
A table of contents for the *Journal of Theological Studies (old series)* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jts-os_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[1st page of article]

the stake. Harnack translates 'Wherefore am I here?', but, apart from the grammatical difficulty, the rendering 'I (emphatic, contrasted with my son) must do that for which I am here' makes much better sense: the context requires action and is followed by action. Here, as in St Matthew, there is a variant ἐφ' ᾧ, but this is of no importance, ἐπί with the dat. often signifies purpose, though not so often as ἐπί with the acc.

When my book was going through the press a reader mentioned, in a note on this passage, that he had seen in a private collection a beaker of the first century with the inscription ΕΥΦΡΑΙΝΟΥ ΕΦ Ο ΠΑΡΕΙ (I asked for further information, but was told that the owner did not wish its whereabouts to be known). He translated 'Enjoy yourself[, which is] what you are here for'; but the sense may just as well be 'Enjoy yourself. Do that for which you are here' (if we had not the other examples to compare it with, we might translate 'Enjoy yourself on that for which you are here'). The evidence, very strong otherwise, for the sentence in St Matthew being elliptical and not interrogative becomes in the light of these additional passages conclusive. Moreover thus understood this sentence has a remarkable congruence with that other in St John (xiii 27) 'That thou doest, do quickly'.

One other point. The elliptical character of the phrase, its vagueness, and its occurrence in the same form in three entirely different contexts suggests that it is a colloquialism. The nearest illustration in English that I can think of is 'What you will', but numerous other instances similar in their vagueness and universality of application will occur to any one ('your turn', 'I am up against it', etc.). If so, it may be compared with other expressions of our Lord, 'What have I to do with thee?' (St John ii 4), 'Thou sayest' (St Luke xxiii 3), and His use of homely proverbs, 'Physician, heal thyself', 'the camel and the needle's eye'. The retention of this vivid Greek phrase by St Matthew alone would bear on the question of the relative authority of that Gospel, and even of the language in which it was originally written. If my conjecture is right, there ought to be other examples of this use, which I hope other correspondents may be able to supply.

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PROPHECY AND THE SABBATH.

(A note on the teaching of Jeremiah.)

The Sabbath is mentioned only once in the book of Jeremiah, but the passage is a striking one (Jer. xvii 19–27). In the dark days at the end of the seventh century B.C. the Prophet is represented as promising victory to kings and prosperity to Jerusalem on the one condition that

the Sabbath be hallowed 'to do no work therein'. But it should be noted that one particular kind of work is in the author's mind. He is not possessed with a general notion of defending the observance of the Sabbath, but he has in mind a particular form of Sabbath breaking: 'Bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden (*vv.* 21, 22). . . . If ye shall diligently hearken to bring in no burden (*v.* 24) . . . then shall there enter in . . . kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, . . . and this city shall be inhabited for ever (*v.* 25). . . . But if ye will not hearken unto me . . . not to bear a burden and enter in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces (ארמנות) of Jerusalem' (*v.* 27).

On this passage Giesebrecht (in Nowack's *Handkommentar*, 1907) writes: 'This piece is pronounced not genuine by Stade, Kuenen, and Cornill, and by the last two it is ascribed to a contemporary of Ezra and Nehemiah, who shared their view'. [See Neh. xiii 15–22.] Kuenen remarks: 'The one-sided emphasizing of the observance of the Sabbath, which represents the whole future of the people as dependent upon it, must strike one as strange in the mouth of Jeremiah'. And so the nine verses are printed in very small type in Giesebrecht's learned commentary on the prophet. It is treated as 'unecht'.

Such, no doubt, was the view also of A. B. Davidson, though it is not expressly stated in his article 'Jeremiah' in Hastings's *D. B.* 'The lawbook', he writes, 'little satisfied the prophetic idealism. Jeremiah seeks to draw men's minds away from all that was external—sacrifices, temple, ark, and lawbook—to that which was inward and real. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart (Jer. iv 4).' Elsewhere in the same article Davidson specifies certain passages (xvii 19–27 among them) which were not incorporated with the prophecies of Jeremiah until 'the third stage' of the history of the growth of the book.

Further, Sir G. A. Smith in his *Jeremiah* (Baird Lectures for 1922) describes xvii 19–27 as 'an exhortation to keep the Sabbath, . . . which is probably post-exilic'. On the other hand Professor Rothstein of Münster in Kautzsch's *Heilige Schrift des A. T.'s* (1922) pronounces in favour of the genuineness of the passage as a whole, though he finds some interpolations (e. g. *vv.* 23, 26) in it. He rightly points out that the Sabbath ordinance is something more than a merely ritual law. The Sabbath rest was the poor man's privilege, but unwelcome to the rich (Amos viii 5).

In discussing the 'genuineness' of this passage we need say but little on the subject of style. The book of Jeremiah is not as such the

work of the prophet himself, and in form it must owe much to Baruch the scribe (Jer. xxxvi 1–7, 32; xlv 1–5). But it may be said that a good parallel to Jer. xvii 19–27 is found in xxii 1–5. The decisive phrases are in *vv.* 3, 4:—

'Execute ye judgement and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence, to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then there shall enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and all his people.' Oppression is the sin which looms largest in the eye of the Prophet.

Both xxii 1–5 and xvii 19–27 are found in the Greek recension of the book of Jeremiah, as well as in MT, but neither passage in its form suggests to us the mind of Jeremiah. Can that prophetic hater of war have held out such a reward as that kings and princes riding in chariots and on horses should enter the gates of Jerusalem? This is a picture of the return of kings from victorious war. It would suit the time of Jeremiah, but it is surely alien from his mind. It might conceivably come from Baruch the scribe, for Baruch cherished worldly ambition (Jer. xlv 5).

But the question before us is one of matter, the matter of observance of the Sabbath. Are Kuenen and his supporters right in holding that Jeremiah could not have urged the observance of the Sabbath with the emphasis which is ascribed to him in xvii 19–27? Or, to put the question another way, Does A. B. Davidson's characterization of Jeremiah (which would be generally accepted) exclude the possibility that the Prophet presented such an ultimatum on Sabbath observance to his king and to his people?

Let us grant in full all that is asserted of the inwardness of the Prophet's teaching; but does it follow that we must in consistency allow that Jeremiah could not have spoken of the Sabbath as in xvii 21–27? Was there nothing 'inward' in that institution? At least it had an inward meaning for Ezekiel, Jeremiah's contemporary, who spoke of the Sabbath as a sign between JEHOVAH and Israel (Ezek. xx 12). Sabbath observance could be looked on by a fellow-prophet as a test of loyalty to JEHOVAH. The Israelite had the Sabbath as 'a gift' from his God: the heathen was without it. Would not Jeremiah as the champion of the One true God be also a champion of this distinguishing mark of the true religion? Sacrifice and temple and ark and lawbook were common to Israel and Egypt and Babylon—but *not* the Sabbath. Nothing has hitherto been reported on this subject from Egypt, and the 'Babylonian Sabbath' still remains a doubtful Sabbath. In the new edition (1926) of Hugo Gressmann's *Altorienta-*

lische Texte zum AT all that appears is a passage of fifteen lines with the non-committal title *Die sogenannten Sabbathvorschriften.* All that is quite clear in these *Vorschriften* is that the seventh, fourteenth, nineteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days of the month were unlucky. 'Ein Vorhaben auszuführen, ist (der Tag) nicht geeignet.' The Jewish Sabbath was something different.

The Sabbath would appeal to Jeremiah as a distinguishing mark of the true JEHOVAH-faith, but not only as such. The mind of the prophet was strictly just and his heart was very pitiful. To such a nature the injunction of rest on the seventh day would seem central in religion. It was indeed a charter for the labourer. Field labour was rigorously forbidden: *the ox and ass must rest.* The maidservant was to have respite from the heavy work of grinding the corn with the hand-mill. We may add that in the Deuteronomic form of the Fourth Commandment a prophetic note is heard: 'And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt' (Deut. v 15). Jeremiah may have heard the Commandment in this form: in any case he would have been in sympathy with it.

His just spirit rose in wrath against any oppression of the labourer. No denunciation could be more severe than that which he aims at the masters ('princes' and others) who on a celebrated occasion broke the covenant of the servant (Jer. xxxiv 8–22). Hebrew servants were to serve for six years, and in the seventh year to go free. The princes first conformed to this regulation, being touched in conscience by their danger from the Chaldeans; and then, when the danger seemed to be past, they recalled their servants into servitude. For this act of treacherous oppression Jeremiah in the name of JEHOVAH devotes the princes 'to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth'. The prophet who stood so stoutly for the law of the seventh year might surely stand up stoutly for the ordinance of the seventh day.

Not only the princes, but the king (Jehoiakim) also was an oppressor of the labourer and similarly earned Jeremiah's denunciation. Jehoiakim was engaged in building a lofty palace and in 'using his neighbour's service without wages' (Jer. xxii 13 ff). This service took no doubt the form of bearing burdens: sometimes it would consist of removing rubbish carried in baskets upon the head or shoulder (cf. Ps. lxxxi 6), at other times of bringing building material. But it was heavy manual work: there were no cranes in those days. The prophet's wrath rises to the height against Jehoiakim: 'He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.'

At a somewhat earlier date, we may suppose, Jeremiah goes to meet the king and to appeal for the observance of the Sabbath by the king.

The words of the address are purposely generalized, 'Hear ye . . . ye kings of Judah, and all Judah', but the message is meant in the first place for Jehoiakim himself. There are no generalities in the prophet's address: he goes straight to the root of the matter with the palace-building king. 'Bear no burden on the sabbath day'—no more carrying of stone or timber on the seventh day as on the six preceding days: let the labourer have a respite from this *corvée*, this heavy unpaid work. Jeremiah is not demanding that no one should cook a meal or go for a walk on the Sabbath, but that acknowledgement should be made that the labourer has a right to rest one day in seven. The prophet is not speaking as a ritualist, but as a would-be protector of the poor. This is surely Jeremiah himself: we need not look for some later prophet on whom to father this living discourse. The background of these verses is that of the middle period of Jeremiah's activity. An oppressive king is on the throne, Jerusalem still has 'palaces', and probably more great houses are in building, but danger is approaching, and the prophet sees it and gives warning of it. In form Jeremiah says, Keep the sabbath, but his matter is, Cease from oppression.

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SOME HEBREW WORDS

IN the following notes an attempt is made to suggest possible, even probable, meanings or suitable affinities in the cognate languages for several uncertain words, which have either been wrongly explained or emended away, in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

The verb אבך has caused the interpreters difficulty in Isa. ix 17 (18), where the M. T. has וַיִּתְאַבְּכוּ גֵּאוּת עָשָׁן 'and they roll upward in thick pillars of smoke' (R.V.). The comparison of it with the Arab. أَبَكَ *carnosus fuit*[1] hardly yields a suitable sense; for the emphasis rests rather on the destruction of the thickets in fire and smoke (cp. LXX's *συνκαταφάγεται*) than on the rich fleshy fat of the smoke.[2] The Pesh., in using ܐܬܥܩܡ 'was twisted', appears to confuse התאבך with התהפך; but it is not necessary either to suppose that the Syr. translator read ויתהפכו and to alter the text accordingly.[3] May not the Heb. אבך be cognate with the Bab.-Ass. *abāku* 'to carry away'? In this case the M. T. is to be translated 'and they are carried away as' or 'in tall pillars of smoke'. The various meanings assigned to the Bab.-Ass.

[1] G.-B. p. 5; cp. Freytag *Lex. Ar.-Lat.*, vol. i p. 5; cp. Bab.-Ass. *apāqu* or *epēqu* 'to be massive' (Bezold *B. A. G.* p. 55).

[2] This interpretation goes back to Marwān ibn Janāḥ, who explains אבך of the تكاثف of trees (Neubauer *Marwân ibn Janâḥ's 'Book of Hebrew Roots'* p. 18).

[3] Cheyne *Isaiah* (in *S. B. O. T.*) p. 84.