

EPISTLE OF JEREMIAH

¹ *Here beginneth a sample of the epistle of the same Baruch, which epistle Jeremy (or Jeremiah) sent to the Jews, that were led away (as) prisoners into Babylon, of (or by) the king of (the) Babylonians, that he should tell to them, by that that was commanded of (or by) God to him[or after that it is commanded to him of (or by) God].*

² For the sins which ye sinned before God, ye shall be led (away as) prisoners [or (as) captives] into Babylon, of (or by) Nebuchadnezzar, king of (the) Babylonians.

³ Therefore ye shall enter into Babylon [or And so ye go into Babylon], and ye shall be there full many years, and into (a) long time, till to seven generations; forsooth after this I shall lead out you from thence with peace.

⁴ But now ye shall see in Babylon gods of gold, and of silver, and of stone, and of tree (or of wood), to be borne on shoulders, showing dread to (the) heathen men [or to (the) folks].

⁵ Therefore see ye, lest also ye be made like [to] alien deeds, and lest ye dread, and [that] dread take you in them. Therefore when ye see a company behind and before (them), worship ye God, [or And so the company of people seen from behind (them) and from before worshipping (them)],

⁶ *(then)* say in your hearts, Lord God, it behooveth that thou be worshipped [*or it behooveth thee for to be worshipped*].

⁷ Forsooth mine angel is with you, but *(or and)* I shall seek your souls [*or (and) I myself shall seek out your souls*].

⁸ For why the trees *(or the wood)* of them be polished of *(or by)* a carpenter; also they be arrayed with gold, and arrayed with silver, and be false [*or they also engolded and ensilvered be false*], and may not *(or be not able to)* speak.

⁹ And as to a virgin [*or to a maiden*] loving ornaments, so, when gold is taken, *ornaments* be made *to (or for the)* idols. Certainly the gods of them have golden crowns on their heads;

¹⁰ wherefore priests withdraw from those *gods* gold and silver, and spend it in *(or on)* themselves.

¹¹ Soothly they give also of that to whores, and array [*or adorn*] whores; and again when they receive that of *(or from)* whores, they array [*or they adorn*] their gods.

¹² But those [*or these*]*gods* be not delivered from rust and moths. For-sooth when they be covered with a cloth *(or a cloak)* of purple,

¹³ *priests* shall wipe the face(s) of them, for *(the)* dust of the house *(or because of the dust of the temple)*, which is full much among those *gods*[*or that is full much among them*].

¹⁴ Forsooth *(these)**idols* have a sceptre, [*or (a) king's rod*], as a man *hath*; *(yea)*, as the judge of a country, *(but)* that slayeth not a man sinning against himself.

¹⁵ Also they have in the hand a sword, and an ax; but they deliver not themselves from battle and from thieves.

¹⁶ Wherefore be it known to you, that they be not gods; therefore worship (*or dread*) ye not them.

¹⁷ For as a broken vessel of a man is made unprofitable, such also be the gods of them. When they be set (*up*) in the house (*or in the temple*), the eyes of them be full of dust, of (*or from*) the feet of men entering [*in*].

¹⁸ And as [*the*] gates be set about a man, that offended the king, either as when a dead man is brought to the sepulchre, so priests keep securely the doors with closings, and locks, lest they be robbed of (*or by*) thieves.

¹⁹ They tend lanterns to (*or for*) them, and soothly many *lanterns*, of which they may or be able to see none;

²⁰ forsooth they be as (*the*) beams in an house (*or in the temple*). Soothly *men* say that (*the*) serpents, that be of (*the*) earth, lick out the hearts of them; (*yet*) while *the serpents* eat them, and their cloth(*es*)[*or (the) clothing of them*], and they feel *it* not.

²¹ The faces of them be black of (*or from*) the smoke, which is made in the house (*or in the temple*).

²² Night crows (*or bats*) and swallows fly above the body (*or the bodies*) of them, and above the head(*s*) of them, and birds also, and cats (*sit upon them*) in like manner.

23 Wherefore know ye, that they be not gods; therefore dread ye not them.

24 Also the gold which they have, is to *(or for their)* fairness; no but some man wipe away the rust, they shall not shine. For they *(even)* feeled *(it)* not, the while those were welled together *[or Forsooth neither (even) the while they were molten together, they feeled (it)]*.

25 They be bought of all price *(or for a very high price)*, in which no spirit *(or breath)* is in them. *[They be bought of all price, in which things spirit is not in them.]*

26 They without feet be borne on *(the)* shoulders of men, and show openly their unnobility to men;

27 be they shamed also that worship them. Therefore if they fall down to *(the)* earth, they shall not rise *(up)* of *(or by)* themselves; and if any man setteth that *idol* upright, it shall not stand by itself, but as to *(or for)* dead things *[or as to (or for) dead men]* shoulders shall *(or must)* be put to them.

28 The priests of them sell the sacrifices of them, and mis-use; in like manner and the women of them ravish *[or taking]* away, neither to a sick man, neither to a beggar; they give anything.

29 Of their sacrifices foul women, and in unclean blood, touch. Therefore know ye by these things, that they be not gods, and dread ye not them. *[Of the sacrifices of them women with child, and menstruate, or in unclean blood,*

touch (al)together. And so witting of these things, for they be not gods, dread ye them not.]

³⁰ For whereof be they called gods? For women set sacrifices to gods of silver, and of gold, and of tree *(or of wood)*;

³¹ and *(the)* priests that have coats rent, and *(their)* heads and beard(s) shaven, whose heads be naked, sit in the houses of them *(or in their temples)*. *[and in the houses of them sit (the) priests having torn, or cut, coats, and heads and beard(s) shaven, whose heads be naked.]*

³² Soothly they roar and cry against *(or before)* their gods, as in *(or at)* the supper of a dead man.

³³ *(And the)* Priests take away the clothes of them, and clothe their wives, and their children.

³⁴ And if they suffer anything of evil of *(or from)* any man, or if they *suffer* anything of good, they may not *(or be not able to)* yield back *(or to repay it)*. Neither they may or be able to ordain *[or (to) make]* a king, neither do *(him)* away.

³⁵ In like manner they may neither give riches, neither yield evil *[thing]*. If any man maketh a vow to them, and yieldeth not, they ask not *(for)* this *[or If any man shall avow to them, and shall not yield, neither they require, or ask, (for) this thing]*.

³⁶ They deliver not a man from death, neither ravish a sick *(or a weak)* man from a mightier *[or neither deliver a sick man from a more mighty]*.

³⁷ They restore not a blind man to sight; they shall not deliver a man from need.

³⁸ They shall not have mercy on a widow, neither they shall do good to fatherless children.

³⁹ Their gods of tree (*or of wood*), and of stone, and of gold, and of silver, be like (*the*) stones of the mountain; forsooth they that worship them, shall be shamed [*or shall be confounded*].

⁴⁰ How therefore is it to guess, either to say [*or to be said*], that they be gods? for why yet when (*even the*) Chaldeans honour not them.

⁴¹ Which when they hear that a dumb man may not speak, offer him to Bel, and ask of him to (*be able to*) speak; as if they that have no stirring, may or be able to feel.

⁴² And they, when they shall under-stand, shall forsake those *idols*; for those gods of them have no wit.

⁴³ Forsooth women gird (*about*) with ropes [*or cords*] sit in ways, and kindled (*or burned*) bones of olives. Soothly when any of these *women* is drawn away of (*or by*) any man passing, and sleepeth *with him*, she despiseth her neighbouress, that she is not had worthy as herself, neither her rope [*or her cord*] is broken.

⁴⁴ Forsooth all things that be done to them, be false. How therefore is it to guess, either to say, that those (*or that they*) be gods? [*or How is it to be guessed, or to be said, them to be gods?*]

⁴⁵ Forsooth *those idols* be made of (*or by*) smiths [*or carpenters*], and of (*or by*) goldsmiths. They shall be none other thing, no but that that (*the*) priests will (*or desire*) that they be [*or that (the) priests will for to be*].

⁴⁶ Also those goldsmiths that make them, be not of much time; therefore whether those things

[or the things] that be made of (*or by*) them, may be or be able to be gods?

⁴⁷ Soothly they left false things, and shame (*or reproof*) to men to coming afterward *[or coming after]*.

⁴⁸ For why when battles and evils come on them, priests think, where they shall hide themselves with those *[or with them]*.

⁴⁹ How therefore owe (*or ought*) those *[or they]* to be deemed, that they be gods, which neither deliver them-selves from battle, neither deliver themselves from evils?

⁵⁰ For why when those *[or they]* be of tree (*or of wood*), and of stone, and of gold, and of silver, it shall be known afterward,

⁵¹ of (*or by*) all folks, and kings, that those things be false, that be made open; for those be not gods, but the works of (*the*) hands of men, and no work of God is with (*or is in*) them. *[to all folks and kings; which be open, or known, for they be not gods, but (the) works of men's hands, and no work of God (is) with (or is in) them.]*

⁵² Whereof therefore it is known, that they be not gods, but the works of (*the*) hands of men *[or but (the) works of men's hands]*, and no work of God is in them.

⁵³ They raise not a king to a country, neither shall give rain to men.

⁵⁴ Also they shall not deem *[or judge](a)* doom, neither they shall deliver the country from wrong. For those be able to (*do*) nothing *[or For they may (do) nothing]*, as little crows betwixt the midst of heaven and of (*the*) earth.

⁵⁵ For when fire falleth into the house of gods of tree (*or of wood*), and of gold, and of silver, soothly the priests of those [*or the priests of them*] shall flee, and shall be delivered; but they shall be burnt as (*the*) beams in the midst.

⁵⁶ Forsooth they shall not against-stand a king and battle. How there-fore is it to guess, or to receive, that they be gods? [*or How therefore is it to be guessed, or to be received, for they be gods?*]

⁵⁷ Gods of tree (*or of wood*), and of stone, and of gold, and of silver, shall not deliver themselves from night thieves, neither from day thieves, and wicked men be stronger than those gods.

⁵⁸ They shall take away gold, and silver, and cloth(es), by which those [*or they*] be covered, and (*then*) they shall go away; neither they (*be able to*) help themselves.

⁵⁹ Therefore it is better to be a king showing his virtue (*or his power*), either [*or (else)*] a profitable vessel in the house, in which he shall have glory that wieldeth it, than false gods; either [*or (else)*] a door in the house, that keepeth those things that be in it, *is better* than false gods.

⁶⁰ Forsooth the sun, and moon, and stars, when they be bright [*or when they be shining*], and sent out to profits, obey.

⁶¹ In like manner and [*the*] light-ning, when it appeareth, is clear. Soothly the same thing and (*the*) wind breatheth in each country.

⁶² And (*the*) clouds, to which, when it is commanded of (*or by*) God to go through all the world, perform that, that is commanded to those [*or do what thing is commanded to them*]. ⁶³ Also

(*the*) fire sent from above, to waste mountains and woods, doeth that, that is commanded to it [*or doeth what thing is commanded to it*]; but these *idols* be not like to one of those things, neither by forms, neither by virtues (*or in power*).

⁶⁴ Wherefore it is neither to guess, neither to say, that they be gods, when they may not (*or be not able to*) neither deem doom, neither do (*good*) to men. [*Whereof neither it is to be guessed, neither to be said, them for to be gods, when they may neither deem doom, neither do to men.*]

⁶⁵ Therefore know ye that those be not gods, and dread ye not them. [*And so witting for they be not gods, therefore ye shall not dread them.*]

⁶⁶ For they shall neither curse, neither bless kings.

⁶⁷ Also they show not to (*the*) heathen men signs in (*the*) heaven(s), neither those [*or they*] shall shine as the sun, neither they shall give light as the moon.

⁶⁸ Beasts that may or be able to flee under a roof, and do profit to them-selves, be better than they. [*Beasts be better than they, which may flee under a roof, and profit to themselves.*]

⁶⁹ Therefore by no manner it is open to you, that they be gods. For which thing, dread ye not them.

⁷⁰ For why as a man of rags, or shoeless, in a place where gourds [*or cucumbers, that be bitter herbs*], waxed, keepeth nothing, so be their gods of tree (*or of wood*), and of silver, and of gold.

⁷¹ In the same manner and a white-thorn (*bush*) in a garden [*or in a yard*]*keepeth nothing*, on which *thorn* each bird sitteth, (*and*) in like manner and their gods of tree (*or of wood*), and of gold, and of silver, be like [*to*] a dead man cast forth in(*to*)(*the*) darknesses.

⁷² Also of purple and of marble, which they hold above it; therefore ye shall know, that they be not gods. Also those be eaten at the last, and it shall be into shame in the country. [*And of the purple and marble, that they hold above them(selves), ye shall know also, for they be no gods. Also at the last they themselves be eaten, and it shall be into reproof in the country.*]

⁷³ Better is a just man, that hath no simulacra, for why he shall be far from shames (*or reproofs*).

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