

Our Freedom Of Choice

Do not say *The Lord was responsible for my sinning*,
for he does not do what he hates.

Do not say *It was he who led me astray*,
for he has no use for a sinner.

The Lord hates all that is foul,
and no-one who fears him will love it either.
He himself made human beings in the beginning,
and then left them free to make their own decisions.
If you choose, you will keep the Commandments,
and so be faithful to his will.

He has set fire and water before you:
put out your hand to whichever you prefer.
A human being has life and death before him;
whichever he prefers will be given him.
For vast is the wisdom of the Lord:
he is almighty and all-seeing.
His eyes are on those who fear him,
he notes every human action.
He never commanded anyone to be godless,
he has given no-one permission to sin.

Ecclesiasticus 15:11-20

Refusal To Live Before God The Creator

Woe to those who burrow down to conceal their plans from the Lord,
who scheme in the dark and say: *Who can see us? Who knows who we are?*
How perverse you are!
Is the potter no better than the clay?
Something that was made: can it say of its Maker, *He did not make me?*
Or a pot say of the potter: *He does not know his job?*

Isaiah 29:16-17

Solomon's Prayer For The Temple

Yet will God really live with human beings on earth? Why, the heavens, and the highest of heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this Temple which I have built! Even so, listen favourably to the prayer and entreaty of your servant, O my God: listen to the cry and the prayer which your servant makes to you today: day and night may your eyes watch over this Temple, over this place of which you have said: *My Name will be there*. Listen to the prayer which your servant offers in this place.

I Kings 8:27-29

When Jesus Had Entered Jerusalem In Triumph....

He entered Jerusalem and went to the Temple: and when he had surveyed it all, as it was late by now, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.
Next day, as they were leaving Bethany, he felt hungry. Seeing a fig-tree in leaf some distance away, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it: but when he came up to it he found nothing but leaves: for it was not the season for figs. And he addressed the fig-tree: *May no-one ever eat fruit from you again*. And his disciples heard him say this.
So they reached Jerusalem and he went into the Temple and began driving out the men selling and buying there: he upset the tables of the money-changers and the seats of the dove-sellers. Nor would he allow anyone to carry anything through the Temple. And he taught them and said: Does not Scripture say: *My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples?* But you have turned it into *a bandit's den*. This came to the ears of the chief priests and the scribes, and they tried to find some way of doing away with him: they were afraid of

him because the people were carried away by his teaching. And when evening came he went out of the city.

Next morning as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree withered to the roots. Peter remembered. *Look Rabbi*, he said to Jesus, *the fig-tree that you cursed has withered away.*

Mark 11:11-22

Against The Temple

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying: *Stand at the gate of the Temple of the Lord and there proclaim this message. Say: Listen to the word of the Lord, all you of Judah that come in by these gates to worship the Lord. The Lord of Armies, the God of Israel says this: Amend your behaviour and your actions and I will let you stay in this place. Do not put your faith in delusive words, as "This is the Lord's Sanctuary, the Lord's Sanctuary, the Lord's Sanctuary!" But if you really amend your behaviour and your actions, if you really treat one another fairly, if you do not exploit the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, if you do not shed innocent blood in this place and if you do not follow other gods, to your own ruin, then I shall let you stay in this place, in the country I gave for ever to your ancestors of old. Look, you are putting your faith in delusive, worthless words! Steal, would you, murder, commit adultery, perjure yourselves, burn incense to Baal, follow other gods of whom you know nothing? -and then come and stand before me, in this Temple that bears my Name, saying: "Now we are safe to go on doing all these loathsome things!" Do you look upon this Temple that bears my Name as a den of bandits? I, at any rate, can see straight, the Lord declares.*

Jeremiah 7:1-11

Prophetic Acts

Jeremiah's call: almond blossom and cauldron, Jer 1:11-16; his underwear, Jer 13:1-11; the breaking of the jug at the Gate of the Potsherds, Jer 19:1 - 20:6

Hosea's marriage to a whore: Hos 1 - 3

Ezekiel's departure with his rucksack: Ezk 12

Malachi's Oracle on the Temple

Look, I shall send my messenger to clear a way before me. And suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his Temple: yes, the angel of the Covenant for whom you long is on his way, says the Lord of Hosts. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like fuller's alkali. He will take his seat as refiner and purifier, he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may make the offering to the Lord with uprightness. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be acceptable to the Lord as in former days, as in the years of old.

Malachi 3:1-4

The Liturgy Of Jesus Christ

But now Christ has come, as the High Priest of all the blessings that were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, not made by human hands - that is, not of this created order - and he has entered the Sanctuary, once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement, may restore their bodily purity. How much more will the blood of Christ, who offered himself, blameless as he was, to God through the eternal Spirit, purify our conscience from dead actions, so that we can worship the living God?

Hebrews 9:11-14

