

JEREMIAH 15: 1 Then the LORD said to 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 out.

God declares to Jeremiah that not even Moses and Samuel, whose prayers had been so prevalent, could divert him from his purpose of punishing so wicked a people, Jer 15:1. Accordingly their captivity is again announced in a variety of images so full of terror, Jer 15:2-9, that the prophet complains of his own hard fate in being obliged to deliver such unwelcome messages, Jer 15:10; for which too he is reproved, Jer 15:11-14. Immediately he appeals to God for his sincerity, and supplicates pardon, Jer 15:15-18; and God tempers his reproof with promising again to protect him in the faithful discharge of his duty, Jer 15:19-21.

Verse 1

Though Moses and Samuel - Moses had often supplicated for the people; and in consequence they were spared. See Exo 32:11 and following verses, Num 14:13. Samuel also had prayed for the people, and God heard him, 1Sam 7:9; but if these or the most holy men were now to supplicate for this people, he would not spare them.

Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth - Do not bring them into my presence by your prayers; let them go forth into captivity.

JEREMIAH 15: 2 It shall happen, when they tell you, Where shall we go out? Then you shall tell them, Thus says the LORD: 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.

Verse 2

Whither shall we go forth? - Such as are for death, to death - Some shall be destroyed by the pestilence, here termed death. See Jer 18:21. Others shall be slain by the sword in battle, and in the sackage of cities. Others shall perish by famine, shall be starved to death through the mere want of the necessaries of life; and the rest shall go into 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.

JEREMIAH 15: 3 I will appoint over them four kinds, says the LORD: the sword to kill, and the dogs to tear, and the birds of the sky, and the animals of the earth, to devour and to destroy.

Verse 3

I will appoint over them four kinds - There shall appear four instruments of my justice.

1. The sword to slay.
2. The dogs to tear what is slain.

3. The fowls of the heaven to feed on the dead carcasses. And,
4. The wild beasts to destroy all that the fowls have left.

JEREMIAH 15: 4 I will cause them to be tossed back and forth among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.

Verse 4

I will cause them to be removed into an kingdoms of the earth - This seems to have respect to the succeeding state of the Jews in their different generations; and never was there a prophecy more literally fulfilled; and it is still a standing monument of Divine truth. Let infidelity cast its eyes on the scattered Jews whom it may meet with in every civilized nation of the world; and then let it deny the truth of this prophecy, if it can. The Jews are scattered through every nation, and yet are not a nation; nor do they form even a colony on any part of the face of the earth. Behold the truth and the justice of God!

JEREMIAH 15: 5 For who will have pity on you, Jerusalem? or who will bemoan you? or who will turn aside to ask of your welfare?

Verse 5

Who shall go aside to ask how thou doest? - Perhaps there is not a more despised nor a more degraded people under the sun. Scarcely any one thinks himself called upon to do a kind office for a Jew. Their character is bad in society, and they are not at all solicitous to redeem it.

JEREMIAH 15: 6 You have rejected me, says the LORD, you have gone backward: therefore have I stretched out my hand against you, and destroyed you; I am weary with repenting.

Verse 6

I am weary with repenting - With repeatedly changing my purpose. I have often, after purposing to punish, showed them mercy. I will do it no longer; it is useless. I took them often at their promise, and in every instance they have failed.

JEREMIAH 15: 7 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 didn't return from their ways.

Verse 7

I will fan them with a fan - There is no pure grain; all is chaff.

In the gates of the land - The places of public justice: and there it shall be seen that the judgments that have fallen upon them have been highly merited. And from these places of fanning they shall go out into their captivity.

JEREMIAH 15: 8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas; I have brought on them against the mother of the young men a destroyer at noonday: I have caused anguish and terrors to fall on her suddenly.

Verse 8

The mother of the young men - The metropolis or mother city, Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH 15: 9 She who has borne seven languishes; she has given up the spirit; her sun is gone down while it was yet day; she has been disappointed and confounded: and their residue will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, says the LORD.

Verse 9

She that hath borne seven - She that hath had a numerous offspring; Jerusalem, the parent of so many cities, villages, and families in the land. Seven signifies a complete or full number.

JEREMIAH 15: 10 Woe is me, my mother, that you have 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 everyone of them curses me.

Verse 10

A man of contention to the whole earth! - To the whole Land, to all his countrymen; though he had done nothing to merit their displeasure.

JEREMIAH 15: 11 The LORD said, Most certainly I will strengthen you for good; most certainly I will cause the enemy to make supplication to you in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

Verse 11

I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil - This was literally fulfilled; see Jer 39:11, etc. Nebuchadnezzar had given strict charge to Nebuzaradan, commander in chief, to look well to Jeremiah, to do him no harm, and to grant him all the privileges he was pleased to ask.

JEREMIAH 15: 12 Can one break iron, even iron from the north, and brass?

Verse 12

Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? - Shall our weak forces be able to oppose and overcome the powers of the Chaldeans? נחשת nechasheth, which we here translate steel, properly signifies brass or copper united with tin, which gives it much hardness, and enables it to bear a good edge.

JEREMIAH 15: 13 Your substance and your treasures will I give for a plunder without price, and that for all your sins, even in all your borders.

Verse 13

Thy substance - will I give to the spoil without price - Invaluable property shall be given up to thy adversaries. Or, without price - thou shalt have nothing for it in return.

JEREMIAH 15: 14 I will make them to pass with your enemies into a land which you don't know; for a fire is kindled in my anger, which shall burn on you.

JEREMIAH 15: 15 LORD, you know; remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my persecutors; you are patient, so don't take me away. Know that for your sake I have suffered reproach.

Verse 15

O Lord - remember me, and visit me - Let me not be carried away into captivity; and it does not appear that he had ever been taken to Babylon. After the capture of the city he went into Egypt; and either died there, or was put to death by his countrymen.

JEREMIAH 15: 16 Your words were found, and I ate them; and your words were to me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by your name, the LORD, God of Armies.

Verse 16

Thy word was - the joy and rejoicing of mine heart - When I did receive the prophetic message, I did rejoice in the honor thou hadst done me; and I faithfully testified thy will to them. They have become mine enemies; not because there was any evil in me, but because I was faithful to thee.

JEREMIAH 15: 17 I didn't sit in the assembly of those who make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of your hand; for you have filled me with indignation.

JEREMIAH 15: 18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuses to be healed? Will you indeed be to me as a deceitful brook, like waters that fail?

Verse 18

Wilt thou be altogether unto me as - waters that fail? - Leaning either springs, which in the height of summer grow dry; or, like that phenomenon in the sandy desert, where, by a peculiar action of the air on the rising vapors, the resemblance of water is produced, so that the traveler, deceived, rejoices that he is come, in the sandy desert, to the verge of a beautiful lake; but the farther he travels, it is still at the same distance, and at last vanishes; and he finds the whole was an illusion, for the waters have failed. Nothing can exceed the disappointment of the farmer whose subsistence absolutely depends on the periodical rains, when these fail, or fall short of their usual quantity. Some times the rice is sown and springs up in the most promising manner; but the latter rains fail, and whole fields of young rice wither and perish.

JEREMIAH 15: 19 Therefore thus says the LORD, If you return, then I will bring you again, that you may stand before me; and if you take out the precious from the vile, you shall be as my mouth: they shall return to you, but you shall not return to them.

Verse 19

If thou return - By repentance unto me, -

Then will I bring thee again - Restore thee to thy own country. But some think the words are spoken to the prophet in reference to his ministry. He had greatly repined because of the persecutions which he endured. The Lord reprehends him, and is about to take from him the prophetic gift; but exhorts him first to take the precious from the vile - not to attend to the deceitful words of the people, but boldly declare the message he had given him; not to return unto the people, but let the people return unto him. And then he should be as God's mouth - his words should appear to be what they were, the genuine words of God; and the people should be obliged to acknowledge them as such.

JEREMIAH 15: 20 I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall; and they shall fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you; for I am with you to save you and to deliver you, says the LORD.

Verse 20

I will make thee - a fenced brazen wall - While thou art faithful to me, none of them shall be able to prevail against thee.

JEREMIAH 15: 21 I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem you out of the hand of the terrible.

Verse 21

I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked - From the power of this evil people.

And I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible - Out of the power of the Chaldean armies.
Every thing took place as God had promised, for no word of his can ever fall to the ground.