

MARCH 24, 2022  
Thursday of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Lent  
Jeremiah 7: 23-28; Luke 11: 14-23

“COVENANT WITH MY GOD.”

Both readings for today center on following the covenant and will of God. Prophet Jeremiah has a strong statement to the people reminding them of the covenant of Israel to God. They do not follow this covenant: “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way I command you, so that it may be well with you.”<sup>1</sup> The people disobeyed the command by following their own evil ways, refused and turned their back to God. Prophet Jeremiah said: “They did not obey or incline their ear, but, in the stubbornness of their evil will, they walked in their own counsels, and looked backward rather than forward. They did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. They did worse than their ancestors did.”<sup>2</sup>

While in the gospel, Jesus was confronted by the crowds and questioned His power over the evil one. The crowd likened Him to Beelzebul, the ruler of demons. They said He cast out demons by Beelzebul rather than by God. “Jesus answers their charge with two arguments. There were many exorcists among the Jews in Jesus' time. So, Jesus retorted by saying that they also incriminate their own kin who cast out demons. If they condemn Jesus, they also condemn themselves. In his second argument he asserts that no kingdom divided against itself can survive for long. We have witnessed enough civil wars in our own time to prove the destructive force at work here for the annihilation of whole peoples and their land. If Satan lends his power against his own forces, then he is finished. How can a strong person be defeated except by someone who is stronger? Jesus

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 7: 23 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 7: 24, 26 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

asserted his power and authority to cast out demons as a clear demonstration of the reign of God.”<sup>3</sup>

My sisters and brothers, let us look at ourselves as we reflect on the messages of Prophet Jeremiah and Jesus in today’s readings. Am I listening to the Word of God and apply it with my life everyday? Do I carry out the covenant of God in my life? Am I a force of unity or division in my family or community? Let us be reminded of His word: “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”<sup>4</sup> Let us ask our Lord here in the Eucharist that we may be with Him always and be the source of love and unity, healing and care to those people around us. Let us strengthen our covenant of love with God and observe our Lenten penance and sacrifices.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.dailyscripture.net](http://www.dailyscripture.net)

<sup>4</sup> Luke 11: 23 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society