

Jeremiah 36:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people.

Analysis

It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way. Despite years of rejected prophecy, God extends another opportunity for repentance. It may be translates 'ulay (עֲלֵי), expressing possibility, not certainty—God grants freedom to respond or reject. Present their supplication uses techinnah (תְּחִנָּה), meaning earnest petition, plea for mercy, or request for favor. This isn't casual prayer but desperate pleading for God's compassion.

Return translates shuv (שׁוּב), the primary Hebrew word for repentance meaning to turn back, reverse direction. From his evil way (miderko hara'ah, מִדְרָכֶוּ הַרְאָה) specifies the object: forsaking wicked behavior, not merely expressing regret. True repentance involves directional change, not emotional experience only. The individual focus (every one) emphasizes personal responsibility—corporate reform requires individual transformation.

For great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. The motivation is revealed: imminent judgment. Anger ('aph, אַף) literally means 'nostril' or 'breathing hard,' depicting divine displeasure. Fury (chemah, חֵמָה) means burning wrath or rage. Yet this very warning demonstrates mercy—God alerts them to coming judgment precisely because repentance could avert it (Jeremiah 18:7-8).

Historical Context

By 605 BC, Judah had accumulated over a century of covenant unfaithfulness since Manasseh's wickedness (2 Kings 21). Josiah's reforms (622 BC) produced temporary improvement but no lasting heart change (Jeremiah 3:10). False prophets promised peace while Jeremiah warned of Babylonian conquest. This scroll reading provided a final, clear opportunity to repent before judgment fell. The phrase 'it may be' reflects God's genuine desire for repentance (Ezekiel 18:23, 33:11, 2 Peter 3:9) while acknowledging human freedom to reject Him. Tragically, King Jehoiakim burned the scroll (v. 23), and the people did not repent. Eleven years later (586 BC), Jerusalem fell to Babylon exactly as prophesied. The destruction validated God's warnings while demonstrating the tragic consequences of refusing repeated calls to repentance.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does the phrase 'it may be' reveal about both God's desire for repentance and human freedom to respond?
2. How does true repentance (returning from evil ways) differ from mere remorse or religious activity?
3. In what ways does God's warning of coming judgment actually demonstrate His mercy rather than merely His wrath?

Interlinear Text

אֹלֵל	תִּפְלֶל	תְּחִנְמָת	לִפְנֵי	יְהִי הָ
H194 It may be they will present	H5307	H8467 their supplication	H6440 before	H3068 that the LORD
וַיֵּשׁ בָּ	מִדְרָכֵךְ וְאַיִשְׁ	בְּרוּךְ הָ	כִּי	בָּאָגָּ
and will return	every one	way	from his evil	for great is the anger
H7725	H376	H1870	H7451	H1419 H639
וְחִמְתָּה	אֲשֶׁר וּבְרִיךְ	דְּבָרָה	יְהִי הָ	בְּשָׁמָן
and the fury	H834	hath pronounced	that the LORD	H413 against this people
H2534		H1696	H3068	H5971
בְּזִיהָ				
H2088				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 36:3 (Evil): It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Jeremiah 4:4 (Evil): Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Jeremiah 21:5 (Parallel theme): And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

Lamentations 4:11 (References Lord): The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

2 Kings 22:13 (References Lord): Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great

is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

2 Kings 22:17 (Parallel theme): Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org