

Jeremiah 35:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD.

Analysis

Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? (הֲלוֹא תִקְחוּ מוֹסֵר לְשִׁמְעַי halo tiqchu musar lishmo'a el-d'varai)—The rhetorical question drips with divine exasperation. Musar (instruction/discipline) appears throughout Proverbs as wisdom's corrective teaching. **Hearken** (שָׁמַע shama') again emphasizes obedient hearing, not mere auditory reception.

Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—The prophetic commission targets both political leadership ('men of Judah') and general population ('inhabitants of Jerusalem'). God commands Jeremiah to use the Rechabites as a sermon illustration, turning their living obedience into a mirror reflecting Judah's spiritual bankruptcy. The question isn't whether Judah CAN learn from the Rechabites, but whether they WILL—the tragedy being that God knows the answer (v. 17).

Historical Context

Jeremiah's ministry (627-586 BC) spanned the reigns of Judah's last five kings, a period of terminal apostasy. Despite forty years of preaching, multiple prophetic signs, and now the Rechabite object lesson, Judah refused instruction. This verse captures the pathos of God's persistent appeals to a people determined to self-destruct.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What 'instruction' (musar) is God offering you through current circumstances or biblical truth that you're refusing to receive?
2. How does the Rechabites' example function as a mirror exposing areas where your obedience falls short of even non-Israelites' faithfulness?
3. Why do religious people (like Judah) often resist instruction more stubbornly than irreligious people, having more knowledge but less obedience?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	וַאֲמַרְתָּ	יְהוָה:	צְבָאוֹת	אֱלֹהֵי י	יִשְׂרָאֵל	הֵלֵךְ	וַאֲמַרְתָּ
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	of hosts	the God	of Israel	Go	Thus saith
	H559	H3068	H6635	H430	H3478	H1980	H559
יֵשׁ	יְהוּדָה	וּלְיוֹשְׁבֵי	יְרוּשָׁלַם	הֵלֵךְ	וְאֵל	תִּקַּח	
the men	of Judah	and the inhabitants	of Jerusalem			Will ye not receive	
H376	H3063	H3427	H3389		H3808	H3947	
מוֹסֵר	לִשְׁמָעַ	אֶל	דְּבַר י	נֹאמַם	יְהוָה:		
instruction	to hearken		to my words	saith	the LORD		
H4148	H8085	H413	H1697	H5002	H3068		

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 32:33 (Parallel theme): And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.

Jeremiah 5:3 (References Lord): O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

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