

Jeremiah 22:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

Analysis

O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD (ארץ הארץ הארץ שמעי דבריהו, erets erets erets shim'i d'var-YHWH). The threefold repetition creates urgency and solemnity—compare Isaiah's 'Holy, holy, holy' (Isaiah 6:3) or Jesus's 'Verily, verily' formulas. The prophet summons the earth itself as witness to divine decree, invoking the ancient pattern where heaven and earth serve as covenant witnesses (Deuteronomy 4:26, 30:19). The imperative שמע (shim'i, 'hear!—feminine singular, addressing the land) echoes the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4).

This cosmic appeal elevates the pronouncement beyond mere political commentary to theological ultimatum. When human leaders refuse to hear, God summons creation itself as audience. Moses similarly called heaven and earth to witness (Deuteronomy 32:1). The land that vomits out covenant-breakers (Leviticus 18:28) now must hear why. Jesus would later weep that if disciples were silenced, 'the stones would immediately cry out' (Luke 19:40). Creation itself testifies to God's judgments.

Historical Context

This oracle's dramatic introduction marks a climactic moment—the end of the Davidic monarchy's unbroken succession in Jerusalem. For four centuries (since ~1000 BC), David's line had ruled from Jerusalem. This threefold summons announces the dynasty's suspension, requiring the widest possible audience as witness. The solemnity matches the gravity of covenant curse being enacted.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What would it mean for creation itself to witness your accountability before God?
2. How does the threefold repetition emphasize the seriousness of divine pronouncements?
3. In what areas of life are you refusing to 'hear' where even the earth itself cries out against injustice?

Interlinear Text

הָרֹתֶה שָׁמָעַ אֶת־דְּבָרַי־הָרֹתֶה
O earth hear the word of the LORD
H776 H8085 H1697 H3068

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:1 (Word): Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

Micah 1:2 (References Lord): Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

Jeremiah 6:19 (Word): Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

Isaiah 34:1 (Parallel theme): Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

Deuteronomy 31:19 (Parallel theme): Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.

Deuteronomy 4:26 (Parallel theme): I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org