### Jeremiah

## Chapter 23

1[The Lord continues:]  
  
 ‘O you shepherds who scatter  
 And destroy the sheep of His pasture;  
 Against you, Jehovah said this…  
 He said this to those who shepherd His [sheep]:  
  
 2‘You have scattered My sheep…  
 Yes, you have pushed them away  
 And refused to [watch over] them.  
 So, {Look!} I will take vengeance upon you  
 For the wicked things that you’ve done.  
  
 3‘Then, from wherever they are on the earth,  
 I will gather them back  
 (Those who are left of My people)  
 From wherever they have been pushed,  
 And bring them [back] to their pastures,  
 Where they’ll multiply and grow once again.  
  
 4‘Then, I will raise shepherds to tend them  
 So they won’t know terror or fear,  
 Nor will they have to be searched for again,’ says Jehovah.  
  
 5‘Look! The days are now coming,’ says Jehovah,  
 ‘When I’ll bring a righteous dawning to David,  
 And an understanding king will then reign,  
 Who’ll bring what’s righteous and fair to the land.  
  
 6‘In his days, he’ll bring salvation to Judah,  
 And IsraEl will camp in submission.  
 Then the Lord will call him, ‘Jehovah is Righteous.’  
  
 7‘And because of this, {Look!} days will come,’ said the Lord;  
 ‘When they’ll not say:  
  
 ‘As Jehovah’s alive…  
 The One who led IsraEl from Egypt.’  
  
 8‘But rather, they will be saying:  
  
 ‘As Jehovah is living…  
 The One who gathered back IsraEl’s offspring  
 From the lands in the north,  
 And from everywhere else that they had been pushed…  
 And then, He returned them to their own land.’  
  
 9‘But their prophets have broken my heart…  
 Yes, they have rattled my bones.  
 I became like a person who’s broken,  
 Or as one who’s had too much wine  
 Before the face of Jehovah…  
 Before His beautiful, glorious face…  
 10For the land is now full of adultery.  
  
 ‘Because of this, the land is in mourning,  
 And all of its pastures have dried.  
 For their race has become wicked and weak,  
 11And their prophets and priests are corrupt.  
  
 ‘Yes, I saw their wicked ways in My Temple,’ said Jehovah,  
 12‘So I allowed them to slip into darkness,  
 Where they have stumbled and fallen!  
 Then, in the year that I come to visit,  
 I’ll bring more bad things upon them,’ says Jehovah.  
  
 13‘Among Samaria’s prophets,  
 I beheld the violations of [My] Law.  
 For, it was by [a] BaAl that they prophesied  
 To mislead IsraEl, My people.  
  
 14‘Then, among the prophets in JeruSalem,  
 I also saw reasons to shudder.  
 For they committed adultery and lied,  
 While shaking hands with the wicked…  
 Not turning their hands from bad ways.  
  
 ‘So, they are like Sodom to Me,  
 And like GomorRah, are the rest of those living there.  
 15And because of this,’ says Jehovah to those prophets;  
 ‘{Look!} I will feed you on grief,  
 And bitter water, I’ll give you to drink.  
 For, everywhere throughout the whole land,  
 JeruSalem’s prophets have brought what is foul.’  
  
 16‘So, thus says Jehovah the Almighty:  
  
 ‘Don’t listen to the words of those prophets…  
 Those who speak prophecies before you.  
 For their visions prove how foolish they are,  
 And that what they speak just comes from their hearts,  
 Not from the mouth of Jehovah.  
  
 17‘They are told by those who have pushed the Lord’s Word aside:  
  
 ‘You will find peace if you’ll follow your hearts…  
 No evil will come to any of those  
 Who follow the delusions in their own hearts.’  
  
 18‘O who has stood in the fort of Jehovah…  
 Who has beheld and heard what He said…  
 Yes, who has listened and paid close attention?  
  
 19‘Look! A shaking will come from Jehovah…  
 His anger will arrive as a shaking;  
 Then a whirl-wind will come to the godless.  
  
 20‘But this won’t turn back the rage of Jehovah  
 Until His heart has been satisfied.  
 And they won’t comprehend til their days reach their end.  
  
 [‘For He said]:  
  
 21‘Although I didn’t send those false prophets,  
 They came to you anyhow.  
 And although I’ve never spoken to them,  
 They have still prophesied.  
  
 22‘If they had followed My council  
 And paid attention to what I had said,  
 My people would have turned from their wicked ways.  
  
 23‘But, I am a God who is near,’ says Jehovah!  
 ‘I’m not a God who is far away.  
 24So, what can be hidden [from Me]…  
 What is the secret that I cannot see…  
 Weren’t the heavens and earth filled by Me?’ asks Jehovah,  
  
 25‘Yet I’ve heard what those prophets have said…  
 Those who speak lies in My Name…  
 Those who say:  
  
 ‘This is what I saw in a dream!’  
  
 26‘How long will their lies still continue  
 To come from the hearts of those prophets…  
 How long will they prophesy lies,  
 And speak the things that their hearts desire?  
  
 27‘They’ve come up with ways to forget My Name,  
 Then they use their dreams to describe to their neighbors  
 How [it was really] their fathers  
 That had forgotten My Name,  
 And then turned to the service of [a] BaAl.  
  
 28‘Let those dreaming prophets describe all their dreams!  
 And let those who say that they have My word  
 Describe what I truly have said!  
  
 ‘As straw is to grain; so are My words,’ says Jehovah.  
  
 29‘And aren’t My words like the flames of a fire,’ asks the Lord?  
 ‘Aren’t they like an axe that cuts rocks?  
  
 30‘Look! I am against all those prophets  
 Who steal My words from their neighbors.  
  
 31‘Yes, I am against all those prophets,’ says Jehovah,  
 ‘Who roll prophecies from their tongues,  
 While all they’ve really done is just sleep.  
  
 32‘Look, I am against all those prophets  
 Who prophesy from their false dreams;  
 For, they are misleading My people  
 With all their lies and delusions!  
  
 ‘No, I did not really send them,  
 Nor did I tell them to do this…  
 I gave them nothing to bring to these people,’ says Jehovah.  
  
 33‘And if you are asked by these people  
 Or if you’re asked by their prophets or priests,  
 ‘What is bothering Jehovah?’  
 This is what you must tell them:  
  
 ‘What bothers Me is you people,  
 For I’ll beat you down,’ says Jehovah…  
 34‘You people, you prophets, and priests…  
 You who’ve dared to ask why I’m bothered!  
 So I’ll punish you men along with your homes!’  
  
 35‘Then each one will be asking his neighbor,  
 And each man will be asking his brother:  
  
 ‘What was Jehovah’s reply…  
 What answer came from the Lord?’  
  
 36‘But don’t ask Jehovah about this again;  
 For the things that He said should be your concern,  
 37Since you have twisted His words!’  
  
 ‘So, [in the future, when] those prophets ask,  
 ‘What was said by Jehovah?’  
 38Because they’ve spoken these words once again;  
 I’ll send Jehovah’s concerns upon them!  
 For I told them that they shouldn’t be asking  
 What things Jehovah’s concerned with.  
  
 39‘Yes, because they’ve done this again,  
 I’ll take them and beat them down in this land  
 That I once gave to their fathers.  
 40Throughout the ages, I’ll place scorn upon them…  
 A dishonor that won’t be forgotten.’