



Threatened and Revived: Jeremiah 11-15  
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## Introduction to Jeremiah 11-15

Being a prophet in Israel was frequently an unpopular role, as Jeremiah would discover.

In this section, his own family conspired against him to silence his irritating preaching. But the Lord stepped in to preserve him.

Jeremiah continued his words of admonition and judgment, speaking even to the king and his mother, and calling them to repentance. But they would not repent, and so, for the sake of the Lord's Name and covenant, the words of judgment continued.

Jeremiah, meanwhile, found his joy in feeding on God's Word and faithfully proclaiming it to the people of Judah and Jerusalem. God promised to reward his faithfulness with salvation, redemption, and deliverance.

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## 1 Breach of Covenant

*Pray Psalm 33.13-17.*

The LORD looks from heaven;  
He sees all the sons of men.  
From the place of His dwelling He looks  
On all the inhabitants of the earth;  
He fashions their hearts individually;  
He considers all their works.  
No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army;  
A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.  
A horse is a vain hope for safety;  
Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.

*Sing Psalm 33.13-17.*

(Truro: [\*Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns\*](#))

God from His throne looks down on men; He knows our works and made our hearts.  
Let not Your Church, let none depend on strength or skill or human arts.

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 11.1-17.*

*Prepare.*

1. What was the covenant God had made with His people?
2. Why were the people being hypocritical?

*Meditate.*

God called the people to look back in time and remember the covenant He made with them and their fathers. He sent Jeremiah throughout the cities of Judah to recall the people to the covenant, which they had broken, just as their fathers before them.

Jeremiah's next message to the people of Jerusalem and Judah pointed them back to the covenant God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. There He gave them His Law and commanded them to obey it, that they might have life. He promised a land flowing with milk and honey, if only His people would hearken to His Word and keep the commandments of the Lord (vv. 1-5). Here for a second time (cf. 7.23) God employs what we might call His "covenant motto" to summarize the essence of His relationship with Israel: "I will be your God, and you will be My people." Keep that motto in mind, for we will see that God uses the same motto to refer to the new covenant He promised through Jeremiah, and *that* has important implications for the nature of that covenant.

Jeremiah was sent to all the cities of Judah to call the people to obedience (vv. 6ff.). But the people of Judah would no more obey the Lord than did their fathers, who died in the wilderness. The people would not hear the words of God; they preferred instead to serve the false gods of their pagan neighbors (vv. 9, 10). This is why God was bringing judgment against them (v. 11). When judgment fell, the people would cry out to their gods, but they would find no help in them (v. 12; cf. 2.26-28).

Once again, God instructed Jeremiah not to waste his prayers on these people (v. 14; cf. 7.16), that they might be saved. It was the will of God that they should receive the outcome of their choices, and that meant serving pagan gods in a pagan land – becoming captives and slaves. Our prayers must at all times be according to the will of God if we are to expect any fruit of them.

And yet the people continued coming to the house of the Lord, leaving the Lord outraged (vv. 15-17). Thus, they added hypocrisy to idolatry and disobedience; and it was this that tipped the scales of judgment against them.

Are you getting a little tired hearing the same message over and over? Remember that Jeremiah was preaching in the streets of Jerusalem, while standing at the entrance to the temple, and throughout the cities of Judah. His message was urgent and consistent. We need to hear it, over and over again, lest, straying from the Lord's righteous path, we set ourselves up for some unpleasant discipline (Heb. 12.2-11).

*Reflect.*

1. What can we do to make sure, as far as possible, that our prayers are according to the will of God?
2. Why is "I will be your God, and you will be My people" a good motto for God's covenant?
3. The people were still worshipping in God's "beloved house" (v. 15), and yet He was about to judge them. What more did He want from His people?

*"And behold, they go after foreign gods, in order to serve them." They do these things in transgression of the covenant that was given to them. For this reason I will surround them with misfortunes of all kinds, and those who weep I will not deem worthy to be spared. They will not even enjoy any help from the gods who are revered by them. Theodoret of Cyr (393-466), On Jeremiah 3.11*

*Lord, I must remove any idols from my life; help me to serve only You as I...*

*Pray Psalm 33.18-22.*

Look to the Lord and His Presence for the day to come. Hope in Him, and look to Him as your Helper and Shield.

*Sing Psalm 33.18-22*

**Psalm 33.18-22** (Truro: [\*Shout for the Blessed Jesus Reigns\*](#))

God watches those who fear His Name, who hope upon His grace and love;  
He keeps their souls from death and shame who trust in Him Who reigns above.

God is our Helper and our Shield; upon us let Your grace descend!  
We hope in You; to You we yield; we trust in Jesus to the end.

## 2 Threatened

*Pray Psalm 56.3, 4.*

Whenever I am afraid,  
I will trust in You.  
In God (I will praise His word),  
In God I have put my trust;  
I will not fear.  
What can flesh do to me?

*Sing Psalm 56.3, 4.*

(Morecambe: [\*Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart\*](#))

When I'm afraid I'll put my trust in You,  
You, Lord, Whose everlasting Word I praise.  
I will not fear what foes to me might do,  
but will in faith to You my crying raise.

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 11.18-12.17.*

*Prepare.*

1. Who was out to get Jeremiah, and what were they planning?
2. What was God's counsel to Jeremiah?

*Meditate.*

Evidently, word reached Anathoth about Jeremiah's ministry. The men of his household were not pleased, and they began to organize a mob (18.6) to destroy the prophet. The Lord revealed these plans to Jeremiah (17.18), and Jeremiah immediately turned to the Lord for help (v. 20). God assured him that He would protect him against the men of Anathoth (vv. 21-23).

In reply, Jeremiah praised the Lord Who heard his prayers and answered him (12.1ff). In his prayer, Jeremiah pondered the age-old question of why the wicked flourish, even as they hypocritically pretend to speak for the Lord (v. 2). He affirmed God's promise to deal with the brethren who were conspiring against him, and added a little *oomph* to what God said He would do (vv. 3, 4).

But God rebuked the prophet (v. 5), and He called on Jeremiah to be prepared for greater challenges, even to experience something of the rejection and suffering God was feeling from His people (vv. 7ff). Jeremiah's betrayal by his family was nothing compared with God's betrayal by His people; and now He was preparing to act in judgment against them (vv. 10ff). And as God would bring judgment against Jeremiah's brothers, so He would act against all the surrounding nations who led Israel into sin and benefited from their fall (v. 14).

But a promise remained of deliverance for God's people (vv. 15-18). He would give them another opportunity to renew covenant with Him and to reject the pagan gods and serve Him only. However, they must obey Him then, or He would "utterly pluck up and destroy the nation" of His people (v. 17).

Here we see in Jeremiah a glimpse of the suffering of Christ to come: "But I *was* like a docile lamb brought to the slaughter..." (17.19). Redemption comes through suffering, and God suffers the most. Just as His suffering from the hands of Israel was greater than Jeremiah's at the hand of his brethren, the suffering of the coming Lamb of God would be infinitely greater than these. And through His suffering, true and lasting redemption would come to the people of God.

*Reflect.*

1. Should we as believers expect to incur the opposition, even the hatred, of the unbelieving world? In what forms?
2. How can we prepare ourselves for any persecution or suffering we may have to endure?
3. How can recalling the suffering of Christ help us when we have to suffer?

*In Jeremiah, too, he likens himself to a lamb, as thus: "I was as a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter." These and other similar sayings he applies to himself. Origen (185-254), *Commentary on the Gospel of John* 1.23*

*Thank You, Jesus, for suffering and dying for me. Strengthen me to live for You as I...*

*Pray Psalm 56.1, 2, 5-13.*

Whatever opposition, whatever fears, whatever doubts or hesitations may keep you from being a witness for Christ, give them all to Him. Then go forth to run with the footmen *and* the horses.

*Sing Psalm 56.1, 2, 5-13*

**Psalm 56.1, 2, 5-13** (Morecambe: [\*Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart\*](#))

Savior, be gracious, gracious unto me!  
Weary, I seek the shelter of Your wings  
till trouble passes, till my sighings flee.  
I seek the Lord Who for me does all things.

Wickedly how my foes distort my words;  
constant attacks and snares await my way.  
Pour out Your wrath, consume them, mighty Lord!  
Bring evil to its end, O Lord, I pray!

Lord, see my wand'rings, see my anxious tears!  
Help me to trust and praise Your holy Word.  
Gladly I know that when I call You hear;  
I will not fear but trust in You, O Lord.

I will not fear what foes might do to me.  
I give You thanks, my vows will I renew.  
You have redeemed me, set my spirit free,  
and ever in Your light I'll walk with You.

### 3 Symbols of Judgment

*Pray Psalm 76.4-7.*

You are more glorious and excellent  
Than the mountains of prey.  
The stouthearted were plundered;  
They have sunk into their sleep;  
And none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands.  
At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,  
Both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep.  
You, Yourself, *are* to be feared;  
And who may stand in Your presence  
When once You are angry?

*Sing Psalm 76.4-7.*

(Lauda Anima: [Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven](#))

O resplendent God of glory, mighty in Your majesty,  
You abase the proud and wicked by Your Word eternally.  
Let men fear You! Who may stand when all Your wrath shall kindled be?

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 13.1-14.*

*Prepare.*

1. Of what was Jeremiah's sash a symbol?
2. What did the wine bottles symbolize?

*Meditate.*

Two symbols are employed here, and each represents the situation of Judah and Jerusalem before God.

Jeremiah was instructed to get a new sash, put it around his waist, and then go bury it in the banks of the Euphrates (vv. 1-5). The new sash would no doubt have attracted some attention ("Check it out: Old cranky's got some new threads."). Then Jeremiah's absence during the trip to the Euphrates would also have caused some speculation ("Whatever happened to Jeremiah?"). When he returned without the sash, folks might have wondered where he'd been and what had become of that spiffy new sash.

Then he went back to the Euphrates – another trip of a few days – and returned wearing the ugly, filthy sash, "ruined" and "profitable for nothing" (v. 7). Here is a symbol of the fate of God's people. They would go to Babylon – the Euphrates runs through the heart of what was then Babylon – in their best togs; but after their captivity there, they would return a ruined and unprofitable people (vv. 8-10). However, they would be clinging to God like the sash around Jeremiah's waist, so there was hope. We hear again the echo of God's covenant motto (v. 11).

Then God instructed Jeremiah to fill the wine bottles with wine, to which the people responded with the ancient equivalent of "Duh!" (v. 12) But Jeremiah explained that these wine bottles were a symbol of Judah's drunken leaders, all of whom would be destroyed (vv. 13, 14).

We can think of these aspects of Jeremiah's ministry as forms of art, which God used to make a further impression on His people. The sash is a kind of performance art, and the wineskins are a kind of sculpture. God understands the power of the arts to communicate, and so He used them here to bolster and reinforce

Jeremiah's essential message of judgment.

*Reflect.*

1. Why did God use these symbols? Could the symbols stand on their own, or did they need explaining?
2. How did God keep the thread of hope alive in this passage?
3. Does God hold leaders more responsible than the rest of His people (cf. Jms. 3.1)? Why?

*The girdle, or loincloth, which is attached to the loins of God, is the people of Israel, who, like this piece of linen, were assumed from the earth unwashed and having no softness or beauty, yet were nevertheless joined to God through his mercy. Jerome (347-420), Six Books on Jeremiah 3.14.5-9*

*Help me to cling to You today, O Lord, so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 76.1-3, 8-12.*

Pray that God's people may increase in Him, that we may fear Him and serve Him in love in everything we do.

*Sing Psalm 76.1-3, 8-12.*

**Psalm 76.1-3, 8-12** (Lauda Anima: [\*Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven\*](#))

God is known among His people; great His Name in Israel!

He is all our peace and glory, as He in our presence dwells.

He has crushed the devil's weapons, cast him down to deepest hell.

Judgment flares from heav'n above us; all the earth in terror waits.

Rising, God will save the humble, each who meekness demonstrates.

Men's proud boasts shall turn to praises when in wrath You show Your face.

Vow to God! Repent and seek Him; keep His cov'nant while you may!

Fear Him, bring Him gifts and tribute; walk within His holy way.

For He's coming soon in judgment: fear Him 'til that glorious day!

Princes proud bow down before Him; He their spirits mortifies.

Kings and rulers fear His glory, Who descends from in the skies.

God is known among His people; loudly Israel testifies.

## 4 A Word to Rulers

*Pray Psalm 75.1-3.*

We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks!  
For Your wondrous works declare *that* Your name is near.  
“When I choose the proper time,  
I will judge uprightly.  
The earth and all its inhabitants are dissolved;  
I set up its pillars firmly.

*Sing Psalm 75.1-3.*

(Galilee: [Jesus Calls Us](#))

We give thanks, Lord, we give thanks for Your all-glorious Name is near!  
Men Your wondrous works declare, Lord; let all living creatures hear!

When you choose the time of judgment, You will judge with equity.  
Then the earth and all within it by Your hand no more shall be.

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 13.15-27.*

*Prepare.*

1. To whom did Jeremiah direct these words? Why?
2. What was the role of Judah’s leaders in bringing God’s judgment?

*Meditate.*

Jeremiah speaks to the “proud”, which, as we shall see, includes the king and his mother. He calls them to honor and glorify God before darkness engulfs the land and no one can see their way to the light (vv. 15, 16). He weeps to think that the proud might not heed his words (v. 17).

Jeremiah has preached to the people of Jerusalem and Judah. He has testified to priests and prophets. Here God sent him to speak directly to the king and his mother (cf. 2 Kgs. 24.12). The warning to them was the same: All the people over whom they ruled would be carried away into captivity (v. 19). They needed to pay attention to what was happening to the north, where Babylon was gathering strength and preying on the nations between them and Jerusalem (v. 20). When judgment fell on Jerusalem, these rulers would have no one to rule and nothing to say (v. 21).

It’s their own fault, though they may not believe it (v. 22). They led the people into falsehood and idolatry. They failed to honor, worship, and serve the Lord (vv. 25-27). Now they would receive the judgment due them according to the Word of the Lord (vv. 23, 24).

We can imagine that this message did not exactly endear Jeremiah to the powers-that-be. But they needed to hear it, whether or not they would believe and receive it. And this remains true in our own day. When leaders go astray, and prefer their own ideas and directions to those of God’s Word, they need to be called to account. For the judgment of God is still a vital implement in His toolkit for shaping people and nations.

*Reflect.*

1. How can you make sure that you don’t stray from the teaching of God’s Word?

2. What is our responsibility for holding leaders accountable to God's Word?
3. Should we expect God to act in judgment against wickedness? How might He do that?

*"After committing many transgressions," he says, "you were not prepared to have recourse to repentance. I shall no longer demonstrate longsuffering. Instead, I will inflict punishment." It is better, therefore, to live according to the divine laws. But since we who are human will most likely fall at some point, we ought to have recourse to the remedies of repentance, and through them placate the judge and escape the experience of the punishments he threatens. Theodoret of Cyr (393-466), On Jeremiah 3.13.27*

*Lord, I pray for our leaders, that they would...*

*Pray Psalm 75.4-10.*

Pray for the leaders of our country and our churches, that God would have mercy on them, and that they would trust more completely in Him.

*Sing Psalm 75.4-10.*

**Psalm 75.4-10** (Galilee: [Jesus Calls Us](#))

Warn the boastful, warn the wicked: "Do not boast or raise your horn!  
Do not raise your boastful voices; do not speak with pride and scorn!"

Neither east nor west nor desert shall exalting bring to man.  
God is Judge, He puts one down and makes another one to stand.

For the cup of judgment foams in Jesus' sovereign, holy hand.  
He has mixed it and will pour it out on every wicked man.

As for me, I will declare it: Evermore to God be praise!  
He abases all the wicked, but His righteous ones He saves!

## 5 For the Sake of God's Name

*Pray Psalm 102.1-4.*

Hear my prayer, O LORD,  
And let my cry come to You.  
Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble;  
Incline Your ear to me;  
In the day that I call, answer me speedily.  
For my days are consumed like smoke,  
And my bones are burned like a hearth.  
My heart is stricken and withered like grass,  
So that I forget to eat my bread.

*Sing Psalm 102.1-4.*

(Leominster: [\*Not What My Hands Have Done\*](#))

Lord, hear my prayer and cry; hide not Your face from me!  
In my distress and tears I sigh – Lord, hear my earnest plea!  
My days like smoke blow past; my bones are scorched with sin.  
My heart, like wilted, withered grass bends low to earth again.

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 14.1-22..*

*Prepare.*

1. What was happening in Judah at this time to provoke Jeremiah to seek the Lord?
2. How did God respond to the teaching of the false prophets?

*Meditate.*

The evidence of God's judgment began to take an unmistakable form: drought. No rain. No water in streams or ponds or anywhere. The reserves in the cisterns were all gone – a dramatic illustration to the people of Jerusalem of the empty promise of false gods (cf. Jer. 2.13). The ground is so parched it cannot be planted. There is no grass anywhere (1.1-6).

We feel Jeremiah's sorrow over this situation. But he knew this had to happen, that God's Name might be vindicated (v. 7). He had promised blessings to His people if they obeyed, and curses if they wandered from Him (Deut. 28). The people knew this. God's Word was ever before them, and He sent prophets to warn them of judgment and call them to repentance. God was thus bound by His own Word to act in judgment against His people.

Still, Jeremiah held out hope that God would save His people (vv. 8, 9). In response, God reminded Jeremiah of the sinfulness of His people, and commanded him not to pray for their deliverance (vv. 10-12). Judgment *must* come upon the sinful people of God. There's no use praying against the settled will of God.

But still, Jeremiah pointed out, the prophets were telling the people that everything was going to be all right (v. 13). God promised to bring an especially horrifying judgment against them, as they would see, contrary to their promises, the gruesome destruction of the people they had misled (vv. 14-16). So God instructed Jeremiah to weep for the people and to tell the prophets His message (vv. 17, 18).

Like Daniel in a later generation (Daniel 9), Jeremiah took upon himself the sins of God's people, admitting their iniquity as though it were his own, and casting Himself on God for mercy and deliverance (vv. 19-22).

Here again the prophet foreshadowed the sin-bearing role of the Messiah to come. He also resigned himself to God's faithfully keeping His covenant. And while, for the moment, that would mean judgment, ultimately, it would bring restoration and redemption, as we shall see.

*Reflect.*

1. What does it mean that God was judging His people for His Name's sake?
2. What do we learn from Jeremiah's conversation with God about how to pray for His people?
3. Jeremiah appealed to God's eternal covenant in verse 21. What is the significance of this?

*Although God is by nature good, yet he is also just, and as the case requires, He knows how to heal but also how to strike...He desires repentance, yet he commands Jeremiah not to intercede for the sinful people, since, he says, even if they fast, I will not hear their prayer. Tertullian (155-250), On Purity 2*

*Lord, I set my mind on You for this day, so that I will...*

*Pray Psalm 102.12-28.*

Thank God for His faithfulness to all His Word, and call on Him to bring revival, renewal, and awakening to our world.

*Sing Psalm 102.12-28.*

**Psalm 102.12-28** (Leominster: [\*Not What My Hands Have Done\*](#))

But You, O Lord, abide forever in Your place.

Arise and stand on Zion's side and lavish us with grace!

Revive Your Church, O Lord! Let all her dust and stones

be strengthened by Your mighty Word, and compact be as one.

Then let the nations fear the glory of the Lord!

For He shall in His Church appear to heed our sighing words.

Then let our children learn to praise the Lord above.

He hears their groans and knows they yearn to dwell within His love.

Yet let us tell God's Name and praise His glorious grace;

let all as one His love proclaim together in this place.

Though now our strength is low; though shortened grow our days,

our God will not forsake us so, but keep us in His ways!

Of old You made the earth and heavens by Your hand.

Though they shall perish You endure; forever shall You stand.

They change, yet You remain the same, without an end.

Our children shall Your favor gain, and theirs shall be Your friend.

## 6 Jeremiah's Joy

*Pray Psalm 145.1-3.*

I will extol You, my God, O King;  
And I will bless Your name forever and ever.  
Every day I will bless You,  
And I will praise Your name forever and ever.  
Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised;  
And His greatness is unsearchable.

*Sing Psalm 145.1-3.*

(Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want\*](#))

I will extol You, God, my King, and ever praise Your Name!  
I bless You, Lord, for everything each day, and e'er the same!  
Great are You, Lord, my praise I bring; unsearchable Your fame!

*Read and meditate on Jeremiah 15.1-21.*

*Prepare.*

1. Why was God going to bring such terrible judgment against His people?
2. What did God promise to Jeremiah?

*Meditate.*

Judah's problems began with King Manasseh (2 Kgs. 21). He rebuilt the pagan worship centers, which Hezekiah his father had destroyed. He worshiped as many pagan gods as he could, infested the temple courts with pagan idols, burned his son in the fire to Moloch, and "practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft, and consulted spiritists and mediums" during his reign (2 Kgs. 21.6). The people went along with all this, as did the priests and prophets. So God swore to bring "such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle" (2 Kgs. 21.12).

In Jeremiah 15, God described in gory detail that judgment He had prepared for His rebellious people. Only a remnant would survive, as God had determined (2 Kgs. 21.14); but they would go into captivity to a foreign people (Jer. 15.11-14). The judgment would be swift, brutal, and thorough. And it made Jeremiah weep and wish he'd never been born to see it (v. 10). God comforted His prophet with the reminder of the remnant, and Jeremiah implored the Lord to remember and visit him with deliverance (v. 15). Jeremiah's delight was in the Lord and His Word, and he had kept himself from all evil (vv. 16, 17). Surely God would spare him the violence and captivity threatened against the rest of the nation (v. 18).

God promised to keep and preserve Jeremiah through the coming judgment (vv. 19-21). He would know hardship, resistance, and sadness, but the comfort of the Lord would be with him through it all. The use of the words "deliver" and "redeem" in verse 21 were meant not only to comfort the beleaguered prophet, but to point forward to Israel's return from captivity seventy years hence, and even further, to the time of the new covenant, which God will reveal to Jeremiah later on. Then a Deliverer would come to redeem all God's chosen people, and to bring them into His comfort and joy forever.

*Reflect.*

1. Why was God just in bringing such terrible judgment against His people?
2. How can we, like Jeremiah, find in God's Word the joy and rejoicing of our hearts?

3. How would you explain the promise of deliverance and redemption to an unbelieving friend?

*The Prophet knew that nothing was better than to receive whatever proceeded from God; and he testifies that he found sweetness in God's word.* John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Jeremiah 15.16*

*I know there is nothing better for me, O Lord, than to feed with rejoicing on Your Word, so that I...*

*Pray Psalm 145.10-21*

Believers know the hope of glory in Jesus Christ. Thank God for that hope. Pray about the day ahead, that you will bring hope and the joy of God's Word to the people around you.

*Sing Psalm 145.10-21.*

**Psalm 145.10-21** (Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want\*](#))  
Your works shall thank You; all Your saints shall bless and praise You, Lord.  
Your reign we bless without restraint; Your power fills our words.  
Our children we shall educate in all Your splendor, Lord.

Your Kingdom evermore shall be; You reign forever, Lord!  
Your works You do so faithfully, according to Your Word.  
The falling You uphold and the oppressed You rescue, Lord!

The eyes of all look up to You to meet our needs each day.  
Open Your hand, provide the food we need, O Lord, we pray!  
Kindness and righteousness You do, O Lord, in every way!

Be near to all who call on You; all those who fear You, bless.  
Preserve all those whose love is true; save us in our distress.  
Our mouths will speak with praise of You; Your holy Name we'll bless!

## 7 Jeremiah and God's Covenant

*Pray Psalm 132.11, 12.*

The LORD has sworn *in* truth to David;  
He will not turn from it:  
“I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.  
If your sons will keep My covenant  
And My testimony which I shall teach them,  
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”

*Sing Psalm 132.11, 12.*

(Finlandia: *Be Still My Soul*)

Remember, Lord, the oath You swore to David;  
Do not turn back, do not deny Your Word:  
“One of your sons, with your throne I will favor,  
And He shall keep My cov'nant evermore,  
And walk within My testimonies ever,  
Thus He shall ever rule as Israel's Lord.”

*Review Jeremiah chapters 11-15; meditate on Jeremiah 15.19-21.*

*Prepare.*

1. What is God's covenant? What does God promise in His covenant?
2. While the people of Judah forfeited the benefits of God's covenant, He continued to hold them out to Jeremiah. Why?

*Meditate.*

This section begins with God reminding Jeremiah of His covenant, and the promise for those who kept covenant with Him: “I will be your God, and you will be My people.” The rest of chapters 11-15 show how Judah failed to keep God's covenant, and how He therefore would most certainly *not* fail His own Word, but would keep it in bringing judgment against His people.

For his trouble as God's messenger, Jeremiah became the target of a conspiracy to silence him (ch. 11). God encouraged him not to allow this setback to daunt or defeat him (12.5, 6), assuring Jeremiah that He would come to his aid. He continued holding out His covenant to any who would repent (12.14-17), but no one seemed interested.

By the symbols of the sash and the wine bottles, God dramatically declared His intention of sending His people into captivity and of breaking their leaders (13.1-14). He even sent Jeremiah to the king and his mother to proclaim God's decision and to pronounce woe on the nation (13.15-27).

The horror and completeness of the coming judgment of God are outlined in chapters 14 and 15. Jeremiah is led to intercede for the people, but God tells him not to do so (14.11). His decision is final. A remnant will be saved (15.11); and Jeremiah, because of His faithfulness, would realize the salvation, deliverance, and redemption of the Lord (15.19-21). Thus God would keep His covenant both ways, by judging the faithless and by sparing the faithful. God's covenant faithfulness with Jeremiah is a portent of covenant renewal that we will see in later chapters.

*Reflect.*

1. How would you explain the promise of God's covenant to a new believer?
2. God keeps His covenant. What are the implications of this for us?
3. How can believers help one another to stay within the safe bounds of God's covenant?

*We hence see more plainly what is the meaning of the word "turn" in the second clause, even that the Prophet would render his office approved of God, however clamorous the Jews might be; though they even rose up [tumultuously] against him, yet he says, thou shalt stand before me. There is implied here a contrast in the word "stand," for though the Prophet should be most violently assailed by the false words of men, yet God would support and sustain him. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Jeremiah 17.19*

*Help me to stand firm for You, Lord, and to remain within Your covenant today as I...*

*Pray Psalm 132.1-10.*

Pray through the promises of God's covenant, and commit yourself afresh to keep covenant with Him in all aspects of your life.

*Sing Psalm 132.1-10.*

**Psalm 132.1-10** (Finlandia: *Be Still My Soul*)

Remember, Lord, we pray, in David's favor, the hardships he endured, the oath he swore, the vow he made to Jacob's mighty Savior: "I shall not enter through my palace door; I shall not sleep, nor slumber my eyes favor, until I make a dwelling for the Lord!"

The word throughout the chosen nation spread, to Ephrata, and in the fields of Jaar:  
"Now let us go," the faithful people said, "and worship where our Savior's dwellings are!  
Around His footstool let our worship spread; come, gather to Him, all from near and far!"

Arise, O Lord, come to Your resting place; Your holy presence meet with us in might.  
Clothe us with righteousness in Jesus' grace, and we will shout to Your divine delight!  
For David's sake, turn not away Your face, but look upon us in Your holy light.

*Threatened and Revived: Jeremiah 11-15*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. What is the promise of God's covenant? Why is this such a precious promise?
2. What caused the people of Judah to turn away from God and His covenant?
3. How can someone today lay hold on the promise of God's covenant?
4. What does being faithful to God in His covenant require of you each day?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Jeremiah 11-15? How are you putting that lesson to work in your life?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.