

14:1 The word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought.

This discourse is supposed to have been delivered after the fourth year of Jehoiakim. We have, unfortunately, no record of such a drought.

2 Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish, they sit in black upon the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.

Covered from head to foot with a black garment, the emblem of sorrow and calamity.

3 And their nobles send their little ones to the waters: they come to the cisterns, and find no water; they return with their vessels empty; they are put to shame and confounded, and cover their heads.

4 Because of the ground which is cracked, for that no rain hath been in the land, the plowmen are put to shame, they cover their heads.

5 Yea, the hind also in the field calveth, and forsaketh [her young], because there is no grass.

6 And the wild asses stand on the bare heights, they pant for air like jackals; their eyes fail, because there is no herbage.

תנין tannim here probably means the hippopotamus, who, after feeding under the water, is obliged to come to the surface in order to take in fresh breaths of air.

7 Though our iniquities testify against us, work thou for thy name's sake, O Yahweh; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

8 O thou hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a sojourner in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?

9 Why shouldest thou be as a man affrighted, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Yahweh, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

Jeremiah pleads for the presence of God.

10 Thus saith Yahweh unto this people, Even so have they loved to wander; they have not refrained their feet: therefore Yahweh doth not accept them; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins.

11 And Yahweh said unto me, Pray not for this people for [their] good.

How dreadful is the state of that people in reference to whom the Lord says to his ministers, Pray not for them; or, what amounts nearly to a prohibition, withholds from his ministers the spirit of prayer and intercession in behalf of the people!

12 When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and meal-offering, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

13 Then said I, Ah, Lord Yahweh! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place.

Is this intended to be some mitigation of their offense?

14 Then Yahweh said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake I unto them: they prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart.

The people should know their character, and avoid them but they love to have it so, and will not be undeceived.

15 Therefore thus saith Yahweh concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land: By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them--them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

17 And thou shalt say this word unto them, Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease; for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous wound.

18 If I go forth into the field, then, behold, the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then, behold, they that are sick with famine! for both the prophet and the priest go about in the land, and have no knowledge.

Even the prophets and the priests are obliged to leave the cities, and wander about in unfrequented and unknown places, seeking for the necessaries of life.

19 Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of healing, and, behold, dismay!

20 We acknowledge, O Yahweh, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against thee.

21 Do not abhor [us], for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us.

22 Are there any among the vanities of the nations that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Yahweh our God? therefore we will wait for thee; for thou hast made all these things.

Jeremiah prays for God's intercession but the populace does not join him. They are hell bent on being hell bent.

15:1 Then said Yahweh unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind would not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.

2 And it shall come to pass, when they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith Yahweh: Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for captivity, to captivity.

There shall be different sorts of punishments inflicted on them according to the nature of their transgressions. Some shall be punished in one way, and some in another.

3 And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith Yahweh: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and to destroy.

4 And I will cause them to be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.

5 For who will have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who will bemoan thee? or who will turn aside to ask of thy welfare?

Perhaps there is not a more despised nor a more degraded people under the sun.

6 Thou hast rejected me, saith Yahweh, thou art gone backward: therefore have I stretched out my hand against thee, and destroyed thee; I am weary with repenting.

The shocking truth here is that God is tired of withholding punishment on a people who simply do not care. He is weary of repenting. **הנהם** frequently of the withdrawal, in grace and pity, of a divine decree to punish

7 And I have winnowed them with a fan in the gates of the land; I have bereaved [them] of children, I have destroyed my people; they returned not from their ways.

8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas; I have brought upon them against the mother of the young men a destroyer at noonday: I have caused anguish and terrors to fall upon her suddenly.

9 She that hath borne seven languisheth; she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it was yet day; she hath been put to shame and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith Yahweh.

10 Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have not lent, neither have men lent to me; [yet] every one of them doth curse me.

To the whole Land, to all his countrymen; though he had done nothing to merit their displeasure.

11 Yahweh said, Verily I will strengthen thee for good; verily I will cause the enemy to make supplication unto thee in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

12 Can one break iron, even iron from the north, and brass?

Shall our weak forces be able to oppose and overcome the powers of the Chaldeans?

נחשת nechasheth, which is here translated steel, properly signifies brass or copper united with tin, which gives it hardness, and enables it to bear a good edge.

13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give for a spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

14 And I will make [them] to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not; for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you.

15 O Yahweh, thou knowest; remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach.

16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by thy name, O Yahweh, God of hosts.

17 I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful [brook], as waters that fail?

There is nothing more profound in all prophetic literature than this lament by Jeremiah.

19 Therefore thus saith Yahweh, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, that thou mayest stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: they shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them.

20 And I will make thee unto this people a fortified brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith Yahweh.

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

And God's response is equally profound: repent or you will be removed from office!

16:1 The word of Yahweh came also unto me, saying,

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters, in this place.

3 For thus saith Yahweh concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land:

4 They shall die grievous deaths: they shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried; they shall be as dung upon the face of the ground; and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the heavens, and for the beasts of the earth.

5 For thus saith Yahweh, Enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament, neither bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith Yahweh, even lovingkindness and tender mercies.

6 Both great and small shall die in this land; they shall not be buried, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them;

A custom of the heathen forbidden to the Jews, Lev 19:28; Deu 14:1, and which appears now to have prevailed among them; because, having become idolaters, they conformed to all the customs of the heathen. They tore their hair, rent their garments, cut their hands, arms, and faces. These were not only signs of sorrow but were even supposed to give ease to the dead, and appease the angry deities.

7 neither shall men break [bread] for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother.

8 And thou shalt not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and to drink.

Funeral banquets were made to commemorate the dead.

9 For thus saith Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

10 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath Yahweh pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against Yahweh our God?

11 Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith Yahweh, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law;

12 and ye have done evil more than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the stubbornness of his evil heart, so that ye hearken not unto me:

13 therefore will I cast you forth out of this land into the land that ye have not known, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; for I will show you no favor.

14 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith Yahweh, that it shall no more be said, As Yahweh liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

15 but, As Yahweh liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither he had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

16 Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith Yahweh, and they shall fish them up; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks.

17 For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity concealed from mine eyes.

18 And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable things, and have filled mine inheritance with their abominations.

Either meaning the idols themselves, which were only carcasses without life; or the sacrifices which were made to them.

19 O Yahweh, my strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction, unto thee shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Our fathers have inherited nought but lies, [even] vanity and things wherein there is no profit.

20 Shall a man make unto himself gods, which yet are no gods?

Can any be so silly, and so preposterously absurd? Yes, fallen man is capable of any thing that is base, mean, vile, and wicked.

21 Therefore, behold, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know my hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is Yahweh.