

Jeremiah 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Analysis

This verse introduces a new prophetic oracle: 'Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying.' The familiar formula signals fresh divine revelation distinct from chapter 1's call narrative. This transitional phrase appears throughout Jeremiah, marking new prophetic messages. Chapter 2 begins God's indictment of Israel's covenant unfaithfulness through vivid imagery and direct accusation. The structure reflects ancient Near Eastern covenant lawsuit (rib, רִיב) pattern where the suzerain (God) brings charges against the vassal (Israel) for treaty violations. This legal framework appears frequently in prophetic literature (Hosea 4:1, Micah 6:1-2, Isaiah 1:2-3) and establishes that God's judgment isn't arbitrary but based on specific covenant violations with clear evidence. The phrase 'came to me' emphasizes prophetic mediation—God's word comes to the prophet who then communicates it to the people. This establishes Scripture's revelatory nature: prophets received messages they did not originate.

Historical Context

Jeremiah 2-6 likely dates to early in his ministry (late Josiah or early Jehoiakim reign, 620s-600s BC), before Babylonian invasions but while Josiah's reforms were proving superficial. The covenant lawsuit form reflects ancient treaty structures discovered in Hittite texts and Assyrian vassal treaties. These treaties specified blessings for obedience and curses for violation, with formal legal procedures for addressing breaches. Israel's covenant with Yahweh (Exodus 19-24, Deuteronomy) followed similar patterns—God as suzerain, Israel as vassal, with stipulated obligations and consequences. When Israel broke covenant, prophets delivered

divine lawsuits detailing charges, evidence, and verdict. Understanding this legal framework clarifies why prophets spend extensive text reviewing Israel's history and God's faithfulness—they're presenting evidence in a covenant court case. The guilty verdict leads to covenant curses (Deuteronomy 28) including exile.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does understanding prophetic oracles as covenant lawsuits affect our reading of prophetic literature's historical accusations and warnings?
2. What does God's pattern of presenting formal charges with evidence before executing judgment reveal about His justice and patience?

Interlinear Text

לִאמְרָה: אֶלָּי יְהִי הַדָּבָר וְיֹאמֶר
H1961 Moreover the word H1697 H3068 H413 H559
of the LORD came to me saying

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 23:28 (Word): The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Hebrews 1:1 (Parallel theme): God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Peter 1:21 (Parallel theme): For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Jeremiah 7:1 (Word): The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

Jeremiah 1:11 (Word): Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree.

Ezekiel 7:1 (Word): Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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