

UNIT 2A: OLD TESTAMENT

38: The Fall of Jerusalem and Exile

Introduction: Jeremiah's Early Ministry

Jeremiah was perhaps only 20 when he began his prophetic ministry some five years before Josiah's Mosaic reformation in 626 B.C. For at least 40 years, Jeremiah challenged the rulers, priests and people of the Southern Kingdom to listen to the Lord. Although Jeremiah said to the Lord that he was a "mere lad" (1:6) (or "rather young" [Septuagint]), God assured him that He would give him words to speak concerning great matters of state in and through which His great purpose would be worked out: "Then the Lord stretched out His hand to me and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: "Behold I have given my words to your mouth. Behold this day I have appointed you over nations and over kingdoms, to uproot and to pull down and to destroy and to rebuild and to plant" (1:9-10).

The oracles that follow (2:1-4:4) cover this five year period and are reminiscent of Hosea's prophecies of Israel as Yahweh's faithless wife. If Judah returns to the Lord and repents (4:1-4), then His judgement may be averted. More is known about the personal life and challenges that faced Jeremiah than about any of the other Old Testament prophets. He was a Jewish priest who was told by the Lord not to marry because the Lord had "removed [His] peace from this people," who would become as "dung on the surface of the ground and come to an end by sword and famine" (16:1-5). Given the starkness of his prophetic words and his many warnings of coming desolation, it is not surprising that Jeremiah had few friends. However, his faithful scribe Baruch remained by his side, helped him purchase land (39:6-15; [M:32:11-16 -*see note at end of the lecture], accompanied him in exile to Egypt (50:6-7; [M:43:6-7]), did not succumb to personal ambition (51:34-35; [M45:1-5]), read Jeremiah's prophecies in The Temple (43:4-32; [M36:4-32]), and may well have been responsible for the final editing of the book.

Although Jeremiah was initially timid, and like Moses, pleaded with the Lord that he did “not know how to speak” (1:6), he gained increasing self-confidence in the midst of his self-examination as he accepted the personal assurance of the Lord: “Behold, I have made you today as a fortified city and as a pillar of iron and as walls of bronze against the whole land,” as the Lord told him firmly that his many powerful enemies would “fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you” (1:17-19). Within himself, Jeremiah built up a confidence in the Lord’s willingness to guide his life: “I know, O Lord, that a human being’s way is not his own, nor shall a man . . . direct his [own] journey. Correct us, O Lord, but in just measure and not in anger so that you may not make us few” (10:23-24). Yet Jeremiah often questioned the Lord and why “the way of the wicked [had] prospered” (12:1), as well as bluntly asking the Lord to “take vengeance for me on my persecutors” (15:15). The intensity of Jeremiah’s life, message, and ultimate rejection make it difficult to accept that he was speaking some 2,600 years ago, because his style and message remain a powerful indictment of any society that rejects the guidance of the Lord.

Jeremiah’s Later Ministry

Clearly, Jeremiah stands for the conditionality of the covenant—that God’s covenant with His people required a response of obedience. Coming from a priestly family in Anathoth, some four miles northeast of Jerusalem, Jeremiah possibly had ancestry stretching back to the old confederacy shrine at Shiloh whose demise made a lasting impression on him. However, it is Jeremiah’s later ministry rather than his ancestral origins that highlights Judah’s parlous spiritual state immediately before Jerusalem’s fall to the invading Babylonians in 587 B.C., the destruction of the Temple and the exile of all her prominent citizens to Mesopotamia. This second phase of his ministry began after the death of King Josiah at the fateful battle of Megiddo when the king was routed by the Egyptians under Pharaoh Necho in 609 B.C. Josiah had attempted to throw in his lot with the Babylonians against the Egyptians, who were themselves trying to shore up the crumbling Assyrian Empire

as a buffer against Babylonian expansionism. For four years until 605 B.C. Judah became Egypt's vassal, first under Josiah's son Jehoahaz (Shallum) whom the Egyptians removed after only three months in favour of the next heir Eliakim who became King Jehoiakim and reigned until 598 B.C. some seven years after the Babylonians defeated the Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish (cf. end of Lecture 37).

Jehoiakim was quite unlike his father Josiah. Jeremiah compares him unfavourably to Solomon as opposed to David, (22:13-19); his wealth being built upon the oppression of the people and the shedding of innocent blood. Jehoiakim reversed the reforms of his father, allowing pagan worship and child sacrifice to flourish once more in Judah (7:29-30 [* M: 7:30-31] - In this the people thought themselves immune from disaster simply because they had the Temple and all its rites, (7:3 [M: 7:4]). Jeremiah spoke out against this apostasy and formalism vigorously in his famous Temple sermon (Chs. 7 and 33:1-24 [M: 26:1-24]). He called the people to amend their ways if they were to have any hope of retaining the land (7:2 [M: 7:3]). He confronted the complacency of corrupt formal religion by declaring that God would do to Jerusalem what He had formerly done to the shrine at Shiloh, (7:11-14 [M: 7:12-15]). Since the Exodus, God had not emphasised sacrifices but rather the importance of a faithful walk with Him (7:21-22 [M: 22-23]; cf. Micah 6:6-9). Not for the last time would the Temple be called a "den of robbers" (7:10 [M: 7:11]; cf. Mark 11:17). The coming judgement would make of the people food for carrion and the land would be made desolate, (7:32-33 [M: 7:33-34]). In all of this, Jeremiah had to contend with false prophets who counselled peace where there was no peace—self-serving sycophants of the establishment (6:13-15; 23:9-40).

When Jeremiah analysed this dire situation, he broke new ground for prophecy by deepening the diagnosis of Israel's sins as few had done before. The problems lay deep within the people's recalcitrant hearts. It is God who examines the heart and tests the mind to requite people in the fruit of their actions. "The heart is deep

beyond all things and it is the man. Even so, who can know him?" (17:5-6 [M: 17:9-10]). In this state, the people could no more reform than a leopard change his spots, (13:23). Mindful of this, God would now unleash his destruction and sins would go unpunished no longer, (15:5-6).

In the vivid metaphor of the potter and the clay (18:1-11), Jeremiah compares Israel to a flawed pot that God, its maker, must break and remould (18:1-11). However, this destruction was merely the "fruit of their turning away" (6:19); they had visited judgement upon themselves as God withdrew his protection in the face of the encroaching enemy from the north, (6:1-5). This judgement is an apocalypse, a void, a trembling of the earth, a reversal of creation (no stars), a conflagration, (4:23-26). But this lies yet a little while into the future. We are now in 605 B.C. at the battle of Carchemish when the Egyptians fell to the Babylonians and Judah was left exposed. The Septuagint has a summary prophecy here (25:1-13) as recorded by Jeremiah's scribe, Baruch; and this refers to the future exile under the Babylonians for a period of 70 years--a human life span.

King Jehoiakim was infuriated with these prophecies, especially the one that referred to his burial with a donkey, casually discarded outside the city gates (22:19). Jeremiah was detained at this point by the king; and so in chapter 43 (M: Ch. 36) Baruch, his scribe, delivered the prophecies to the people in the Temple Precinct from his scroll. Jehoiakim, a little later, recovers the scroll and contemptuously burns it in the winter brazier of his palace. The leopard has indeed not changed his spots. However, Jeremiah recovers his prophetic advice and insists that soon "no one [will] sit on the throne of David" (verse 30). After this incident, Jeremiah withdrew into hiding for a little while; and it is during this time that he wrote a sequence of autobiographical laments, unparalleled in prophetic literature. We gain an insight here into the personal cost of Jeremiah's prophesying, his loneliness, his sorrow and yet also his firm conviction that he must fulfil his vocation

and speak God's word as a "prophet to the nations." But now return to the historical developments after the battle of Carchemish.

Nebuchadnezzar's Leadership

In 601 B.C. a new king in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar attacked Egypt but the result was inconclusive and with heavy casualties on both sides. The crippled Babylonian army returned home. The next year Jehoiakim foolishly decided to withhold tribute from Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar responded by stirring up incursions from local peoples during which Jehoiakim died. His son Jehoiachin took to the throne but he only lasted three months when Babylonia mounted in 598-597 B.C. a full scale assault on Judah. The Babylonians installed Josiah's youngest son, Mattaniah on the throne as King Zedekiah, emptied the temple treasury and made their first deportation of Jehoiachin and other influential people to Babylon. From this period comes Jeremiah's prophecy of the two baskets of figs—the first basket good: those currently exiled whom God at some later point would restore to a revived Jerusalem; and the second basket bad: those remaining in Jerusalem who would be driven out and vanquished (Ch. 24). Later, he would counsel the first group, then in exile in Babylon to settle down, prosper as best they could and pray for Babylon itself, whose fortunes now controlled their own futures, (36:1-15 [M: Ch. 29]).

In the ten year period until the final fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. Jeremiah was actively persecuted by a coalition of corrupt nationalist princes and false popular prophets, being imprisoned on a number of occasions. He made many enemies for himself by counselling surrender to Babylon, the instrument of God's wrath against an apostate people, most notably in his enacted parable concerning the wooden and iron yokes, (Chs. 34-35 [M: Chs. 27-28]). Zedekiah was a mild, well intentioned

king but essentially weak and ineffectual. On one occasion he did rescue Jeremiah from certain death by arranging an Ethiopian eunuch to release him from a dried up water cistern into which the prophet had been cast by the princes (45:1-28 [M: 38:1-

28]) and on two other occasions before the final onslaught he did seek Jeremiah's counsel. He was, however, too weak personally to bring about any lasting change in Judah as witnessed by his abandoned attempt to abolish slave labour.

When the end came it was triggered not at first by Zedekiah himself, who tended himself to draw back from political alliances, but by an Egyptian inspired revolt amongst local nations in 594 B.C. and then by a later more aggressive incursion against the Babylonians by the Egyptians under Pharaoh Hophra, this time allied with Ammon and Judah. In 588 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's army laid siege to Jerusalem, and it fell. The Temple was destroyed, and a final contingent was deported to Babylon including, tragically, Zedekiah, who witnessed the death of his sons only then to be blinded and led away in chains. Only the very poorest were left behind in a land devastated and broken (2 Kings [4 Kingdoms] 25:12). Although the centre of political and military control had passed from Jerusalem to Babylon, Jeremiah himself remained a beacon of God's purposes, advising both kings and people of how to deal with numerous threats.

Jeremiah's Struggles and His Vision of a New Covenant

During the siege, Jeremiah had been imprisoned; and even as the end for Jerusalem drew nearer he concluded an extraordinary contract with his cousin Hanamel—to buy from him a plot of land in his home village at Anathoth. This he did as a pledge that there would be a return from exile and a restoration of Jerusalem, (39:1-15 [M: 32:1-15]). This message of hope pervades the prophecies of Jeremiah beyond the fall of Jerusalem. Jeremiah foretold the creation of a new community replacing the old kingdoms of Israel and Judah in which there would be a new beginning in the restorative compassion of Yahweh, (38:1-30 [M: 31:1-30]). This was to be sealed with a new covenant in which the original intention of the Mosaic dispensation would be realized—namely that God's laws were to be in the minds and hearts of the people, knowing and loving God directly and personally (38:31-34 [M: 31:31-34]). This New Age, this coming Day of the Lord, would be a time for salvation, not

judgement. Truly this is one of the high points of Old Testament prophecy, directly looking forward to the coming of the Christ and the establishment of this New Covenant and the coming Kingdom of God.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah reluctantly joined a major dispersion into Egypt amidst the chaos of the competing factions that remained in a desolate Judaea. Here in Egypt he was to renew his prophetic ministry while the diasporal Jews apostasised and worshipped Ishtar the Queen of Heaven alongside Yahweh (Ch. 51 [M: 44]). Jeremiah had prophesied before, however, that the future lay with the returning exiles from Babylon, and so it did.

Jeremiah foresaw not only the Fall of Jerusalem, but also the fall of Babylon which was to “sink down and not rise again” (28: 64; [M: 51:64]), as well as the return of his people to Jerusalem (25:12). Here then was a prophet who was completely committed to hearing the Lord and challenging both kings and people to listen. As one Biblical commentator has reflected: “It was Jeremiah’s commission to lodge God’s indictment against His people and proclaim the end of an era.” Few were prepared to listen to him.

The Later Ministry of Ezekiel

In order to trace the experience and longings of the exiles in Babylon we need to consider the later prophecies of the priest Ezekiel who left for Babylon in the first wave of deportations in 597 B.C. He began prophesying 5 years later in 593 B.C., but his oracles from thence until 587 B.C. in chapters 1 to 32 cover much the same ground as Jeremiah, so we shall pass directly to chapters 33 to 48 being oracles delivered after the Fall of Jerusalem and addressed directly to the situation of the exiles.

It should be noted that Ezekiel is a very different measure of prophet than Jeremiah, both in character and situation. Ezekiel was in all probability a high class priest of the lineage of Zadok from the Jerusalem Temple itself, whereas Jeremiah was a

country prophet, who was initially unknown to kings. Ezekiel was a prophet in the ecstatic, mystical tradition of those who were seized by the Spirit and taken out of themselves and illumined by God, whereas Jeremiah simply spoke out God's message and suffered for it. Ezekiel prophesied in a foreign and alien culture at the heart of a huge sophisticated empire which had subjugated many nations, whereas Jeremiah spoke to a home nation teetering on the edge of disaster. However, it is in the second section of Ezekiel that we see prophecies played out that confirm and inform Jeremiah's own conviction that there would be a new community, a new covenant, a new relationship with God and an eventual return to rebuild a united nation. Only the last prophecy was never to be realised, because the Samaritans never regained fellowship with those who became known as Jews.

The later prophecies of Ezekiel are suffused with great hope and promise, because he is convinced that God's holiness and mighty power (according to the continual refrain: "You shall know that I am Yahweh") is vindicated in His creation of new possibilities for the covenant relationship in history. Four vivid metaphors are used to express this promise:

(1) The dry bones that will be en fleshed and vivified by the Spirit, (Ch. 37).

(2) God will shepherd his people and care for them appointing also a Davidic shepherd among them, (Ch. 34).

(3) God will replace his people's heart of stone with a heart of flesh and place His Spirit within them in order that they might walk with Him and obey his laws, (36:26-28). This prophecy parallels that of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31, as noted earlier.

(4) Upon Israel's return there will be a new Temple, the worship in which will transform not only the people but also the land, (Chs. 40-48, Cf. Revelation 21).

Finally, it is appropriate to consider the actual situation of the Jews in exile. Clearly the first generation were a people in deep shock as evidenced by the great psalm

of lament of the exiles with its terrible ending of a call to vengeance (Psalm 136 [M: 137]).

Ezekiel exercised his appointment fully from the Lord as “watchman for the house of Israel (33:7).

The Jewish Experience of Exile in Babylon

Finally, it is appropriate to consider the actual situation of the Jews in exile. Clearly the first generation were a people in deep shock as evidenced by the great psalm of lament of the exiles with its terrible ending of a call to vengeance (Psalm 136 [M: 137]).

1 By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept When we remembered Zion.

2 We hung our harps Upon the willows in the midst of it.

3 For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song, And those who plundered us requested mirth, Saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

4 How shall we sing the LORD’s song In a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget its skill!

6 If I do not remember you, Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth— If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy.

7 Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, “Raze it, raze it, To its very foundation!”

8 O daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed, Happy the one who repays you as you have served us!

9 Happy the one who takes and dashes Your little ones against the rock!

Echoing this psalm, any “Babylon”—any evil that rejects the City of God—is condemned in Revelation 18:1-19:4.

Conclusion: "Small Holy Precincts" Prevail

In reality, notwithstanding the grief arising from the national apocalypse and exile, the Jews in Babylon were allowed to live where they liked and practise their religion freely. Like the Roman Empire of later times, the Babylonians did not repress the peoples they subjugated. Clearly, the Jews must have been overawed to find themselves in a culture considerably more advanced politically, culturally and in agricultural technology. The miracle of grace is that the communities did not on the whole assimilate elements of the religion of their conquerors (as did the Jewish dispersion in Egypt), although there is some evidence that a belief in angels, demons and the resurrection from the dead strengthened at this time. The people gathered together their spiritual resources in sacred texts and worship, perhaps developing an early form of synagogue worship. They certainly believed that God remained with them in exile "as a small holy precinct in the countries, there where they enter (11:16). From this seed corn of the Priestly Tradition there was to develop with the return from exile and the rebuilding of the Temple a new impetus for reform and renewal. For that to take place, there would have to be a decisive intervention in the affairs of the Babylonian Empire, loosening and even breaking its grip. That would come in due course from Persia, but this would be a new chapter in the story of Israel.

[See Note below on the Septuagint and Masoretic Text in the book of Jeremiah]

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The Septuagint (LXX) and the Masoretic Text (M) in the book of Jeremiah

The Septuagint translation and textual edition of Jeremiah is significantly different from the later Masoretic Hebrew version. The Septuagint does not include 8:10-12; 10:6-8,10; 11:7-8; 17:1-4; 29:16-20; 30:10-11; 33:14-26; 39:4-13; 48:45-46; 51:44d-49a; 52:2-3,27c-30. In all, about 2,700 words found in the Masoretic text are not to be found in the Septuagint which is shorter by about 12%. Also, the 'Oracles against the Nations', that appear as chapters 46-51 in the Masoretic and most dependent

versions, in the Septuagint are located where they should be right after 25:13 where the judgements of God after the exile are pronounced. The Western Church since the 4th century has preferenced the Masoretic text notwithstanding that the Septuagint was invariably quoted in both the New Testament and the first four centuries of patristic writings. On account of this preference for the Masoretic in the West, non-Orthodox Biblical scholars have often assumed that the Septuagint was a later edited down version of the Masoretic. However, the Qumran listings of Jeremiah have shown that the Septuagint was a translation of an ancient alternate version of the book running in parallel with the Masoretic and, therefore, deserves to be studied as a genuine variant source, and maybe even a more reliable version in terms of antiquity and redaction. These lectures, being Orthodox in methodology, are working with the Septuagint only. References, therefore, are limited to that text and the Masoretic cross references are given in parentheses where different, with the abbreviation (M: -).

A Template for the Orthodox Interpretation of Biblical Texts

In accordance with the proposal of Fr. Theodore G. Stylianopoulos that Orthodox biblical interpretation ought to have a three-level approach, the following template is offered for preachers, teachers, Bible study leaders, catechists and students of the Scriptures generally:¹

Jeremiah 38:31-33 [M:31:31-34]

Level	Process	In Tradition / Fathers (Theoria)	Applicable Now (Praxis)
Exegetical	Historical / Contextual <i>(using the full range of critical tools)</i>	<p>These verses have been called “the high point of Jeremiah’s prophecies” and are the longest quotation from the Old Testament (OT) to appear in the New Testament (NT)—in Hebrews 8:8-12. This is the only place in the OT where the phrase “New Covenant” appears. Ezekiel 36:26-28 sets out a similar “new heart” and “new spirit” within each person in a community where God says “You will be My people, and I will be your God.” Both the personal and community aspects are important in the experience of drawing closer to God.</p>	<p>“The greatest critical problem raised by the book [of Jeremiah] . . . is the striking difference between the Septuagint and the Masoretic texts. . . . Most modern critics believe that the order of the Greek is original” (article on “Jeremiah” in F. L. Cross & E. A. Livingstone, <i>A Dictionary of the Christian Church</i> (Hendrickson, 1997).</p>
	Allegorical / Typological <i>(as derived from Tradition)</i>	<p>Both Jeremiah and his faithful scribe and friend Baruch (the subject and possible author of the Book of Baruch in the Apocrypha) were Cohen—priests descended from Aaron. The Jewish scholar Richard Elliott Friedman has argued in <i>Who Wrote the Bible?</i> (Harper, 1987) that the Deuteronomist was either Jeremiah or Baruch or possibly both men working together.</p>	<p>The question of how God deals with people who are not obedient to Him, who worship idols, remains important now, because God continues to offer each of us the opportunity to seek and find His will for each of our lives.</p>
Interpretative	Spiritual / Ethical	<p>In Galatians 3:17 St. Paul insists that “the Law [given to Moses], which came 430 years later [than the covenant with Abraham] does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.” In a similar vein, the relationship between the old and new covenants needs to be understood in such a way that the promise given earlier is not nullified, yet the</p>	<p>When God gives laws to the minds of His people and writes “them on their hearts” (Jeremiah 38:33 [M: 31:33]) He is offering an opportunity to us to “know the Lord” in an interior manner without further teaching from a “fellow citizen”</p>

		primacy of the new covenant is proclaimed.	(verse 34), because “their sins are no more.”
	Personal / Social	As Father Theodore G. Stylianopoulos points out in <i>The New Testament: An Orthodox Perspective</i> (Holy Cross O Press, 1997), In a Biblical perspective “The correct meaning from the Hebrew word <i>berith</i> is covenant, meaning . . . the sacred bond between God and His people, established by God’s saving action and freely offered to His people as a permanent relationship of mutual love and fidelity For the apostle Paul and the early Christians the ‘new covenant’ was neither a book nor a collection of books but rather the dynamic reality of the new bond between God and Christian believers based on the person and saving work of Christ” p. 26.	The stress in verse 34 on how each person will “know the Lord ... from the least of them to the greatest of them” is still an important guideline today for the reason cited—because God is “gracious regarding [our] injustices and . . . sins.” The bonds which God established with the Hebrews, the early Christians and with us remain a “sacred bond ... a permanent relationship of mutual love and fidelity.”
Transformative	The Call to Holiness	Reflecting on Hebrews 8:13b, the 5th century Antiochian bishop St. Theodoret of Cyr has written that “The law is suited to mortals, whereas the New Covenant guarantees us eternal life. It was therefore right for the former one to grow old, while the latter remains new forever in being associated with the ages that do not grow old.” The challenge from Jeremiah is to move beyond the strictures of law, to eternal life in which one does “not grow old.”	St. Athanasius of Alexandria contrasts weeping in exile “by the waters of Babylon” (Psalm 136 [M:137]) with “the joy and gladness” in the transformative power of Christ, who abolishes death and the devil so that “God is no longer known only in Judea, but in all the earth.” (<i>Letter V, Easter 333 A.D.</i>)
	The Call to Witness	Study of the OT should be grounded in Raymond E. Brown’s awareness that: “In traditional Christian thought the OT is Scripture, just as sacred and enduringly valid as the NT.” (<i>An Introduction to the NT</i> , (New York: Doubleday, 1999, p. xxxiv). The OT and the NT are a unified statement of God’s purposes. Therefore, the call to witness requires a deep understanding of both	The call to witness to the validity of both the old and new covenants requires much prayer and study. Although the presence of Christ in the Church, and the reality of redemption that He offers to all humanity is paramount, God’s

		the OT and the NT, of the relationship between them, and of how the integrity of the full Bible continues to guide us.	promise to His people in the old covenant has considerable validity.
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¹ In *“The New Testament, An Orthodox Perspective, Volume 1: Scripture, Tradition, Hermeneutics,”* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1997, Ch. 7), Fr. Theodore sets out three levels serving a sound Orthodox hermeneutical process. These are: **1. Exegetical** - using all critical, contextual, textual and literary methods to determine “the level of understanding of the biblical text in its historical context of literary form and conceptuality ...” (p. 190). **2. Interpretative** – evaluating means derived from the exegetical stage as applicable contextually to the reader’s contemporary issues and concerns (p. 197). **3. Transformative** – experiencing life changing practical applications of insights derived from the previous two stages. In ALL of these three levels, the Orthodox context must be the Church as the locus of divine revelation and inspiration. Here the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth as manifested in the biblical text, the teachings of the Fathers and the liturgical context. In Ch. 4, p. 115f. Fr. Theodore explains the historical and spiritual exegetical approaches which, following the Fathers, must be applied throughout. Classically these have concerned the Antiochian emphasis on the “literal” or historical approach and the Alexandrian emphasis on the allegorical and typological interpretations that reveal the inter-connectedness of all Scripture in Tradition at deeper levels of understanding.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 New King James Version (NKJV)

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,^a says the LORD. ³³ But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Footnotes: [Jeremiah 31:32](#) Following Masoretic Text, Targum, and Vulgate; Septuagint and Syriac read *and I turned away from them.*

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SEPTUAGINT (38:31-33)

³¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda: ³² not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took hold of their hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they abode not in my covenant, and I disregarded them, saith the Lord. ³³ For this is my covenant which I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will surely put my laws into their mind, and write them on their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.