

Jeremiah 11

Much of this chapter is a warning to the people not to forsake the Mosaic covenant as that will bring judgment from God. An interesting revelation, in light of the myriad conspiracy theories today, from God to Jeremiah is that there was a conspiracy among the people. Jeremiah was told what God would do to these conspirators. Conspiracies are real. But conspiracy theories are most often not real. What can we learn from what God told Jeremiah as well as the rest of the Bible on how, as Bible believers, we should deal with conspiracy theories?

- 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,**
- 2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem;**
- 3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant,**
- 4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God:**
- 5 That I may perform the oath which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. Then answered I, and said, So be it, O LORD.**
- 6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them.**
- 7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.**
- 8 Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.**

Jeremiah is told to "hear the words of the covenant." Then he is told to speak to the nation and tell them that disobeying the covenant will bring curses. Jeremiah is reminded that the Mosaic covenant was made with your fathers. The covenant is the Mosaic covenant.

- 9 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.**

The LORD reveals to Jeremiah that there is a conspiracy among the people.

1. Conspiracies are real and do happen.

Acts 23:

- 12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.
- 13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.
- 14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.
- 15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.
- 16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

2. Conspiracy theories May or MAY NOT be true. If they are not true the lie often originates from the father of lies, Satan.

Satan's first conspiracy theory - God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) conspired against Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:

- 1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
- 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
- 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
- 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
- 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

"A conspiracy theory explains an event or set of circumstances as the result of a secret plot, usually by powerful conspirators. Satan convinced Eve that the most powerful of "conspirators"—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were secretly trying to keep the first humans from having their eyes opened in a way that would make them "like God, knowing good and evil." Eve became the first in a long line, from Gnostics to flat-earthers, to believe powerful forces were withholding secret information.

"That some people somewhere believe something ridiculous is not surprising. What is shocking, though, is so many Christians not only believe in such conspiracies but also promote them in public. You can hardly open Facebook without seeing a Christian (too often a pastor or other church leader) has posted claims they cannot possibly know to be true. Much needs to be said about why so many followers of Christ are spreading misinformation. But we don't need a sophisticated sociological analysis before we can denounce such slander as sinful.

"In a 1950 book review in the philosophy journal *Mind*, Sir Peter Medawar said of the New Age Catholic Teilhard de Chardin, "[He] can be excused of dishonesty only on the grounds that before deceiving others he has taken great pains to deceive himself." While that is a generous sentiment, it is not one that we can adopt for our fellow Christians. Just as God doesn't give Christian politicians an exemption to lie, he doesn't give Aunt Karen or Pastor Bob a pass on slander simply because they believe the falsehoods they are spreading. They have a duty to determine the veracity of a claim that is potentially slanderous. After all, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak (Matt. 12:36).

"Slander occurs, as Jon Bloom notes, whenever someone says something untrue about someone else that results, intentionally or unintentionally, in damaging that someone else's reputation. The Bible makes it clear God hates slander (Prov. 6:16, 19). Paul lists it as a behavior of those who hate God (Rom. 1:30), and James calls it demonic behavior (James 3:15-16). We must not slander even our enemies (Matt. 5:43-48).

"Many modern conspiracies being spread by Christians were concocted by alt-right occultists, New Age pagans, or some other group dedicated to anti-Christian esotericism. Ultimately, though, all slanderous conspiracy theories originate from Satan. If we are a people filled with the Spirit of truth (John 14:17), we won't spread messages from the father of lies (John 8:44)."

Joe Carter, Executive pastor at McLean Bible Church, *Christians Are Not Immune to Conspiracy Theories*, May 8, 2020, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/christians-conspiracy-theories/>

- 10 They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.**
- 11 Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.**
- 12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their trouble.**
- 13 For according to the number of thy cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal.**
- 14 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.**

When the people focused on conspiracies it resulted in them sinning, refusing to hear the word of God, and following after idols (false gods) and a sinful lifestyle.

The progression of this chapter is instructive.

1. Israel was commanded to obey the Mosaic covenant.
vss 1-7
2. Israel turned their back on God and broke the Mosaic covenant - disobeyed its commands.
vss. 8, 10
3. Conspiracy arose to make sure that men like Jeremiah could not turn back the godless rebellion.
vss. 9, 19
4. Sin in the nation became worse and worse.
vs. 15
5. Because of their rebellion God will send judgment.
vss. 11,12,17
6. The people had reached the place that the judgment was so certain no prayer was even to be made.
vss. 14

- 15** What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.
- 16** The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.
- 17** For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

Israel's sin is of such magnitude that God say they have nothing in common with His Temple. Not only do they practice evil, but they rejoice in the evil they do.

God brought Israel into existence and has now pronounced judgment upon her. Notice, the people have brought the judgment upon themselves because of what they have done.

- 18** And the LORD hath given me knowledge of it, and I know it: then thou shewedst me their doings.
- 19** But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

Vs. 18 There was sinfulness in the nation as well as a conspiracy to remove the righteous such as Jeremiah.

Notice, the LORD gave Jeremiah knowledge of what was happening.

Vs. 19 Initially, Jeremiah was like a lamb brought to the slaughter. Unaware, ignorant, of what is happening. He had no ideas that there was a conspiracy against him until the LORD revealed it to him.

- 20** But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause.
- 21** Therefore thus saith the LORD of the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Prophecy not in the name of the LORD, that thou die not by our hand:
- 22** Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine:
- 23** And there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.

Vs. 20 Jeremiah takes his concerns to the LORD. He acknowledges God:

1. Judges righteously
2. Judges based on the heart
3. Will exact vengeance on those who deserve it.
4. Will respond to the prayers of His prophet.

Vs. 21-23 God answers Jeremiah's prayer.

The conspirators ordering Jeremiah not to speak in God's name lest he be killed (vs. 21), from the same village as Jeremiah, will, instead, die themselves by the sword (vs. 22). And their children will die as well by famine (vs. 22). All the conspirators will be slain (vs. 23).