

Jeremiah preaches, and you will live. If the nation humbles itself and waits on Hashem, the nation will return. But whoever attempts to resist the divine arrest will be put to death. They will be like bad figs (Jer 24:8), and because of their disobedience G-d will not give them a heart to know Him (Jer 24:7). This was Jeremiah's hard message, which cost him dearly, and brought great persecution down on his head. But, ironically, weak, isolated Jeremiah, the maggid with the dangerous and wrath-provoking message, is in much safer hands than the sonorous-voiced false prophets and power-wielding political leaders, who stir up violence against Jeremiah as a traitor. For Hashem promises to protect Jeremiah but to put to death these enemies of his, both Jews and Gentiles, with judgment beginning at the household of G-d (see Jer 1:18-19; 25:8-9,29) and climaxing in the Day of the L-rd (Jer 25:33; 46:10). "Flight shall fail the shepherds" (Jer 25:35), a prophecy that proved true for fleeing King Zedekiah, the last king of Judah (52:1-11). All the wicked must drink the lethal cup of judgment that is coming (Jer 25:28), even ultimately that anti-Moshiach King of Babylon (Jer. 25:26). The reason for the coming Babylonian Exile is given in Jer 5:18-19, the land of Israel was full of elim (idols). See also Jer 9:12-16; 10:5,18,21; 16:11-13. The sin of Manasseh (Jer 15:4; 2 Kgs 21:6), especially child sacrifice (Jer 7:30-34) brought great national disaster on Judah, just as the abortion holocaust will bring great grief on any country. Consequently, G-d's wrath burns against her, and G-d is going to turn Jerusalem

into an abortion and it will be no place to marry or to bear children (Jer 16:3-4). Jerusalem will be like a rejected prostitute (3:2-3; 4:29-31) because she has stubbornly rejected Hashem, her true husband, and has given herself in spiritual adultery to false g-ds, the Baals and all the worthless foreign idols that have taken over her land. Nothing short of the Babylonian exile would cure her of this sin of changing her g-ds (Jer 2:11). What is amazing is that the kingdom of Judah does not learn her lesson by seeing the idolatrous northern kingdom of Israel go off (722 B.C.E.) into captivity because of this very sin (Jer 3:6-10); Judah has to undergo a similar punishment herself to get cured of idolatry. But, to put it simply, the main fault that brought all this punishment on G-d's people was refusal to listen to the prophetic Word of the Scriptures (Jer 25:4-7; 32:33-35; 35:15-17). Jeremiah did not have a popular message to preach (look at it—Jer 13:19; also 15:10), and many people opposed him. Who wanted to hear someone prophesy massacre and national desolation (see, for example Jer 9:22)? But all Jeremiah was preaching was Deuteronomy 28 and its covenant reprisals and curses (see Jer. 11:2-4; 34:18). Nevertheless, some men from Jeremiah's hometown (Anathoth near Jerusalem) were so embarrassed and infuriated by his preaching that they started a conspiracy to kill him (Jer 11:8-23). The political leaders were stupid, because they did not inquire of the L-rd (Jer 10:21) but had rejected the Word of G-d (Jer 8:9).

EKHAH

1 How doth HaIr (the city, Yerushalayim) sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become like an almanah (widow)! She that was great among the Goyim, and sarah (princess) among the provinces, how is she become a forced laborer! |2| She weepeth bitterly in the lailah (night), and her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers she hath no Menachem (comforter); all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies. |3| Yehudah is gone into the Golus (Exile) under affliction, and under great avodah (servitude); she dwelleth among the Goyim; she findeth no manoach (rest); all her rodefim (persecutors) overtook her in dire straits. |4| The darkhei Tziyon (approaches to Tziyon) do mourn, because none come to mo'ed (set feasts); all her she'arim (gates) are desolate; her kohanim sigh, her betulot (virgins) are afflicted, and she is in bitterness. |5| Her adversaries are now the rosh (supreme, master); her enemies prosper; for Hashem hath afflicted her because of the multitude of her peysha'im (transgressions); her olalim (little children) are gone into captivity before the enemy. |6| And from Bat Tziyon all her beauty has departed; her sarim (princes) are become like deer that find no pasture, and they are gone without strength