

A Lament Over the Ravages of Drought

**Judgment for Believing the Misleading Lies of False
Prophets**

**Lament Over Present Destruction and Threat of More to
Come**

Jeremiah 14:1-22

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Text:

Jeremiah 14:1-22,

- 1. The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the drought.**
- 2. “The people of Judah are in mourning. The people in her cities are pining away. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem.**
- 3. The leading men of the cities send their servants for water. They go to the cisterns, but they do not find any water there. They return with their containers empty. Disappointed and dismayed, they bury their faces in their hands.**
- 4. They are dismayed because the ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land. The farmers, too, are dismayed and bury their faces in their hands.**
- 5. Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field because there is no grass.**
- 6. Wild donkeys stand on the hilltops and pant for breath like jackals. Their eyes are strained looking for food, because there is none to be found.”**
- 7. Then I said, “O Lord, intervene for the honor of your name even though our sins speak out against us. Indeed, we have turned away from you many times. We have sinned against you.**
- 8. You have been the object of Israel’s hopes. You have saved them when they were in trouble. Why have you become like a resident**

foreigner in the land? Why have you become like a traveler who only stops in to spend the night?

9. Why should you be like someone who is helpless, like a champion who cannot save anyone? You are indeed with us, and we belong to you. Do not abandon us!”

10. Then the Lord spoke about these people. “They truly love to go astray. They cannot keep from running away from me. So I am not pleased with them. I will now call to mind the wrongs they have done and punish them for their sins.”

11. Then the Lord said to me, “Do not pray for good to come to these people!

12. Even if they fast, I will not hear their cries for help. Even if they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Instead, I will kill them through wars, famines, and plagues.”

13. Then I said, “Oh, Lord God, look! The prophets are telling them that you said, ‘You will not experience war or suffer famine. I will give you lasting peace and prosperity in this land.’”

14. Then the Lord said to me, “Those prophets are prophesying lies while claiming my authority! I did not send them. I did not commission them. I did not speak to them. They are prophesying to these people false visions, worthless predictions, and the delusions of their own mind.

15. I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name. They may be saying, ‘No war or famine will happen in this land.’ But I, the Lord, say this about them: ‘War and starvation will kill those prophets.’

16. The people to whom they are prophesying will die through war and famine. Their bodies will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and there will be no one to bury them. This will happen to the men and their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out on them the destruction they deserve.”

17. “Tell these people this, Jeremiah: ‘My eyes overflow with tears day and night without ceasing. For my people, my dear children, have suffered a crushing blow. They have suffered a serious wound.

18. If I go out into the countryside, I see those who have been killed in battle. If I go into the city, I see those who are sick because of starvation. For both prophet and priest go about their own business in the land without having any real understanding.”

19. Then I said, “Lord, have you completely rejected the nation of Judah? Do you despise the city of Zion? Why have you struck us with such force that we are beyond recovery? We hope for peace, but nothing good has come of it. We hope for a time of relief from our troubles, but experience terror.

20. Lord, we confess that we have been wicked. We confess that our ancestors have done wrong. We have indeed sinned against you.

21. For the honor of your name, do not treat Jerusalem with contempt. Do not treat with disdain the place where your glorious throne sits. Be mindful of your covenant with us. Do not break it!

22. Do any of the worthless idols of the nations cause rain to fall? Do the skies themselves send showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God, who does this? So we put our hopes in you because you alone do all this.” (NET)

Introduction:

I. Willis wrote, “The time for mercy has passed; the Lord has been long-suffering as long as he could. Now is the time, “to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow.” (Jeremiah 1:10)

II. Coffman outlined this chapter as follows:

A. A description of the drought (verses 1-6).

B. Jeremiah’s prayers for God’s help (verses 7-9).

C. God’s refusal to and the apostate nation (verses 10-12).

D. Jeremiah’s plea that the false prophets are to blame (verses 13-15).

E. the doom of the false prophets and the people (verses 16-18).

F. Jeremiah's continual plea to God (verses 19-22).

III. Coffman mentioned that Jeremiah 14:1 – 15:4 deals with the same overall subject.

A. The Pulpit Commentary suggests that this chapter be read in connection with the following one.

Commentary:

A Lament Over the Ravages of Drought

Jeremiah 14:1, The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the drought. (NET)

I. The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the drought.*

A. *NET footnote: Drought was one of the punishments for failure to keep the terms of the covenant.

1. **Deuteronomy 28:22-24, He will afflict you with weakness, fever, inflammation, infection, sword, blight, and mildew; these will attack you until you perish. The sky above your heads will be bronze and the earth beneath you iron. The Lord will make the rain of your land powder and dust; it will come down on you from the sky until you are destroyed. (NET)**

2. **Leviticus 26:18-20, “If, in spite of all these things, you do not obey me, I will discipline you seven times more on account of your sins. I will break your strong pride and make your sky like iron and your land like bronze. Your**

strength will be used up in vain, your land will not give its yield, and the trees of the land will not produce their fruit. (NET)

B. Hamilton observed that Southern Palestine was a land of few springs and rainwater was collected during the two rainy seasons (the former in the late fall and the latter in the spring.)

1. Reduction in rainfall posed a serious danger to people and animals.

2. Southern Judah (Negen) was subject to droughts. This particular drought cannot be identified with any particular historical occurrence and may have represented all droughts of that particular period. (See Clarke.)

C. Smith places this severe famine to the reign of Jehoiakim, and things were getting worse.

1. Farmers could not produce a crop, the cisterns were dry, wild and domesticated animals were starving and dying of thirst.

2. Times were very difficult!

D. Willis wrote, “We are almost certainly in the reign of Zedekiah here.

1. Clements argues that we are still in the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598 B.C.) here.

E. God spoke again to Jeremiah.

1. Jeremiah 1:2, The Lord began to speak to him in the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amon ruled over Judah. (NET)

2. Jeremiah 46:1, The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the nations. (NET)

3. Jeremiah 47:1, The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza. (NET)

4. Jeremiah 49:34, Early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, the Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam. (NET)

F. Clarke supposed this discourse was delivered after the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

Note: Coffman observed that dating the events in this chapter is difficult. References to invasions and exile are not conclusive, because there were three invasions and exiles. Droughts were also frequent. Various commentators vary in the dates they assign to these events. The occasion of this chapter was a terrible drought that fell upon Judaea.”

Jeremiah 14:2, “The people of Judah are in mourning. The people in her cities are pining away. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem. (NET)

I. “The people of Judah are in mourning.

A. “They all sit in black upon the ground . . .”

1. Wearing black even then was a token of grief or mourning.

a. Psalm 35:14, I mourned for them as I would for a friend or my brother. I bowed down in sorrow as if I were mourning for my mother. (NET)

2. The Pulpit Commentary states “black” here does not refer to color, but to the “squalid, unwashed” clothes being worn by the mourners.

II. The people in her cities are pining away.

A. The people were made to deeply grieve, languish, pine away because of the consequences of the drought.

III. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow.

A. The people of Judah and Jerusalem laid prostrate on the ground crying to God for relief from their sorrow. (See Coffman.)

1. If they had not sinned they would not have been in this distress.

2. Coffman wrote, “Throughout their history, the Jews had persistently called upon God when their troubles came upon them.”

3. Clarke stated this verse refers to the black garment that covered the mourners from head to foot.

a. Jeremiah 14:2, “The people of Judah are in mourning. The people in her cities are pining away. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem. (NET)

IV. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem.

A. In our times of trouble, whether we have been righteous or not, we cry to the Lord.

1. To whom can we go but to the Lord?

Jeremiah 14:3, The leading men of the cities send their servants for water. They go to the cisterns, but they do not find any water there. They return with their containers empty. Disappointed and dismayed, they bury their faces in their hands. (NET)

I. The leading men of the cities send their servants for water.

A. The word “servants” in certain other versions is rendered, “little ones”.

1. “Most modern scholars insist that the word means “servants,” “inferiors,” “employees,” or “the common people.” (Coffman) (Also see The Pulpit Commentary.)

2. Some older commentators understood “little ones” to mean children believing the servants no longer were working due to the financial consequences of the famine, drought. (See Coffman.)

3. Things had become so bad even the leading men of the city had to discharge their employees and send their children throughout the land in search of water. (See Clarke.)

a. 1 Kings 18:1-6, Some time later, in the third year of the famine, the Lord told Elijah, “Go, make an appearance before Ahab, so I may send rain on the surface of the ground.” So Elijah went to make an appearance before Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria. So Ahab summoned Obadiah, who

supervised the palace. (Now Obadiah was a very loyal follower of the Lord. When Jezebel was killing the Lord's prophets, Obadiah took one hundred prophets and hid them in two caves in two groups of fifty. He also brought them food and water.) Ahab told Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs and valleys. Maybe we can find some grazing areas so we can keep the horses and mules alive and not have to kill some of the animals." They divided up the land between them; Ahab went one way and Obadiah went the other. (NET)

B. The leading men of the cities were the nobles, the upper classes of Judah and Jerusalem. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

II. They go to the cisterns,* but they do not find any water there.

A. *NET footnote: Cisterns were pits dug in the ground and lined with plaster to hold rainwater.

B. The cisterns are dry. The drought was severe!

C. The storage cistern were empty. They contained no water.

III. They return with their containers empty.

A. There was no water. Think how devastating this was to people, livestock and crops.

1. Life, health, commerce were in serious danger.

IV. Disappointed and dismayed, they bury their faces in their hands.

A. The people of Judah, because of the drought, are disappointed and dismayed to the point that they bury their faces in their hands because of their grief or “cover their heads” as a sign of mourning.

B. This phrase is also translated in some versions, “covered their heads” which was a sign of the deepest mourning. (The Pulpit Commentary)

1. 2 Samuel 15:30, As David was going up the Mount of Olives, he was weeping as he went; his head was covered and his feet were bare. All the people who were with him also had their heads covered and were weeping as they went up. (NET)

2. 2 Samuel 19:4, The king covered his face and cried out loudly, “My son, Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!” (NET)

3. Esther 6:12, Then Mordecai again sat at the king’s gate, while Haman hurried away to his home, mournful and with a veil over his head. (NET)

Jeremiah 14:4, They are dismayed because the ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land. The farmers, too, are dismayed and bury their faces in their hands. (NET)

I. They are dismayed because the ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land.

A. The ground was so dry it became cracked and could not be plowed.

1. No crops could be grown.

B. The people, as would be expected, were totally dismayed by the situation in which they found themselves.

II. The farmers, too, are dismayed and bury their faces in their hands.

A. This drought was so severe hunger and starvation were threatening all the people.

Jeremiah 14:5, Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field because there is no grass. (NET)

I. Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field because there is no grass.

A. The mother deer forsakes her newborn fawn because she could not produce milk due to the shortage of grass.

1. This animal was famous in the ancient world for the care it provided its young. (The Pulpit Commentary)

2. Conditions had to be really bad for the mother deer to forsake her fawn!

B. Even the innocent animals were starving because of the people's sins.

Jeremiah 14:6, Wild donkeys stand on the hilltops and pant for breath like jackals. Their eyes are strained looking for food, because there is none to be found.” (NET)

I. Wild donkeys stand on the hilltops and pant for breath like jackals.

A. Due to the drought and resulting famine, wild donkeys were at the point of death.

B. Animals, wild and domesticated, vegetation of all kinds, people of all positions in life, nobles, servants, children, farmers, grass, the ground itself, everything suffered from the drought which was the result of willful sins! (See Coffman.)

C. Jackals here are said to be in such distress that they pant for breath.

1. Jeremiah 9:11, The Lord said, “I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. I will destroy the towns of Judah so that no one will be able to live in them.” (NET)

2. Jeremiah 10:22, Listen! News is coming even now. The rumble of a great army is heard approaching from a land in the north. It is coming to turn the towns of Judah into rubble, places where only jackals live. (NET)

II. Their eyes are strained looking for food, because there is none to be found.

A. Coffman wrote, “The glazed condition of the eyes of the wild ass gives us the picture of eyes that are practically motionless because the death of the animal is near.” . . . from starvation.

Jeremiah 14:7, Then I said, “O Lord, intervene for the honor of your name even though our sins speak out against us. Indeed, we have turned away from you many times. We have sinned against you. (NET)

I. Then I said, “O Lord, intervene for the honor of your name even though our sins (iniquities) speak out against us.*

A. *NET footnote; Or bear witness against us; or can be used as evidence against us.

B. Jeremiah confessed the sins of the people and asked the Lord to help Judah and Jerusalem for the sake of his reputation. (See Smith.)

1. Jeremiah begins anew his intercession on behalf of Judah and Jerusalem.

C. Coffman wrote, This “prayer is not based upon any merit of Israel, but solely upon the character of God himself.”

1. A failure of God to bless the people would be understood by the pagan nations to mean God could not bless Israel-Judah.

D. Jeremiah asked God to “act gloriously” to honor his name. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

1. Psalm 22:31, They will come and tell about his saving deeds; they will tell a future generation what he has accomplished. (NET)

2. Isaiah 44:23, Shout for joy, O sky, for the Lord intervenes; shout out, you subterranean regions of the earth. O mountains, give a joyful shout; you too, O forest and all your trees! For the Lord protects Jacob; he reveals his splendor through Israel. (NET)

3. Isaiah 63:16, For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not recognize us. You, Lord, are our father; you have been called our protector from ancient times. (NET)

II. Indeed, we have turned away from you many times.

A. Their sins were both many and great as well as frequent and continual.

III. We have sinned against you.

A. Confession of sins is an essential step in securing forgiveness, but genuine repentance must accompany it.

1. Numbers 5:7, then he must confess his sin that he has committed and must make full reparation, add one fifth to it, and give it to whomever he wronged. (NET)

2. Joshua 7:20, Achan told Joshua, “It is true. I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel in this way: (NET)

3. 1 Samuel 15:24, Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned, for I have disobeyed what the Lord commanded and what you said as well. For I was afraid of the army, and I followed their wishes. (NET)

4. Psalm 32:5, Then I confessed my sin; I no longer covered up my wrongdoing. I said, “I will confess my rebellious acts to the Lord.” And then you forgave my sins. (Selah) (NET)

5. Matthew 3:6, and he was baptizing them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. (NET)

6. Luke 5:8, But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” (NET)

7. Luke 15:18, “Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep

**the house, and search thoroughly until she finds it?
(NET)**

Jeremiah 14:8, You have been the object of Israel's hopes. You have saved them when they were in trouble. Why have you become like a resident foreigner in the land? Why have you become like a traveler who only stops in to spend the night?

I. You have been the object of Israel's hopes.

A. God had been Israel's only hope.

1. Because of Israel's sins, God had withdrawn his protection from Israel.

2. No hope was left!

II. You have saved them when they were in trouble.

A. Many were the times in which Israel had genuinely repented and God had delivered them from trouble.

III. Why have you become like a resident foreigner in the land?

A. God had become more like a disinterested resident foreigner or traveler than a loving father.

1. Instead of acting as their resident Father god, the Lord appeared to Jeremiah to be more like a sojourner, a wayfaring man who came through the area on occasion.

2. God had begun to act like one who had no particular interest in the welfare of Judah and Jerusalem, like a stranger, a way-faring traveler just passing through. (See Clarke.)

IV. Why have you become like a traveler who only stops in to spend the night?

A. Their troubles were the result of their sins, but now that they were suffering they plead, “Oh, don’t forsake us now. We need you.” (Coffman)

1. God is not a “genie in a bottle” to be called on as needed.

Jeremiah 14:9, Why should you be like someone who is helpless, like a champion who cannot save anyone? You are indeed with us, and we belong to you. Do not abandon us!” (NET)

I. Why should you be like someone who is helpless, like a champion* who cannot save anyone?

A. *NET footnote: Hebrew, mighty man.

B. The claim here is that Jehovah was helpless, like a purported champion who couldn’t save anyone, “like someone struck dead, one in a deep sleep.” (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

II. You are indeed with us, and we belong to you.

A. Perhaps it is more accurate at that time to say God had been with them and they had belonged to him.

III. Do not abandon us!”

A. Having God among us is like a “double-edged sword”, Willis wrote.

1. God blesses those who serve him well, but severely punishes those who sin against him.

a. Deuteronomy 23:14, For the Lord your God walks about in the middle of your camp to deliver you and defeat your enemies for you. Therefore your camp should be holy, so that he does not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you. (NET)

b. Deuteronomy 7:17-24, If you think, “These nations are more numerous than I—how can I dispossess them?” you must not fear them. You must carefully recall what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt, the great judgments you saw, the signs and wonders, the strength and power by which he brought you out—thus the Lord your God will do to all the people you fear. Furthermore, the Lord your God will release hornets among them until the very last ones who hide from you perish. You must not tremble in their presence, for the Lord your God, who is present among you, is a great and awesome God. He, the God who leads you, will expel the nations little by little. You will not be allowed to destroy them all at once lest the wild animals overrun you. The Lord your God will give them over to you; he will throw them into a great panic until they are destroyed. He will hand over their kings to you and you will erase their very names from memory. Nobody will be able to resist you until you destroy them. (NET)

c. Deuteronomy 6:15, for the Lord your God, who is present among you, is a jealous God and his anger will erupt against you and remove you from the land. (NET)

d. Deuteronomy 17:2, 7, Suppose a man or woman is discovered among you—in one of your villages that the Lord your God is giving you—who sins before the Lord your God and breaks his covenant. The witnesses must be first to begin the execution, and then all the people are to join in afterward. In this way you will purge evil from among you. (NET)

e. Deuteronomy 21:21, Then all the men of his city must stone him to death. In this way you will purge out wickedness from among you, and all Israel will hear about it and be afraid. (NET)

2. The Pulpit Commentary gives the literal meaning of this sentence, “Do not abandon us!” as “Do not lay us down,” as if we were a burden of which the Lord was tired.

Jeremiah 14:10, Then the Lord spoke about these people. “They truly love to go astray. They cannot keep from running away from me. So I am not pleased with them. I will now call to mind the wrongs they have done and punish them for their sins.” (NET)

I. Then the Lord spoke about these people.

A. God spoke the truth! His description of Judah and Jerusalem was absolutely accurate.

II. “They truly love to go astray.

A. God had withdrawn his protection from Judah and Jerusalem because they had first wandered from God.

1. They loved the ways of the world, of sin and the devil.

a. Ecclesiastes 3:11, God has made everything fit beautifully in its appropriate time, but he has also placed ignorance in the human heart so that people cannot discover what God has ordained, from the beginning to the end of their lives. (NET)

b. 1 John 2:15, Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, (NET)

2. The world is full of such people!

a. Matthew 7:13-14, “Enter through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the way is spacious that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. How narrow is the gate and difficult the way that leads to life, and there are few who find it! (NET)

b. Ephesians 2:1-3, And although you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you formerly lived according to this world’s present path, according to the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the ruler of the spirit that is now energizing the sons of disobedience, among whom all of us also formerly lived out our lives in the cravings of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest... (NET)

3. Choose God and righteousness and do not wander from God and his righteousness!

a. Amos 5:15, Hate what is wrong, love what is right! Promote justice at the city gate! Maybe the Lord,

the God who commands armies, will have mercy on those who are left from Joseph. (NET)

b. 1 John 2:5, But whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him. (NET)

III. They cannot keep from running away from me.

A. They were dead set, determined to “rove lawlessly about.”

1. This was premeditated, malicious rebellion against God!
2. These people were addicted to sin as some are now addicted to illegal drugs, alcohol, etc.

IV. So I am not pleased with them.

A. “The measure of Israel’s iniquity being now full, they must be punished.” (Adam Clarke via Coffman)

1. God is not at all pleased with sin in our lives!

V. I will now call to mind the wrongs they have done and punish them for their sins.”

A. By war, starvation, and disease, Hamilton wrote, Judah and Jerusalem would be destroyed.

1. This sentence was determined and irrevocable.
2. God would remember their wickedness and act accordingly.

a. Hosea 8:13, They offer up sacrificial gifts to me, and eat the meat, but the Lord does not accept their sacrifices. Soon he will remember their wrongdoing, he will punish their sins, and they will return to Egypt. (NET)

b. Hosea 9:9, They have sunk deep into corruption as in the days of Gibeah. He will remember their wrongdoing. He will repay them for their sins. (NET)

Judgment for Believing the Misleading Lies of the false Prophets

Jeremiah 14:11, Then the Lord said to me, “Do not pray for good to come to these people! (NET)

I. Then the Lord said to me, “Do not pray for good to come to these people!

A. Jehovah’s answer to Jeremiah is contained in verses 10-16.

B. This continues to be a somewhat strange command, at least on the surface.

1. Jeremiah 7:16, Then the Lord said, “As for you, Jeremiah, do not pray for these people! Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf! Do not plead with me to save them, because I will not listen to you. (NET)

2. Jeremiah 11:14, So, Jeremiah, do not pray for these people. Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf. Do not plead with me to save them. For I will not listen to them when they call out to me for help when disaster strikes them.” (NET)

3. Jeremiah 15:1, Then the Lord said to me, “Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me pleading for these people, I would not feel pity for them! Get them away from me! Tell them to go away! (NET)

C. Coffman wrote that further prayers on behalf of apostate Israel were useless.

1. These rebellious people had long refused to repent.
2. Praying for unrepentant sinners would serve no useful purpose.
 - a. God does not forgive unrepentant sinners!

Jeremiah 14:12, Even if they fast, I will not hear their cries for help. Even if they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Instead, I will kill them through wars, famines, and plagues.” (NET)

I. Even if they fast, I will not hear their cries for help.

A. Jeremiah 6:16-20, The Lord said to his people: “You are standing at the crossroads. So consider your path. Ask where the old, reliable paths are. Ask where the path is that leads to blessing and follow it. If you do, you will find rest for your souls.” But they said, “We will not follow it!” The Lord said, “I appointed prophets as watchmen to warn you, saying: ‘Pay attention to the warning sound of the trumpet!’” But they said, “We will not pay attention!” So the Lord said, “Hear, you nations! Be witnesses and take note of what will happen to these people. Hear this, you peoples of the earth: ‘Take note! I am about to bring disaster on these people. It will come as punishment for their scheming. For they have paid no attention to what I have said, and they have rejected my law. I

take no delight when they offer up to me frankincense that comes from Sheba or sweet-smelling cane imported from a faraway land. I cannot accept the burnt offerings they bring me. I get no pleasure from the sacrifices they offer to me.’ (NET)

B. Israel turned to God only in their times of need while their hearts still clung to their idols. (Coffman)

C. The “cries for help” are shrieks which give vent to their pain and grief. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

II. Even if they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them.

A. Isaiah 1:10-15, Listen to the Lord’s word, you leaders of Sodom! Pay attention to our God’s rebuke, people of Gomorrah! “Of what importance to me are your many sacrifices?” says the Lord. “I am stuffed with burnt sacrifices of rams and the fat from steers. The blood of bulls, lambs, and goats I do not want. When you enter my presence, do you actually think I want this— animals trampling on my courtyards? Do not bring any more meaningless offerings; I consider your incense detestable! You observe new moon festivals, Sabbaths, and convocations, but I cannot tolerate sin-stained celebrations! I hate your new moon festivals and assemblies; they are a burden that I am tired of carrying. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I look the other way; when you offer your many prayers, I do not listen, because your hands are covered with blood. (NET)

B. “Their prayers were only lip-service, and their sacrifices a soulless formality.” (Keil via Coffman)

C. Scribner via Coffman wrote, “There is a time when the most genuine repentance avails nothing to avert the temporal consequences of sin.”

D. Hosea 8:13-14, They offer up sacrificial gifts to me, and eat the meat, but the Lord does not accept their sacrifices. Soon he will remember their wrongdoing, he will punish their sins, and they will return to Egypt. Israel has forgotten his Maker and built royal palaces, and Judah has built many fortified cities. But I will send fire on their cities; it will consume their royal citadels. (NET)

E. Often grain or vegetable offerings, oblations accompany burnt offerings. (The Pulpit commentary)

F. God would not accept these sinful peoples offerings which were heartlessly formal and insincere. (The Pulpit Commentary)

1. Isaiah 1:15, When you spread out your hands in prayer, I look the other way; when you offer your many prayers, I do not listen, because your hands are covered with blood. (NET)

III. Instead, I will kill them through wars, famines, and plagues.”

A. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

1. All hope for deliverance is now gone. (Willis)

B. The Babylonian siege of Jerusalem would produce starvation, diseases and death by the sword.

C. Willis observed that these siege conditions were typical during Zedekiah’s reign.

1. Jeremiah 15:2, If they ask you, ‘Where should we go?’ tell them the Lord says this: “Those who are destined to die of disease will go to death by disease. Those who are destined to die in war will go to death in war. Those who are destined to die of starvation will go to death by starvation. Those who are destined to go into exile will go into exile.” (NET)

2. Jeremiah 21:7, 9, Then I, the Lord, promise that I will hand over King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, and any of the people who survive the war, starvation, and disease. I will hand them over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to their enemies who want to kill them. He will slaughter them with the sword. He will not show them any mercy, compassion, or pity.’ Those who stay in this city will die in battle or of starvation or disease. Those who leave the city and surrender to the Babylonians who are besieging it will live. They will escape with their lives. (NET)

3. Jeremiah 24:10, I will bring war, starvation, and disease on them until they are completely destroyed from the land I gave them and their ancestors.’” (NET)

4. Jeremiah 27:8, 13, But suppose a nation or a kingdom will not be subject to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Suppose it will not submit to the yoke of servitude to him. I, the Lord, affirm that I will punish that nation. I will use the king of Babylon to punish it with war, starvation, and disease until I have destroyed it. There is no reason why you and your people should die in war or from starvation or disease! That’s what the Lord says will happen to any nation that will not be subject to the king of Babylon. (NET)

5. Jeremiah 29:17-18, There is no reason why you and your people should die in war or from starvation or disease! That's what the Lord says will happen to any nation that will not be subject to the king of Babylon. (NET)

6. Jeremiah 32:24, 36, Even now siege ramps have been built up around the city in order to capture it. War, starvation, and disease are sure to make the city fall into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. Lord, you threatened that this would happen. Now you can see that it is already taking place. "You and your people are right in saying, 'War, starvation, and disease are sure to make this city fall into the hands of the king of Babylon.' But now I, the Lord God of Israel, have something further to say about this city: (NET)

7. Jeremiah 34:17, So I, the Lord, say: "You have not really obeyed me and granted freedom to your neighbor and fellow countryman. Therefore, I will grant you freedom, the freedom to die in war, or by starvation or disease. I, the Lord, affirm it! I will make all the kingdoms of the earth horrified at what happens to you. (NET)

8. Jeremiah 38:2, "The Lord says, 'Those who stay in this city will die in battle or of starvation or disease. Those who leave the city and surrender to the Babylonians will live. They will escape with their lives.'" (NET)

9. Jeremiah 42:17, 22, All the people who are determined to go and settle in Egypt will die from war, starvation, or disease. No one will survive or escape the disaster I will bring on them.' So now be very sure of this: You will die

from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live.” (NET)

10. Jeremiah 44:12-13, 18, 27, I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go and live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem. But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation.” I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left. (NET)

D. Wars, famine and pestilence (disease) have killed millions upon millions of people throughout history and they are often mentioned together in Scripture. (See Coffman.)

1. Jeremiah 5:12, “These people have denied what the Lord says. They have said, ‘That is not so! No harm will come to us. We will not experience war and famine. (NET)

2. Jeremiah 14:15, I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name. They may be saying, ‘No war or famine will happen in this land.’ But I, the Lord, say this about them: ‘War and starvation will kill those prophets.’ (NET)

3. 2 Samuel 24:13, Gad went to David and told him, “Shall seven years of famine come upon your land? Or shall you flee for three months from your enemy with him in hot pursuit? Or shall there be three days of plague in your land? Now decide what I should tell the one who sent me.” (NET)

4. Isaiah 51:19, These double disasters confronted you. But who feels sorry for you? Destruction and devastation, famine and sword. But who consoles you? (NET)

E. The people’s wickedness had grown over time to the point that God could no longer tolerate their evil ways. (See the Pulpit Commentary.)

1. Genesis 15:16, In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit.” (NET)

2. Isaiah 18:5, For before the harvest, when the bud has sprouted, and the ripening fruit appears, he will cut off the unproductive shoots with pruning knives; he will prune the tendrils. (NET)

3. Isaiah 33:10, “Now I will rise up,” says the Lord. “Now I will exalt myself; now I will magnify myself. (NET)

Jeremiah 14:13, Then I said, “Oh, Lord God, look! The prophets are telling them that you said, ‘You will not experience war or suffer famine. I will give you lasting peace and prosperity in this land.’”

I. Then I said, “Oh, Lord God,’ look! The (false) prophets are telling them that you said, . . .

A. NET footnote; Hebrew, ‘adonay, Yahweh.

B. The people of Judah and Jerusalem had followed false prophets, but this in no way lessened their guilt or responsibility. (See Hamilton.)

1. We are to try the spirits to determine if they are of God.
2. Following false teachers will in no way justify us and spare us from punishment for sins.
3. Jeremiah “tried to excuse the people by blaming the false prophets. That excuse was not acceptable to Jehovah,” Coffman wrote.

C. Jeremiah preached sword and famine while others claiming to speak for God preached hope and peace.

1. Jeremiah asked for clarification.

II. ‘You will not experience war or suffer famine. I will give you lasting peace and prosperity in this land.’”

A. Why did the people allow themselves to be deceived by the false prophets?

1. Coffman suggested they were deceived because they wanted to be deceived.

a. Jeremiah 5:31, The prophets prophesy lies. The priests exercise power by their own authority. And my people love to have it this way. But they will not be able to help you when the time of judgment comes! (NET)

2. We are directly commanded to try the spirits to determine which ones are and are not from God.

a. Believing false teachers does not gain any favor from God!

3. The false prophets may have been saying anything that was popular and/or they may have based their prognostications on the results of divination rituals. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

a. **Micah 3:6, Therefore night will fall, and you will receive no visions; it will grow dark, and you will no longer be able to read the omens. The sun will set on these prophets, and the daylight will turn to darkness over their heads. (NET)**

b. **Deuteronomy 18:10, There must never be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, anyone who practices divination, an omen reader, a soothsayer, a sorcerer, (NET)**

Jeremiah 14:14, Then the Lord said to me, “Those prophets are prophesying lies while claiming my authority! I did not send them. I did not commission them. I did not speak to them. They are prophesying to these people false visions, worthless predictions, and the delusions of their own mind. (NET)

I. Then the Lord said to me, “Those prophets are prophesying lies while claiming my authority!

A. God told Jeremiah that the others were false prophets and were not speaking the truth.

1. To make bad matters worse, these false prophets knew they were speaking lies.

2. Coffman wrote they were engaging in “willful and intentional fraud.”

a. This applies to many false teachers today as well.

II. I did not send them. I did not commission them. I did not speak to them. They are prophesying to these people false visions, worthless predictions,* and the delusions of their own mind.

A. *NET footnote: Hebrew, divination and worthlessness.

B. Those false prophets were proclaiming that Judah and Jerusalem were entitled to the blessings of the covenant whether or not they obeyed the commando of the covenant.

1. No one could come to this conclusion by reading the covenant as found in the Pentateuch.

2. The efforts of these false prophets to look into the future were totally futile. (The Pulpit Commentary)

3. Today some teach a person will be saved if he believes in Jesus even though he does not obey the terms of the New covenant.

Jeremiah 14:15, I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name. They may be saying, ‘No war or famine will happen in this land.’ But I, the Lord, say this about them: ‘War and starvation will kill those prophets.’ (NET)

I. I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name.

A. Claiming to have been “called to preach” doesn’t make it so.

B. Those sent from God preached his word exactly as directed! Those not sent from God preached things in addition to, less than or different than what God had commanded them to say.

C. Today those who preach the Bible without addition, subtraction or modification are God’s faithful servants while those who don’t aren’t!

II. They may be saying, ‘No war or famine will happen in this land.’

A. Their fake prophecies led to their deaths and the deaths of those who believed their lies.

B. Clarke wrote, “Jeremiah had told Jehoiakim that, if he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, he should be overthrown, and the land wasted by *sword* and *famine*: the false prophets said there shall be neither *sword* nor *famine*, but *peace* and *prosperity*. The king believed *them*, and withheld the *tribute*. Nebuchadnezzar, being incensed, invaded and destroyed the land; and the false prophets fell in these calamities.”

1. 2 Kings 25:3, By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city was so severe the residents had no food. (NET)

2. Lamentations 2:11-19, My eyes are worn out from weeping; my stomach is in knots. My heart is poured out on the ground due to the destruction of my helpless people; children and infants faint in the town squares. Children say to their mothers, “Where are food and drink?” They faint like a wounded warrior in the city squares. They die slowly in their mothers’ arms. With

what can I equate you? To what can I compare you, O Daughter Jerusalem? To what can I liken you so that I might comfort you, O Virgin Daughter Zion? Your wound is as deep as the sea. Who can heal you? Your prophets saw visions for you that were worthless lies. They failed to expose your sin so as to restore your fortunes. They saw oracles for you that were worthless lies. All who passed by on the road clapped their hands to mock you. They sneered and shook their heads at Daughter Jerusalem. “Ha! Is this the city they called ‘The perfection of beauty, the source of joy of the whole earth!’?” All your enemies gloated over you. They sneered and gnashed their teeth; they said, “We have destroyed her! Ha! We have waited a long time for this day. We have lived to see it!” The Lord has done what he planned; he has fulfilled his promise that he threatened long ago: He has overthrown you without mercy and has enabled the enemy to gloat over you; he has exalted your adversaries’ power. Cry out from your heart to the Lord, O wall of Daughter Zion! Make your tears flow like a river all day and all night long! Do not rest; do not let your tears stop! Get up! Cry out in the night when the night watches start! Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord! Lift up your hands to him for your children’s lives; they are fainting at every street corner. (NET)

III. But I, the Lord, say this about them: ‘War and starvation will kill those prophets.’

A. The false prophets told of hope and peace garnered from their own imagination, but they would be killed by war and starvation. (See Willis.)

Jeremiah 14:16, The people to whom they are prophesying will die through war and famine. Their bodies will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and there will be no one to bury them. This will happen to the men and their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out on them the destruction they deserve.” (NET)

I. The people to whom they are prophesying will die through war and famine.

A. The fake prophets would not only cause their own deaths; they would by their lies cause others to die.

1. Deuteronomy 21:23, his body must not remain all night on the tree; instead you must make certain you bury him that same day, for the one who is left exposed on a tree is cursed by God. You must not defile your land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. (NET)

2. 2 Samuel 21:10, Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on a rock. From the beginning of the harvest until the rain fell on them, she did not allow the birds of the air to feed on them by day, nor the wild animals by night. (NET)

3. Ezekiel 6:5, I will place the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars. (NET)

4. Ezekiel 37:1, The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and placed me in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones. (NET)

5. Amos 2:1, This is what the Lord says: “Because Moab has committed three crimes— make that four!—I will not

revoke my decree of judgment. They burned the bones of Edom's king into lime. (NET)

B. Others died because they preferred the soothing words of false prophets to the unpleasant truth spoken by Jeremiah. (See Clarke.)

1. 1 Kings 22:1-40, There was no war between Syria and Israel for three years. In the third year King Jehoshaphat of Judah came down to visit the king of Israel. The king of Israel said to his servants, "Surely you recognize that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us, though we are hesitant to reclaim it from the king of Syria." Then he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to attack Ramoth Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I will support you; my army and horses are at your disposal." Then Jehoshaphat added, "First seek an oracle from the Lord." So the king of Israel assembled about four hundred prophets and asked them, "Should I attack Ramoth Gilead or not?" They said, "Attack! The sovereign one will hand it over to the king." But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there not a prophet of the Lord still here, that we may ask him?" The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man through whom we can seek the Lord's will. But I despise him because he does not prophesy prosperity for me, but disaster. His name is Micaiah son of Imlah. Jehoshaphat said, "The king should not say such things." The king of Israel summoned an official and said, "Quickly bring Micaiah son of Imlah." Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their respective thrones, dressed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria. All the prophets were prophesying before them. Zedekiah son of Kenaanah made iron horns and said, "This is what the Lord says, 'With these you will gore Syria until they are destroyed.'"

All the prophets were prophesying the same, saying, “Attack Ramoth Gilead! You will succeed; the Lord will hand it over to the king.” Now the messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the prophets are in complete agreement that the king will succeed. Your words must agree with theirs; you must predict success.” But Micaiah said, “As certainly as the Lord lives, I will say what the Lord tells me to say.” When he came before the king, the king asked him, “Micaiah, should we attack Ramoth Gilead or not?” He answered him, “Attack! You will succeed; the Lord will hand it over to the king.” The king said to him, “How many times must I make you solemnly promise in the name of the Lord to tell me only the truth?” Micaiah said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like sheep that have no shepherd. Then the Lord said, ‘They have no master. They should go home in peace.’” The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you he does not prophesy prosperity for me, but disaster?” Micaiah said, “That being the case, hear the word of the Lord. I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, with all the heavenly assembly standing on his right and on his left. The Lord said, ‘Who will deceive Ahab, so he will attack Ramoth Gilead and die there?’ One said this and another that. Then a spirit stepped forward and stood before the Lord. He said, ‘I will deceive him.’ The Lord asked him, ‘How?’ He replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets.’ The Lord said, ‘Deceive and overpower him. Go out and do as you have proposed.’ So now, look, the Lord has placed a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours, but the Lord has decreed disaster for you.” Zedekiah son of Kenaanah approached, hit Micaiah on the jaw, and said, “Which way did the Lord’s spirit go when he went from me to speak to you?” Micaiah replied, “Look, you will see in the day when you go into an inner room to hide.” Then

the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the city official and Joash the king’s son. Say, ‘This is what the king says, “Put this man in prison. Give him only a little bread and water until I safely return.”’” Micaiah said, “If you really do safely return, then the Lord has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Take note, all you people.” The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah attacked Ramoth Gilead. The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “I will disguise myself and then enter into the battle, but you wear your royal robes.” So the king of Israel disguised himself and then entered into the battle. Now the king of Syria had ordered his thirty-two chariot commanders, “Do not fight common soldiers or high-ranking officers; fight only the king of Israel.” When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “He must be the king of Israel.” So they turned and attacked him, but Jehoshaphat cried out. When the chariot commanders realized he was not the king of Israel, they turned away from him. Now an archer shot an arrow at random, and it struck the king of Israel between the plates of his armor. The king ordered his charioteer, “Turn around and take me from the battle line, because I’m wounded.” While the battle raged throughout the day, the king stood propped up in his chariot opposite the Syrians. He died in the evening; the blood from the wound ran down into the bottom of the chariot. As the sun was setting, a cry went through the camp, “Each one should return to his city and to his homeland.” So the king died and was taken to Samaria, where they buried him. They washed off the chariot at the pool of Samaria (this was where the prostitutes bathed); dogs licked his blood, just as the Lord had said would happen. The rest of the events of Ahab’s reign, including a record of his accomplishments and how he built a luxurious palace and various cities, are recorded in the

scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel. Ahab passed away. His son Ahaziah replaced him as king. (NET)

II. Their bodies will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and these will be no one to bury them.

A. So much for false teachers and those who believe their lies.

III. This will happen to the men and their wives, their sons, and their daughters.

A. When people leave God for false teachings of any kind, they not only harm themselves, but they also harm those near and dear to them.

1. No one lives to himself and no one dies to himself.

IV. For I will pour out on them the destruction they deserve.”

A. What if God poured out on us the punishment we deserve?

1. Jeremiah 2:19, Your own wickedness will bring about your punishment. Your unfaithful acts will bring down discipline on you. Know, then, and realize how utterly harmful it was for you to reject me, the Lord your God, to show no respect for me,” says the Lord God who rules over all. (NET)

Lament Over Present Destruction and Threat of More to Come

Jeremiah 14:17, “Tell these people this, Jeremiah: ‘My eyes overflow with tears day and night without ceasing. For my people, my dear children, have suffered a crushing blow. They have suffered a serious wound. (NET)

I. “Tell these people this, Jeremiah: . . .

A. set the record straight, Jeremiah.

II. ‘My eyes overflow with tears day and night without ceasing.

A. The lament here was expressed by Jeremiah in the midst of the Babylonian invasion. (See Hamilton.)

B. Willis wrote, “From this perspective, the calamity befalling Judah is seen to be a father’s discipline of his daughter administered with love and paternal tears overflowing his eyes.

1. “Human sin yields divine punishment,” Willis wrote.

C. In spite of all their sins, God still loved Judah and Jerusalem.

1. We can rightly exclaim, “Wonder of wonders! Jesus loves me!”

2. Jeremiah 13:27, People of Jerusalem, I have seen your adulterous worship, your shameless prostitution to, and your lustful pursuit of, other gods. I have seen your disgusting acts of worship on the hills throughout the countryside. You are doomed to destruction! How long will you continue to be unclean?” (NET)

III. For my people, my dear children (the virgin daughter of my people), have suffered a crushing blow. They have suffered a serious wound.

A. Clarke wrote, . . .

1. “First, the land was sadly distressed by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt.

2. Secondly, it was laid under a heavy tribute by Nebuchadnezzar.

3. And, thirdly, it was nearly desolated by a famine afterwards.”

B. Clarke concluded, . . .

1. In a few years all these calamities fell upon them; these might be well called a great breach, a very grievous blow.

C. The sorrow expressed here is comparable to that felt by loving parents upon the death of a beloved virgin daughter. (See the Pulpit commentary.)

Jeremiah 14:18, If I go out into the countryside, I see those who have been killed in battle. If I go into the city, I see those who are sick because of starvation. For both prophet and priest go about their own business in the land without having any real understanding.”
(NET)

I. If I go out into the countryside, I see those who have been killed in battle.

A. Horrible pain and suffering, atrocities were everywhere, all the result of sinful living and prolonged rejection of God.

II. If I go into the city, I see those who are sick because of starvation.

A. Atrocities with unbearable agony were everywhere in the city.

1. Nothing could be done about all this misery!

2. There was no cure! There was no way to relieve the suffering. The situation was hopeless.

B. Here the picture is of Judah and Jerusalem after the capture of the city by the Babylonians. (The Pulpit Commentary)

III. For both prophet and priest go about their own business* in the land without having any real understanding.””

A. *NET footnote:

1. Jeremiah 2:8, Your priests did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’ Those responsible for teaching my law did not really know me. Your rulers rebelled against me. Your prophets prophesied in the name of the god Baal. They all worshiped idols that could not help them. (NET)

2. Jeremiah 5:13, The prophets will prove to be full of wind. The Lord has not spoken through them. So, let what they say happen to them.”” (NET)

3. Jeremiah 6:13, “That is because, from the least important to the most important of them, all of them are greedy for dishonest gain. Prophets and priests alike, all of them practice deceit. (NET)

4. Jeremiah 8:10, So I will give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. For from the least important to the most important of them, all of them are greedy for dishonest gain. Prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit. (NET)

B. These false prophets and corrupt priests were not totally befuddled, without understanding.

1. They could not explain why what they had preached was totally wrong.
2. They had no excuse for lying to the people! . . . none whatsoever!

Jeremiah 14:19, Then I said, “Lord, have you completely rejected the nation of Judah? Do you despise the city of Zion? Why have you struck us with such force that we are beyond recovery? We hope for peace, but nothing good has come of it. We hope for a time of relief from our troubles, but experience terror. (NET)

I. Then I said, “Lord, have you completely rejected the nation of Judah? Do you despise the city of Zion?

A. Hamilton wrote, “. . . the people plead again for the Lord to save them, confessing their wickedness and the guilt of their fathers.”

1. Their repentance appears to be sincere and they confess that only God could save them. (See Hamilton.)
2. How often do people plead with God to rescue them when they are in trouble only to return to their sinful ways once the trouble has passed?

B. In this section, Jeremiah asked God three questions; viz., . . .

1. Have you (God) utterly rejected Judah?
 - a. **Isaiah 41:9, you whom I am bringing back from the earth’s extremities, and have summoned from the remote regions— I told you, “You are my servant.” I have chosen you and not rejected you. (NET)**

2. Do you (God) loathe Zion?

3. Why have you (God) stricken the nation beyond healing?

Note: Willis observed that asking three questions in a series is a pattern found elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah. **Jeremiah 2:14**, “Israel is not a slave, is he? He was not born into slavery, was he? If not, why then is he being carried off? **Jeremiah 8:4, 19, 22**, The Lord said to me, “Tell them, ‘The Lord says, Do people not get back up when they fall down? Do they not turn around when they go the wrong way? I hear my dear people crying out throughout the length and breadth of the land. They are crying, ‘Is the Lord no longer in Zion? Is her divine King no longer there?’” The Lord answers, “Why then do they provoke me to anger with their images, with their worthless foreign idols?” There is still medicinal ointment available in Gilead! There is still a physician there!

Why then have my dear people not been restored to health? (NET)

II. Why have you struck us with such force that we are beyond recovery?

A. Related references:*

1. **Isaiah 41:9**, you whom I am bringing back from the earth’s extremities, and have summoned from the remote regions— I told you, “You are my servant.” I have chosen you and not rejected you. (NET)

2. **Jeremiah 6:30**, They are regarded as ‘rejected silver’ because the Lord rejects them.” (NET)

3. **Jeremiah 7:29**, So, mourn, you people of this nation. Cut off your hair and throw it away. Sing a song of mourning on the hilltops. For the Lord has decided to

reject and forsake this generation that has provoked his wrath!” (NET)

4. Psalm 89:38, But you have spurned and rejected him; you are angry with your chosen king. (NET)

5. Jeremiah 6:19, Hear this, you peoples of the earth: ‘Take note! I am about to bring disaster on these people. It will come as punishment for their scheming. For they have paid no attention to what I have said, and they have rejected my law. (NET)

6. Jeremiah 8:9, Your wise men will be put to shame. They will be dumbfounded and be brought to judgment. Since they have rejected the word of the Lord, what wisdom do they really have? (NET)

7. 1 Samuel 15:23, 26, For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and presumption is like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.” Samuel said to Saul, “I will not go back with you, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel!” (NET)

8. 2 Kings 17:15, 20, They rejected his rules, the covenant he had made with their ancestors, and the laws he had commanded them to obey. They paid allegiance to worthless idols, and so became worthless to the Lord. They copied the practices of the surrounding nations in blatant disregard of the Lord’s command. So the Lord rejected all of Israel’s descendants; he humiliated them and handed them over to robbers, until he had thrown them from his presence. (NET)

9. Jeremiah 33:24-26, “You have surely noticed what these people are saying, haven’t you? They are saying, ‘The Lord has rejected the two families of Israel and Judah that he chose.’ So they have little regard that my people will ever again be a nation. But I, the Lord, make the following promise: I have made a covenant governing the coming of day and night. I have established the fixed laws governing heaven and earth. Just as surely as I have done this, so surely will I never reject the descendants of Jacob. Nor will I ever refuse to choose one of my servant David’s descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, I will restore them and show mercy to them.” (NET)

10. Jeremiah 17:14, Lord, grant me relief from my suffering so that I may have some relief; rescue me from those who persecute me so that I may be rescued, for you give me reason to praise! (NET)

*References listed via Willis.

I. We hope for peace, but nothing good has come of it. We hope for a time of relief from our troubles, but experience terror.

A. Their grievous and prolonged sins had brought these horrendous sufferings upon them!

B. The peace, good, and relief for which they hoped were not realized.

1. Instead only troubles and terror remained.

Jeremiah 14:20, Lord, we confess that we have been wicked. We confess that our ancestors have done wrong. We have indeed sinned against you. (NET)

I. Lord, we confess (acknowledge) that we have been wicked. We confess that our ancestors* have done wrong. We have indeed sinned against you.

A. *NET footnote; Hebrew, fathers.

B. Jeremiah confessed the sins of the people and admitted they were indeed worthy of punishment. (See Smith.)

C. Willis wrote, “The people again express what appears to be sincere remorse for their sins. They acknowledge (know) their wickedness and guilt. They appeal again to his name and his covenant, not their righteousness, as the basis for forgiveness.”

D. Jeremiah, Clarke wrote, confessed the people’s sins, but the sinful people did not confess and turn from their evil ways.

1. To be effective, we must confess and forsake our own sins.

E. There seems to be here a connection between present sins and the sins of their ancestor, fathers.

Jeremiah 14:21, For the honor of your name, do not treat Jerusalem with contempt. Do not treat with disdain the place where your glorious throne sits. Be mindful of your covenant with us. Do not break it! (NET)

I. For the honor of your name, do not treat Jerusalem with contempt. Do not treat with disdain the place where your glorious throne* sits.

A. *NET footnote: Technically the ark of the covenant; then the temple that housed it, and finally the city of Jerusalem.

1. Jeremiah 17:12, Then I said, “Lord, from the very beginning you have been seated on your glorious throne on high. You are the place where we can find refuge. (NET)

2. Jeremiah 3:17, At that time the city of Jerusalem will be called the Lord’s throne. All nations will gather there in Jerusalem to honor the Lord’s name. They will no longer follow the stubborn inclinations of their own evil hearts. (NET)

3. Ezekiel 43:7, He said to me: “Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel will no longer profane my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their spiritual prostitution or by the pillars of their kings set up when they die. (NET)

4. Isaiah 37:16, “O Lord who commands armies, O God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubim! You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky and the earth. (NET)

5. Psalm 80:1, O shepherd of Israel, pay attention, you who lead Joseph like a flock of sheep! You who sit enthroned above the winged angels, reveal your splendor! (NET)

6. Psalm 99:1, The Lord reigns! The nations tremble. He sits enthroned above the winged angels; the earth shakes. (NET)

B. Jeremiah, in order that God’s name would be honored, prayed that the Lord would not treat Jerusalem with contempt, would not

treat the place where his throne was with disdain, nor break the covenant he had made with the Israelites.

II. Be mindful of your covenant with us. Do not break it!

A. This covenant had already been broken, shattered and rejected!

1. The covenant was no more. The people of Judah and Jerusalem had broken it into pieces and destroyed it.

2. This request for God to remember the covenant is pathetic. . . . remember the covenant they had trampled under their feet.

a. Exodus 24:7-8, He took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud to the people, and they said, “We are willing to do and obey all that the Lord has spoken.” So Moses took the blood and splashed it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.” (NET)

b. Exodus 19:5, And now, if you will diligently listen to me and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the nations, for all the earth is mine, (NET)

3. God’s answer was, “No!”

4. Judah and Jerusalem had not kept their duties under the covenant, but they still wanted God to keep his part of it.

a. Wonder what God thought of that?

b. The covenant/contract was annulled by their sins.

B. Feinberg via Coffman noted that this prayer by Jeremiah for the people was based on three things; that is, . . .

1. God's reputation, . . .
2. God's temple, and . . .
3. God's covenant from Israel.

C. These people had gone far into sin, far from God's holiness and righteousness.

1. In their state of wickedness, they had the audacity to ask God to bless them with peace and relief from trouble.
2. Does this sound all too much like what we do?

D. They had not kept their obligations regarding the covenant, contract, but they wanted God to keep his.

1. The covenant was no longer in force.
2. It was nullified by the people's not discharging their covenantal obligations.

Jeremiah 14:22, Do any of the worthless idols of the nations cause rain to fall? Do the skies themselves send showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God, who does this? So we put our hopes in you because you alone do all this.” (NET)

I. Do any of the worthless idols* of the nations cause rain to fall?

A. *NET footnote: the Hebrew term, often translated “vanities,” is frequently used for idols on false gods.

1. Jeremiah 3:17, At that time the city of Jerusalem will be called the Lord's throne. All nations will gather there in Jerusalem to honor the Lord's name. They will no longer follow the stubborn inclinations of their own evil hearts. (NET)

B. Only from God do blessings flow?

C. The answer to this question is a simple, "No."

II. Do the skies themselves send showers?

A. Only by God's arrangements does rain fall from the skies.

1. The severe drought was causing unspeakable misery.

2. The skies released not one drop of rain.

3. So much for idol worship!

B. The answer to this question is a simple, "No."

III. Is it not you, O Lord our God, who does this? So we put our hopes in you because you alone do all this."

A. God alone could provide for Judah and Jerusalem, meet their needs.

1. John 6:68, Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. (NET)

B. We do not know if the people's repentance was truly sincere, but we do know God refused to hear their prayers for forgiveness and relief.

1. A person can be forgiven and yet remain the subject of earthly penalties for past sins.
2. A murderer sentenced to death may become a Christian in prison and still be executed!
3. Willis wrote, “There is a common assumption that “true” repentance would be followed immediately with divine blessing, that the Lord would have averted the Exile if the people were being genuine here. The succeeding unit indicates that this is not necessarily so.”

C. God was and is the world’s only hope.

1. Sincerely follow God and live.
2. Reject God and die.

Conclusion:

I. A “covenant” is a formal agreement between two parties that provides a proper basis for an on-going relationship. (Asbury Bible Commentary)

A. Judah and Jerusalem had repeatedly and willfully broken their covenant with God.

1. Grievous punishments were, therefore, coming upon them.
2. These punishments were irrevocable!

B. When disaster struck in the form of war, famine and pestilence, the people plead for God’s help.

1. All of their excuses were of no avail.

2. They could not blame false prophets for their troubles.

3. Their idols could not help.

4. God would not help these unrepentant, distressed sinners.

II. Let this be a lesson to us.

A. Live righteously and God will bless us.

B. Live in sin, fall on hard times and God will not deliver the unrepentant evildoer.

Questions

on

Jeremiah 14:1-22

(Questions based on NET text.)

1. When is it time to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow? _

2. According to Coffman, how can Jeremiah 14 be outlined? _____

3. How are Jeremiah 14:1-22 and Jeremiah 15:1-4 related? _____

4. Why should Jeremiah 14 and 15 be read in connection with each other? _____

5. How many times is it said in Jeremiah 14 that God spoke to Jeremiah?

6. Why did the drought mentioned in Jeremiah 14:1 come upon Judah? _

7. How can we know when disasters such as droughts are acts of God and when they are natural occurrences? _____

8. Describe the expected weather conditions including rainfall in Southern Judah. _____

9. Locate the Negev. _____

10. When did this particular drought occur? Who was king at the time?

11. What were the consequences of this severe drought? _____

12. How did the people of Judah express their grief? _____

13. What caused them to grieve? _____

14. To what does “black” refer in Jeremiah 14:2, in the Authorized King James Version? _____

15. When people are in trouble they call on the Lord for relief. What determines if God will and won't provide the desired relief? _____

16. Who were the “leading men” of the cities? _____

17. Who were the “servants” mentioned in verse 3? Were they the people who ordinarily performed the duties assigned to these “servants”? If not, why not? _____

18. What duties were assigned to these “servants”? _____

19. How were “cisterns” constructed? What purposes did they serve? What was the problem regarding the cisterns mentioned in verse 3. _____

20. What were the consequences of this drought? _____

21. How did the people of Judah and Jerusalem cope with the effects of this drought? _____

22. What effects did this drought have on vegetation, innocent livestock and wild animals? Was it fair for vegetation and innocent animals to suffer for the sins of the people? _____

23. Jeremiah prayed to God to intervene on behalf of the suffering people of Judah and Jerusalem. What was God's response to Jeremiah's prayer? _____

24. Why did Jeremiah say God should answer his prayer and help, relieve Judah and Jerusalem? _____

25. How would pagans regard God's failure to bless the people of Judah and Jerusalem? _____

26. What sins of the people did Jeremiah confess to God? _____

27. Some people in the Bible who confessed their sins were forgiven while others were not. What determined which ones were forgiven and which ones were not forgiven? _____

28. What were the characteristics of resident foreigners, travelers? How had, in Jeremiah's opinion, God become like resident foreigners, travelers? _____

29. In what ways was God said to be like a "champion"? By calling God a "champion," was Jeremiah being disrespectful? _____

30. Was God indeed with the people of Judah and Jerusalem? Did the people of Judah and Jerusalem really belong to God? _____

31. Whom and under what conditions does God abandon people? _____

32. What did the Lord say about “these people?” _____

33. Why was the Lord not pleased with the people of Judah and Jerusalem? _____

34. Under what conditions can a person not keep from sinning, running away from God? _____

35. Is God pleased with you? Why or why not? _____

36. God said he would _____ to _____ the _____ the people had committed and would _____ them for their _____ by _____, _____ and _____. This _____ was _____ and _____. God would _____ their _____ and _____.

37. Why did God tell Jeremiah not to pray for good to come to the people of Judah and Jerusalem? _____

38. For whom should we pray? For whom should we not pray? _____

39. _____, _____ and _____ would not move God to _____ their _____ for _____.

40. What would it have taken for the people to secure God's help? _____

41. Instead of helping the people, he vowed to _____ them through _____, _____ and _____. It is a _____ thing to _____ into the _____ of the _____.

42. Describe the siege conditions during the reign of Zedekiah, etc. al. _

43. The people of _____ and _____ had followed _____, but this is no way lessened their _____ or _____. We are to _____ the _____ to determine if they are of _____.

44. What false doctrines did the false prophets teach? What truths did Jeremiah proclaim? Which did the people believe? Why did the people believe these particular teachings? _____

45. To make bad matters worse, these _____ knew they were _____. Coffman wrote they were _____ in “_____ and _____.” This applies today as well.

46. God told Jeremiah that the _____ claimed his _____, but that he had not _____ them, _____ them, nor _____ to them.

47. They were _____ to the people _____, _____, and _____ of their own _____.

48. These _____ were _____ that _____ and _____ were entitled to the _____ of the _____ whether or not they _____ the _____ of the _____.

49. What is a “covenant”? Which covenant had they broken? _____

50. Today some _____ that a _____ will be _____ if he _____ in _____ even though he does _____ the _____ of the _____.

51. Is the teaching referenced in question 50 above in harmony with God’s Word on the subject? _____

52. How can we determine which preachers God has and has not sent? _

53. What are the results of believing false teachers? _____

54. What will happen to false teachers? _____

55. How do our deeds, righteous and sinful, affect our families and others with whom we associate? _____

56. _____ said, "My _____ with _____
and _____."

57. What was seen in the countryside? What was seen in the city? _____

58. The _____ and _____ go about their _____
_____ in the _____ without having any _____
_____. They were _____, _____
_____.

59. How often do people plead with God to rescue them when they are
in trouble only to return to their sinful ways once the trouble has passed?

60. What three questions did Jeremiah ask God? _____

61. Their _____ and _____ had _____
these _____ upon them. The _____,
_____, and _____ for which they hoped were not
_____.

62. _____, Clarke wrote, _____ the _____'s
_____, but the _____ did not _____
and _____ from their _____. To be
_____, we must _____ and _____ our own
_____.

63. For what did Jeremiah pray in verse 21? Why did he ask God for these things? _____

64. _____ and _____ had _____ and _____
_____ their _____ with _____, _____
and _____ were coming upon Judah and
Jerusalem.

65. _____ not _____.
would not _____ these _____,
_____ and _____ will _____
us. _____ in _____, _____ on _____
_____ and _____ will not _____ the _____
_____.