

JEREMIAH 11

A PLOT AGAINST JEREMIAH'S LIFE

Chronologically speaking, it seems that the prophecies in this chapter and the next were delivered shortly after the great reforms that were carried out during King Josiah's reign (2 Chr. 34:8-33). In this particular discourse, Jeremiah reminds the people of the recent renewal of the Covenant (2 Chr. 34:29-32); and then he complains of rebellion against the Lord, as well as of a plot by the men of Anathoth to take away his life.

Jeremiah urged his countrymen (verses 1-10) to not be heedless of the Covenant that they and their king had recently made with the Lord, for Jehovah never has and never will promise blessings upon His creatures while they persist in willful and obstinate disobedience and rebellion. For this reason, He keeps alive a succession of faithful preachers and ministers among His people in all ages, who continually remind His people to obey His voice (verse 7). Pardon and acceptance are freely promised to all who believe in the salvation that is offered through Jesus; but no person can or will be saved when they do not obey the command of God to repent, to believe in Christ, to separate from sin and the world, and to choose self-denial and newness of life. But alas! Men will very often hearken to those who speak to them of doctrines, promises, and privileges; but when duties are mentioned, they will not give their ear.

In verses 11-17, we learn that evil pursues sinners who refuse to obediently bend their knee to the King of the universe; and it entangles them in snares, out of which they cannot free themselves. In their distress, their many idols will be no help to them whatsoever (verse 12). And those persons whose own prayers will not be heard cannot expect to reap any benefits from the prayers of others (verse 14). Their false professions of religion shall prove to be of no use. They placed their confidence in these things, thinking that they would come to their rescue when troubles fell upon them; but God has rejected them. His altar and His house of worship shall yield them no satisfaction (verse 15). The remembrance of God's former favors to them (verse 16) shall be no comfort under their present troubles. Every sin against the Lord is a sin against ourselves, and it will be proved to be so – sooner or later.

Unlike some of the other prophets, Jeremiah tells us much concerning his personal life; and the times which he lived in were very troublesome indeed. The rest of the chapter details how the men of his own hometown plotted how they might cause his death! But how ironic it is that these wicked men planned to end his days, while the faithful servant of Jehovah outlived most of his ene-

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ The prophet urges his people to be mindful of the Covenant that they had made with the Lord – verses 1-10
- ❖ Those who willfully rebel against the Lord are pursued by evil – verses 11-17
- ❖ The men of Anathoth conspire against Jeremiah's life – verses 18-23

mies! They thought to blast his memory; but it lives on in honor until this very day, and it will be blessed as long as time shall last. God knows all the secret plans of His and His people's enemies; and when He pleases, He can make them known – as He apparently did here (verses 18-19). God's justice is a terror to the wicked, but a comfort to the believer.

The fact that the inhabitants of his own hometown were conspiring against him was doubtless a great grief to the prophet; but he appealed to the Lord of hosts and said, "Let me see thy vengeance on them, for unto thee have I revealed my cause." And God threatened to visit them with sword and famine. To be able to say, in times of calamity, "I have ceased to concern myself about myself" – that will bring a person far more peace of mind than he can otherwise obtain! Martin Luther once said,

*"Once I grasped too many things,
None stayed; they all had wings.
But since I've weary grown,
And all away have thrown,
Not one from me has flown.
And do you ask, How is it thus?
Because I've cast my all on Jesus!"*



Learn, then, to place your cause in the hands of God – or, in other words, to cast your all upon Christ. And then you may let afflictions and persecutions come from whatever source they may; for you will stand like an oak of the forest, amidst the fury of the wildest storm. It is a comfort to know that when we are wronged, we have a God to commit our cause to!

From this chapter, let us meditate upon the subject that Jerusalem's sinners laid so little at heart – namely, the blessedness of that Covenant, which the Lord commanded His servant the prophet to preach in their streets. What can be more sweet or gracious than that which is at the bottom of all mercies, and which Jehovah Himself causes to be so: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people!" Amidst all our departures and backslidings to this foundation, which is confirmed and made known in Christ – may we look and take comfort! Our God will hear us! We have been like the people of Judah, and we have set up many idols in our hearts. But in the gracious Covenant-promises of God in Christ, let us seek deliverance from all our idols. He is gracious! He will be very merciful to our cries; and when He hears, He will answer. O for grace to lay hold of the Covenant of redemption, in His blood!

Lord, we pray for Your grace to preserve us so that we may never be seduced from our allegiance to You by the fascination of our sinful lusts. Keep our souls from becoming wedded to evil ways, for then they will become impervious to the entrance of Your holy light and love! Amen.