed the majority of commentators (and English versions like TEV, NCV, CEV, NIV) in understanding the referent as Babylon and v. 24 being a transition to vv. 25-26 (cf. e.g. J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 356-57, and J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 756-57). If the referent is understood as Media then the verbs in vv. 20-23 should all be translated as futures. See also the translator’s note on v. 24.

⁵ tn This Hebrew word (“מַפֵּץ, mappets”) only occurs here in the Hebrew Bible, but its meaning is assured from the use of the verbs that follow which are from the same root (נָפַץ, na’ats) and there is a cognate noun (“מַפָּץ, mappats”) that occurs in Ezek 9:2 in the sense of weapon or “smashing.”

⁶ tn Heb “I smash nations with you.” This same structure is repeated throughout the series in vv. 20c-23.

⁷ tn Heb “horse and its rider.” However, the terms are meant as generic or collective singulars (cf. GKC 395 §123. b) and are thus translated by the plural. The same thing is true of all the terms in vv. 21-23b. The terms in vv. 20c-d, 23c are plural.

⁸ tn These two words are Akkadian loan words into Hebrew which often occur in this pairing (cf. Ezek 23:6, 12, 23; Jer 51:23, 28, 57). BDB 688 s.v. תֵּסוּן (tavson) gives “prefect, ruler” as the basic definition for the second term but neither works very well in a modern translation because “prefect” would be unknown to most readers and “ruler” would suggest someone along the lines of a king, which these officials were not. The present translation has chosen “leaders” by default, assuming there is no other term that would be any more appropriate in light of the defects noted in “prefect” and “ruler.”
for all the wicked things they did in Zion right before the eyes of you Judeans," says the Lord.\(^1\)

\section*{51:25} The Lord says, \(^3\) "Beware! I am opposed to you, Babylon!\(^4\)
You are like a destructive mountain that destroys all the earth.
I will unleash my power against you;\(^5\)
I will roll you off the cliffs and make you like a burned-out mountain.\(^6\)

\section*{51:26} No one will use any of your stones as a cornerstone.
No one will use any of them in the foundation of his house.
For you will lie desolate forever,"\(^7\)

\footnotesize
\begin{enumerate}
\item tn Or "Media, you are my war club...I will use you to smash...leaders. So before your very eyes I will repay...for all the wicked things they did in Zion." For explanation see the translator's note on 5:12 for explanation.
\item tn Heb "Oracle of the Lord.
\item tn The word "Babylon" is not in the text but is universally understood as the referent. It is supplied in the translation here to clarify the referent for the sake of the average reader.
\item tn Heb "I will reach out my hand against you." See the translator's note on 6:12 for explanation.
\item tn Heb "I am against you, oh destroying mountain that destroys all the earth! I will roll you off the cliffs and make you a mountain of burning." The interpretation adopted here follows the lines suggested by S. R. Driver, Jeremiah, 318, n. c and reflected in NAB. The majority of modern English versions render "commander" or "marshal" following the suggestion of BDB 381 s.v. טִפְסָר ("tablet writer"). The exact function of this official is disputed. KBL 356 s.v. טִפְסָר relates it to a "recruiting officer," a sense which is reflected in NAB. The majority of modern English versions render "commander" or "marshal" following the suggestion of BDB 381 s.v. טִפְסָר, G. L. Keown, P. J. Scalsie, T. G. Smothers (Jeremiah 26-52 [WBC], 351) translate "recruiter (scribe)" but explain the function on p. 371 as that of recording the plunder captured in war. The rendering here follows that of TEV and God's Word and is the nuance suggested by the majority of modern English versions for all the wicked things they did in Zion right before the eyes of you Judeans," says the Lord.\(^8\)
\item tn Heb "Raise up a standard on the earth. Blow a ram's horn among the nations. Consecrate nations against her." According to BDB 651 s.v. צע, 1, the raising of a standard was a signal of a war – a summons to assemble and attack (see usage in Isa 5:26; 13:2; Jer 51:12). The "blowing of the ram's horn" was also a signal to rally behind a leader and join in an attack (see Judg 3:27; 6:34). For the meaning of "consecrate nations against her" see the study note on 6:4. The usage of this phrase goes back to the concept of holy war where soldiers had to be consecrated for battle by the offering of a sacrifice. The phrase has probably lost its ritual usage in later times and become idiomatic for making necessary preparations for war.
\item sn And Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz are three kingdoms who were located in the Lake Van, Lake Urmia region which are now parts of eastern Turkey and northwestern Iran. They were kingdoms which had been conquered and made vassal states by the Medes in the early sixth century. The Medes were the dominant country in this region from around 590 B.C. until they were conquered and incorporated into the Persian empire by Cyrus in 550 B.C.
\item tn The figure here shifts to that of a burned-up city whose stones cannot be used for building. Babylon will become a permanent heap of ruins.
\item tn Heb "Media, you are my war club...I will use you to smash...leaders. So before your very eyes I will repay...for all the wicked things they did in Zion right before the eyes of you Judeans," says the Lord.\(^8\)
\item sn The figure here shifts to that of a burned-up city whose stones cannot be used for building. Babylon will become a permanent heap of ruins.
\item tn Heb "Raise up a standard on the earth. Blow a ram's horn among the nations. Consecrate nations against her." According to BDB 651 s.v. צע, 1, the raising of a standard was a signal of a war – a summons to assemble and attack (see usage in Isa 5:26; 13:2; Jer 51:12). The "blowing of the ram's horn" was also a signal to rally behind a leader and join in an attack (see Judg 3:27; 6:34). For the meaning of "consecrate nations against her" see the study note on 6:4. The usage of this phrase goes back to the concept of holy war where soldiers had to be consecrated for battle by the offering of a sacrifice. The phrase has probably lost its ritual usage in later times and become idiomatic for making necessary preparations for war.
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51:28 Prepare the nations to do battle against her.

51:29 The earth will tremble and writhe in agony.

51:30 The soldiers of Babylonia will stop fighting. They will remain in their fortified cities. They will lose their strength to do battle. 

51:31 One runner after another will come to the king of Babylon. One messenger after another will come bringing news. They will bring news to the king of Babylon that his whole city has been captured.

51:32 They will report that the fords have been captured, the reed marshes have been burned, the soldiers are terrified. For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘Fair Babylon will be like a threshing floor which has been trampled flat for harvest. The time for her to be cut down and harvested will come very soon.’
51:34 “King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon devoured me and drove my people out. Like a monster from the deep he swallowed me.

He filled his belly with my riches. He made me an empty dish. He completely cleaned me out.”

51:35 The person who lives in Zion says, “May Babylon pay for the violence done to me and to my relatives.”

Jerusalem says, “May those living in Babylonia pay for the bloodshed of my people.”

51:36 Therefore the Lord says, “I will stand up for your cause. I will pay the Babylonians back for what they have done to you. I will dry up their sea. I will make their springs run dry.

51:37 Babylon will become a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. It will become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, a place where no one lives.

51:38 The Babylonians are all like lions roaring for prey. They are like lion cubs growling for something to eat. When their appetites are all stirred up, I will set out a banquet for them. I will make them drunk so that they will pass out.

\[tn\] This verse is extremely difficult to translate because of the shifting imagery, the confusion over the meaning of one of the verbs, and the apparent inconsistency of the pronominal suffixes here with those in the following verse which everyone agrees is connected with it. The pronominal suffixes are first common plural but the versions all read them as first common singular which the Masoretes also do in the Qere. That reading has been followed here for consistency with the next verse which identifies the speaker as the person living in Zion and the personified city of Jerusalem. The Hebrew text reads: “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon devoured me [cf. 50:7, 17] and threw me into confusion. He set me down an empty dish. He swallowed me like a monster from the deep [cf. BDB 1072 s.v. גלע and compare usage in Isa 27:1; Ezek 29:3; 32:2;] He filled his belly with my dainties. He rinsed me out [cf. BDB s.v. גלע Hiph.2 and compare the usage in Isa 4:4].” The verb “throw into confusion” has proved troublesome because its normal meaning does not seem appropriate. Hence various proposals have been made to understand it in a different sense. The present translation has followed W. L. Holladay (Jeremiah, 2:428) in understanding the verb to mean “disperser” or “route” (see NAB). The last line has seemed out of place and has often been emended to read “he has spered me out” (so NIV, NRSV, a reading that presupposes יתקדקתי for יתקדתקתי). The reading of the MT is not inappropriate if it is combined with the imagery of an empty jar and hence is retained here (see F. B. Huey, Jeremiah, Lamentations (NAC), 425, n. 59; H. Freedman, Jeremiah [SoBB], 344; NJPS). The lines have been combined to keep the imagery together.

The speaker in this verse and the next is the personified city of Jerusalem. She laments her fate at the hands of the king of Babylon and calls down a curse on Babylon and the people who live in Babylonia. Here Nebuchadnezzar is depicted as a monster of the deep who has devoured Jerusalem, swallowed her down, and filled its belly with her riches, leaving her an empty dish, which has been rinsed clean.

2 tn Heb “The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon,” says the one living in Zion. “My blood be upon those living in Chaldea,” says Jerusalem.” For the usage of the genitive here in the phrase “violence done to me and my relatives” see GKC 414 §128a (a construct governing two objects) and IBHS 303 §16.4d (an objective genitive). For the nuance of “pay” and the deep sense of retribution see BDB 756 s.v. תָּא.\(b\) and compare the usage in Judg 9:24. For the use of נָשַׁךְ (shōr) in the sense of “relatives” see BDB 985 s.v. נָשֵׂךְ 2 and compare NJPS. For the use of “blood” in this idiom see BDB 197 s.v. נָשָׁךְ 2.k and compare the usage in 2 Sam 4:11; Ezek 3:18, 20. The lines have been reversed for better English style.

3 tn Heb “I will avenge your vengeance [+ I will take vengeance for you; the phrase involves a verb and a cognate accusative].” The meaning of the phrase has been spelled out in more readily understandable terms.

4 tn Heb “I will dry up her [Babylon’s] sea and make her fountain dry.” “Their” has been substituted for “her” because “Babylonians” has been inserted in the previous clause and is easier to understand than the personification of Babylon = “her.” The reference to their sea is not clear. Most interpreters understand it to be a figurative reference to the rivers and canals surrounding Babylon. But some feel it refers to the reservoir that the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, Queen Nictoris, had made.

5 tn Heb “a heap of ruins, a haunt for jackals.” Compare 9:11.

6 tn Heb “without an inhabitant.”

7 tn Heb “They [the Babylonians] all roar like lions. They growl like the cubs of lions.” For the usage of יָקְדוּת (yakḥaṭ) meaning “all” see Isa 10:8; 18:8; 41:20. The translation strives to convey in clear terms what is the generally accepted meaning of the simile (cf., e.g., J. Bright, Jeremiah [AB], 358, and J. A. Thompson, Jeremiah [NICOT], 762).

8 tn Heb “When they are hot.”

9 tc The translation follows the suggestion of KBL 707 s.v. וָלַעַד and a number of modern commentaries (e.g., Bright, J. A. Thompson, and W. L. Holladay) in reading יָלַעַד (v’alou’d) for יָלַע (v’alu’d) in the sense of “swoon away” or “grow faint” (see KBL 710 s.v. וָלַעַד Pual). That appears to be the verb that the LXX (the Greek version) was reading when they translated ἀνακατακνών (karakatán, “they will be stupefied”). For parallel usage KBL cites Isa 51:20. This fits the context much better than “they will exult.”
they will fall asleep forever, they will never wake up," says the LORD.  
51:40 "I will lead them off to be slaughtered like lambs, rams, and male goats."  
51:41 "See how Babylon has been captured! See how the pride of the whole earth has been taken! See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!  
51:42 The sea has swept over Babylon. She has been covered by a multitude of its waves.  
51:43 The towns of Babylonia have become heaps of ruins. She has become a dry and barren desert. No one lives in those towns any more. No one even passes through them.  
51:44 I will punish the god Bel in Babylon. I will make him spit out what he has swallowed. The nations will not come streaming to him any longer. Indeed, the walls of Babylon will fall."  
51:45 "Get out of Babylon, my people! Flee to save your lives from the fierce anger of the LORD!  
51:46 Do not lose your courage or become afraid because of the reports that are heard in the land. For a report will come in one year. Another report will follow it in the next. There will be violence in the land with ruler fighting against ruler."  
51:47 "So the time will certainly come when I will punish the idols of Babylon. Her whole land will be put to shame.

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4 sn The central figure here is the figure of the cup of the LORD’s wrath (cf. 25:15-29, especially v. 26). Here the Babylonians have been made to drink so deeply of it that they fall into a drunken sleep from which they will never wake up (i.e., their destruction is depicted as being compared to sleep (cf. Ps 13:3 (13:4 HT); 76:5 (76:6 HT); 90:5)). Compare the usage in Jer 51:57 for this same figure.

2 tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

3 tn Heb “I will bring them down like lambs to be slaughtered, like rams and he goats.”

sn This statement is highly ironic in light of the fact that the Babylonians were prepared to come on lions and lion cubs (v. 38). Here they are like lambs, rams, and male goats which are to be led off to be slaughtered.

4 sn Heb “Sheshach.” For an explanation of the usage of this name for Babylon see the study note on Jer 25:26 and that on 51:1 for a similar phenomenon. Babylon is here called “the pride of the whole earth” because it was renowned for its size, its fortifications, and its beautiful buildings.

5 tn Heb “How Sheshach has been captured, the pride of the whole earth has been seized! How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations!” For the usage of “How” here see the translator’s note on 50:23.

sn This is part of a taunt song (see Isa 14:4) and assumes prophetically that the city has already been captured. The verbs in vv. 41-43a are all in the Hebrew tense that the prophets often use to look at the future as “a done deal” (the so-called prophetic perfect). In v. 44 which is still a part of this picture the verbs are in the future. The Hebrew tense has been retained here and in vv. 42-43 but it should be remembered that the standpoint is prophetic and future.

6 tn For the meaning “multitude” here rather than “tumult” see BDB 242 s.v. כֵּן 3.c, where reference is made that this refers to a large group of people under the figure of an overwhelming mass of waves. The word is used of a multitude of soldiers, or a vast army in 1 Sam 14:16; 1 Kgs 20:13, 18 (cf. BDB 242 s.v. כֵּן 3.a for further references).

7 tn Heb “The sea has risen up over Babylon. She has been covered by the multitude of its waves.”

sn This is a poetic and figurative reference to the enemies of Babylon, the foe from the north (see 50:3, 9, 51:27-28), which has attacked Babylon in wave after wave. This same figure is used in Isa 17:12. In Isa 8:7-8 the king of Assyria (and his troops) are compared to the Euphrates which rises up and floods over the whole land of Israel and Judah. This same figure, but with application to Babylon, is assumed in Jer 47:2-3. In Jer 46:7-8 the same figure is employed in a taunt of Egypt which had boasted that it would cover the earth like the flooding of the Nile.

8 tn Heb “Its towns have become a desolation, [it has become] a dry land and a desert, a land which no man passes through them [referring to “her towns”] and no son of man [⇒ human being] passes through them. The present translation has followed the suggestion of BHS and a number of the modern commentators in deleting the second occurrence of the word “land,” in which case the words that follow are not a relative clause but independent statements. A number of modern English versions appear to ignore the third feminine plural suffixes which refer back to the cities and refer the statements that follow to the land.

9 tn Heb “And I will punish Bel in Babylon...And the nations will not come streaming to him anymore. Yea, the walls of Babylon have fallen.” The verbs in the first two lines are all consecutive perfects and the verb in the third line is an imperfect all looking at the future. That indicates that the perfect that follows and the perfects that precede are all prophetic perfects. The translation adopted seems to be the best way to make the transition from the past (which were mentioned in conjunction with the taunting use of גַּם (‘ikk) in v. 41 to the futures in v. 44. For the usage of גַּם (‘ikk) to indicate a climax, “yea” or “indeed” see BDB 169 s.v. 3. It seemed to be impossible to render the meaning of v. 44 in any comprehensible way, even in a paraphrase.

sn In the ancient Near East the victory of a nation over another nation was often attributed to its god. The reference is a poetic way of referring to the fact that God will be victorious over Babylon and its chief god, Bel/Marduk (see the study note on 50:2 for explanation). The reference to the disgorging of what Bel had swallowed is to captured people and plundered loot that had been taken to Babylon under the auspices of the victory of Bel over the foreign god (cf. Dan 5:2-4). The plundered treasures and captive people will be set free and nations will no longer need to pay homage to him because Babylon will be destroyed.

10 tn Heb “Go out from her [Babylon’s] midst, my people. Save each man his life from the fierce anger of the LORD.” The verb has been paraphrased to prevent gender specific terms.

sn Compare Jer 50:8-10; 51:6 where the significance of saving oneself from the fierce anger of the LORD is clarified.

11 tn Heb “That being so, look, days are approaching.” דָּבָר (lakhem) often introduces the effect of an action. That may be the case here, the turmoil outlined in v. 46 serving as the catalyst for the culminating divine judgment described in v. 47. Another possibility is that דָּבָר here has an asseverative force (“certainly”), as in Isa 26:14 and perhaps Jer 5:2 (see the note there). In this case the word almost has the force of “for, since,” because it presents a cause for an accompanying effect. See Judg 8:7 and the discussion of Isa 26:14 in BDB 486-87 s.v. ד 3.d.
All her mortally wounded will collapse in her midst.¹
51:48 Then heaven and earth and all that is in them will sing for joy over Babylon.
For destroyers from the north will attack it, says the LORD.²
51:49 “Babylon must fall³ because of the Israelites she has killed,⁴ just as the earth’s mortally wounded fell because of Babylon.⁵
51:50 You who have escaped the sword,⁶ go, do not delay.⁷
Remember the LORD in a faraway land. Think about Jerusalem.⁸
51:51 ‘We⁹ are ashamed because we have been insulted.¹⁰
Our faces show our disgrace.¹¹
For foreigners have invaded the holy rooms¹² in the LORD’s temple.’
51:52 Yes, but the time will certainly come,¹³ says the LORD,¹⁴ “when I will punish her idols. Throughout her land the mortally wounded will groan.
51:53 Even if Babylon climbs high into the sky,¹⁵ and fortifies her elevated stronghold,¹⁶ I will send destroyers against her,”¹⁷ says the LORD.¹⁸

¹ tn Or “all her slain will fall in her midst.” In other words, her people will be overtaken by judgment and be unable to escape. The dead will lie in heaps in the very heart of the city and land.
² tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”
³ tn The infinitive construct is used here to indicate what is about to take place. See IBHS §36.2.3g.
⁴ tn Heb “the slain of Israel.” The text has the plural “walls,” but many Hebrew mss read the singular “wall,” which is also supported by the ancient Greek version. The modifying adjective “holy” is often viewed as the seat of one’s mental faculties and thought life.
⁵ sn For discussion of the terms “governors” and “leaders” see the note at Jer 2:19.
⁶ tn Heb “we have heard an insult.”
⁷ tn Heb “disgrace covers our face.”
⁸ tn Or “mighty waters.”
⁹ sn God’s exiled people are told to leave doomed Babylon (see v. 45).
¹⁰ tn Heb “don’t stand.”
¹¹ tn Heb “let Jerusalem go up upon your heart.” The “heart” is often viewed as the seat of one’s emotional life.
¹² map For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
¹³ sn For location see Map5-B1; Map6-F3; Map7-E2; Map8-F2; Map10-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
¹⁴ The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following finite verb. Another option is to translate, “he certainly pays one back.” The translation assumes that the imperfect verbal form here describes the Lord’s characteristic actions. Another option is to take it as referring specifically to his judgment on Babylon. In which case one should translate, “he will pay back in full.”⁵
¹⁵ The juxtaposition of “gates,” here indicates correspondence. See BDB 169 s.v.
¹⁶ sn For discussion of the terms “governors” and “leaders” see the note at Jer 2:19.
¹⁷ sn The title “Yahweh of armies” see the study note on Jer 2:19.
¹⁸ tn Heb “Oracle of the LORD.”

19 tn The antecedent of the third masculine plural pronominal suffix is not entirely clear. It probably refers back to the “destroyers” mentioned in v. 53 as the agents of God’s judgment on Babylon.
20 tn Or “mighty waters.”
21 tn Heb “and the noise of their sound will be given.”
22 tn Heb “for a destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon.”
23 tn The Piel form (which would be intransitive here, see GKC 142 §52.k) should probably be emended to Qal.
24 tn Or “God of retribution.”
25 tn The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following finite verb. Another option is to translate, “he certainly pays one back.” The translation assumes that the imperfect verbal form here describes the Lord’s characteristic actions. Another option is to take it as referring specifically to his judgment on Babylon. In which case one should translate, “he will pay (Babylon) back in full.”
26 sn For discussion of the terms “governors” and “leaders” see the note at Jer 51:23.
27 sn See the note at Jer 51:39.
28 tn For the title “Yahweh of armies” see the study note on Jer 2:19.
29 sn See the note at Jer 2:19.
30 tn The text has the plural “walls,” but many Hebrew mss read the singular “wall,” which is also supported by the ancient Greek version. The modifying adjective “thick” is singular as well.
31 tn The infinitive absolute emphasizes the following finite verb. Another option is to translate, “will certainly be demolished.”
32 tn Heb “for what is empty.”
33 tn Heb “and the nations for fire, and they grow weary.”
51:59 This is the order Jeremiah the prophet gave to Seraiah son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went to King Zedekiah of Judah in Babylon during the fourth year of his reign.² (Seraiah was a quartermaster.) ³ 51:60 Jeremiah recorded on one scroll all the judgments⁴ that would come upon Babylon—all these prophecies⁵ written about Babylon. 51:61 Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, “When you arrive in Babylon, make sure⁶ you read aloud all these prophecies.⁷ 51:62 Then say, ‘O Lord, you have announced that you will destroy this place so that no people or animals live in it any longer. Certainly it will lie desolate forever!’ 51:63 When you finish reading this scroll aloud, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates River.⁸ 51:64 Then say, ‘In the same way Babylon will sink and never rise again because of the judgments⁹ I am ready to bring upon her; they will grow faint.’”

The prophecies of Jeremiah end here.¹⁰

The Fall of Jerusalem

52:1¹¹ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem² for eleven years. His mother’s name was Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah. 52:2 He did what displeased the Lord just as Jehoiakim had done.

52:3 What follows is a record of what happened to Jerusalem and Judah because of the Lord’s anger when he drove them out of his sight.¹⁵ Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. 52:4 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and set up camp outside it.¹⁶ They built siege ramps all around it. He arrived on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year that Zedekiah ruled over Judah.¹⁷ 52:5 The city remained under siege until Zedekiah’s eleventh year. 52:6 By the ninth day of the fourth month¹⁸ the famine in the city was so severe the residents¹⁹ had no food. 52:7 They broke through the city walls, and all the soldiers tried to escape. They left the city during the night. They went through the gate between the two walls that is near the king’s garden.²⁰ (The Babylonians had the city surrounded.) Then they headed for the Jordan Valley.²¹ 52:8 But the Babylonian army chased after the king. They caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho,²² and his entire army deserted him. 52:9 They captured him and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath and he passed sentence on him there. 52:10 The king of Babylon had Zedekiah’s sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. He also had all the nobles of Judah put to death there at Riblah. 52:11 He had Zedekiah’s eyes put out and had him bound in chains.²⁴ Then the king of Babylon had him led off to Babylon and he was imprisoned there until the day he died.

52:12 On the tenth²⁵ day of the fifth month,²⁶ in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard who served²⁸ the king of Babylon, arrived in Jerusalem. 52:13 He burned down the Lord’s temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large

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1 sn This would be 582 b.c.
2 tn Heb “an officer of rest.”
3 tn Or “wrote.”
4 tn Or “disaster”; or “calamity.”
5 tn Heb “words” (or “things”).
6 tn Heb “see [that].”
7 tn Heb “words” (or “things”).
8 tn The word “River” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied for clarity.
9 tn Or “disaster”; or “calamity.”
10 sn The final chapter of the book of Jeremiah does not mention Jeremiah or record any of his prophecies.
11 sn This final chapter does not mention Jeremiah, but its description of the downfall of Jerusalem and exile of the people validates the prophet’s ministry.
12 map For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-F3; Map9-B3; JP1-F4; JP2-F4; JP3-F4; JP4-F4.
13 tn Some textual witnesses support the Kethib (consonantal text) in reading “Hamital.”
14 tn Heb “what was evil in the eyes of the Lord.”
15 tn Heb “Surely (or “for”) because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah until he drove them out upon his face.” For the phrase “drive out of his sight,” see 7:15.
16 tn Or “against it.”
17 sn This would have been January 15, 588 b.c. The reckoning is based on the calendar that begins the year in the spring (Nisan = March/April).
18 sn According to modern reckoning that would have been July 18, 586 b.c. The siege thus lasted almost a full eighteen months.
19 tn Heb “the people of the land.”
20 sn The king’s garden is mentioned again in Neh 3:15 in conjunction with the pool of Siloam and the stairs that go down from the City of David. This would have been in the southern part of the city near the Tyropean Valley which agrees with the reference to the “two walls” which were probably the walls on the eastern and western hills.
21 sn Heb “toward the Arabah.” The Arabah was the rift valley north and south of the Dead Sea. Here the intention was undoubtedly to escape across the Jordan to Moab or Ammon. It appears from 40:14; 41:15 that the Ammonites were known to have harbored fugitives from the Babylonians.
22 map For location see Map5-B2; Map6-E1; Map7-E1; Map8-F3; Map10-A2; Map11-A1.
23 sn Riblah was a strategic town on the Orontes River in Syria. It was at a crossing of the major roads between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Pharaoh Necho had earlier received Jehoahaz there and put him in chains (2 Kgs 23:33) prior to taking him captive to Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar had set up his base camp for conducting his campaigns against the Palestinian states there and was now sitting in judgment on prisoners brought to him.
24 tn Heb “fetters of bronze.” The more generic “chains” is used in the translation because “fetters” is a word unfamiliar to most modern readers.
25 sn The parallel account in 2 Kgs 25:8 has “seventh.”
26 sn The tenth day of the month would have been August 17, 586 b.c. in modern reckoning.
27 tn For the meaning of this phrase see BDB 371 s.v. הַכְּנַס and compare the usage in Gen 39:1.
28 tn Heb “stood before.”
The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took into exile some of the poor, the rest of the people who remained in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the rest of the craftsmen. But he left behind some of the poor and gave them fields and vineyards.

The Babylonians broke the two bronze pillars in the temple of the LORD, as well as the movable stands and the large bronze basin called the “The Sea.” They took all the bronze to Babylon. They also took the pots, shovels, trimming shears, basins, pans, and all the bronze utensils used by the priests. The captain of the royal guard took the gold and silver bowls, censers, basins, pots, lampstands, pans, and vessels. The bronze of the items that King Solomon made for the LORD’s temple (including the two pillars, the large bronze basin called “The Sea,” the twelve bronze bulls under “The Sea,” and the movable stands) was too heavy to be weighed.

Each of the pillars was about 27 feet high, about 18 feet in circumference, three inches thick, and hollow. The bronze top of one pillar was about seven and one-half feet high and had bronze latticework and pomegranate-shaped ornaments all around it. The second pillar with its pomegranate-shaped ornaments was like it. There were ninety-six pomegranate-shaped ornaments on the sides; in all there were one hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments over the latticework that went around it.

The captain of the royal guard took Seirah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest who was second in rank, and the three doorkeepers.

From the city he took an official who was in charge of the soldiers, seven of the king’s advisers who were discovered in the city, an official army secretary who drafted citizens for military service, and sixty citizens who were discovered in the middle of the city. Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. The king of Babylon ordered them to be executed at Riblah in the territory of Hamath.

So Judah was taken into exile away from its land. Here is the official record of the number of people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: In the seventh year, 3,023 Jews; in Nebuchadnezzar’s eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem; in Nebuchadnezzar’s twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, carried into exile 745 Judeans. In all 4,600 people went into exile.

Jehoiachin in Exile

In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, Evil-Merodach, in the first year of his reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison. He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon. Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king’s presence for the rest of his life. He was given daily provisions by the king of Babylon for the rest of his life until the day he died.