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Judah's Sin and the LORD's Sovereignty

17: 1-27

606 BC during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim

ADONAI's sovereignty constitutes an offer of life. In these images **the LORD** does not so much intervene in judgment. Rather, life works out its own destiny, but where there is no water (here meaning **God**) – death is certain. **Y'hudah** was running out of choices. **Her** best choice would be to **return (shuwb)** to **the LORD** in faith. Then **she** would most assuredly live. It had been said in different ways beforehand: Moshe had said: **choose life** (**Deuteronomy 30:19**); and **Amos** had said: **Seek Me and live (Amos 5:4).** The poetry of **Jeremiah**, however, is much more subtle, requiring us to delve deeper into the Scriptures.



Judah's turning away (shuwb) indicated that she had rejected her only means of life – and so death would be the natural consequence. She needed to come to terms with her Maker, the only source of her existence. He is the source of her well being (17:8), hope (17:13a), and source of life (17:13c). If, on the other hand, the LORD is rejected by the one who trusts in man (17:5), like the deceitful heart (17:19), the greedy and the ones who leave the living well (17:13), then death is inevitable. The wisdom statements seen in this section are placed in the middle of some very harsh prophetic judgments over Jerusalem. Clearly wisdom would be needed to change her destiny. If not, she had as much of a chance of living as a shrub in the desert, a wanderer without water, a partridge taking a baby bird, or a greedy one keeping wealth. When Judah turned her back on God, it was her way of rejecting ADONAI's gift of spiritual life.