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You Have Rejected Me, and I am Tired of Relenting 15: 5-9

You have rejected Me, and I am tired of relenting DIG: What attitude had set God firmly against the people of Y'hudah here? What is the focus of the verses? Why should Jeremiah's prophecy about death and captivity gotten their attention? Are you shocked at the severity of the LORD's judgment? Why?

REFLECT: When have you reacted with scorn or persecution against someone who rocked your boat? How do you react when you are rejected by someone you love? Can you feel ADONAI's pain here? Can you identify with the One True God as a jilted lover with an adulterous wife? How sad is that!

608 BC during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim

Before **the Jews** even entered **the** Promised **Land**, Moshe had rehearsed with **them** the terms of the covenant, warning **them** that **Ha'Shem** would remove **them** from **the Land** if **they** refused to obey **His** voice **(Deuteronomy 28:63-68)**. No sooner did **Joshua** and that generation of spiritual leaders pass from the scene **(Judges 2:7-15)** than the nation turned **(shuwb)** to idolatry and **YHVH** had to chasten **them**. First, **He** punished **them** *in* ***the Land*** by allowing other nations to invade and take control. Then, when **the people** cried out for help, **He** raised up deliverers **(Judges 2:16-23)**. By the time of **Yirmeyahu**, however, the wickedness of **the people** was so great that **God** had to remove **them** *from* ***the Land*** and sentence **them** to exile in Babylon.

Now **God** elaborates on **Jerusalem's** destruction and speaks in the first person. **Who will have pity on you, Yerushalayim? Who will mourn for you? Who will stop to ask how you are (Hosea 11:8-9)?** Why? **You have rejected Me,** declares **ADONAI.** Repentance involves more than confession, it involves **turning away (shuwb)** from sin. Going in a different direction. But **Y'hudah** had not done

this and **her** flimsy repentance was hypocritical. As a result, **the LORD** said to **Judah**, **“You keep turning your back on Me. So I will stretch out My hand and destroy you; I am tired of relenting” (15:5-6 NASB). YHVH** had promised that if **Y’hudah** would **return (shuwb)** to **Him, He** would forgive **her.** But **she** refused, choosing other gods. **Many times God had relented and did not severely punish Judah for her spiritual adultery. But He could relent no more. His patience had come to an end.**

The series of judgments **Ha’Shem** now reiterates are very similar to **Amos 4:6-11.** In the **Amos** passage **the LORD** implements curses in the hope that there would be a change on the northern kingdom of Israel’s part. Yet **God** was greatly disappointed. Despite **His** efforts to save: **Yet, you have not returned (shuwb) to Me.**

Two metaphors are then used to speak of the destruction of **Tziyon**. Like a farmer **at the city gates**, **YHVH** says: **I will winnow them with a winnowing fork at the city gates of the Land.** This figure would be well understood by the people of **Y’hudah**, who annually gather their harvest on the threshing floor. In **winnowing**, the grain, chaff and straw are all tossed in the air when the wind is blowing. The implication here is that there is much chaff and little grain. **The people** are pictured as standing **at the city gates of Zion** as **they are winnowed (Ezeki’el 12:15)** and dispersed out into exile. But this is also a faint glimmer of hope. The punishment is designed to **turn (shuwb) the people** *from* **their ways**, *to* **God**. **I will bring bereavement and destruction on My people, for they have not repented (shuwb) of their ways (15:7).** Many have said that they **turned to God**, not in gratitude for prosperity, but in desperation from the deepest tragedy; their souls, being **winnowed** by adversity.[151]

Another metaphor relates to family **life and death (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)**. **ADONAI** has bereaved **Judah**, that is, **He** has so destroyed **her** that **she** will have lost **her** capacity to assure **her** own future. **God** had told Abraham that his descendents would be **as numerous as the sand on the seashore (Genesis 22:17)**. But now **He** says: **I will make their widows more numerous than the sand of the sea. At midday I will bring a destroyer against the mothers of the young men** (**to see link click Ae – The Problem of Holy War in the TaNaKh**)**. Wives** will be deprived of **their husbands**; **mothers** of **their sons**, warriors, and young, strong **men**. So many **men**, both fathers and their male children, have been killed in battle, that every house seemed to have **a widow** and a mourning **mother** living there. These **women** will be filled with **anguish and terror** over what happened to **their** families, and even more because it had happened so **suddenly (6:26)**.[152]

The mother of seven sons was to enjoy a great blessing **(Ruth 4:15; First Samuel 2:5). She** should be overjoyed, but now **she will grow faint and breathe her last. Her sun will set while it is still day,** in the prime of **her** life. In the height of **her** glory, the glory of **her** many **childre**n, suddenly every one of **them** is gone from **her**. **She will be disgraced and humiliated. The woman** who had **seven sons** – you would think that one or two would survive. But no, **they** are all dead. **I will put the survivors to the sword before their enemies,** declares **the LORD (15:8-9).** The judgment did come, but the genre of prophetic fulfillment does not demand every detail of its language. There obviously was a remnant in exile that were reading these words, so the words are highly exaggerated here.

The God of Jerusalem is a **God** of enormous patience. But now that patience is spent. **Ha'Shem** is exhausted and will try no more if the situation does not change. A stubborn people like **Y'hudah** surely must die at **His** hand. The covenant with **ADONAI** needed to be taken very seriously, and **Judah** did not respond. Consequently, the end must come.