

Jeremiah 14

This chapter has some fascinating teaching. The first six verses deal with the drought and famine that has come upon Israel because of their disobedience (think of the Mosaic Law). In verses 7-10 we see Jeremiah's plea to God. Within this portion, vs. 8, we have the Hebrew word *mikveh* translated as *Hope of Israel*. In verses 11-12, God answers Jeremiah's plea. It is stunning when God tells Jeremiah not even to pray for the people. Verses 13-16 deal with the false message of false prophets. In verses 17-18, God tells Jeremiah how to respond to what is happening to the nation. Finally, in verses 19-22, Jeremiah lets his emotions come out in his response to God and appeals to God to reverse what is irreversible. At the end, vs. 22, Jeremiah acquiesces to the sovereign God of the universe.

- 1 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth.**
- 2 Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.**
- 3 And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.**
- 4 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.**
- 5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass.**
- 6 And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass.**

The judgment of God resulted in drought, no water, and no grass for the animals.

This was part of the Mosaic Covenant curse for disobedience:

Deuteronomy 28:

- 15 But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:
- 23 And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.
- 24 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

- 7 O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.**

Jeremiah recognizes that the nation deserves the punishment it will receive.

Jeremiah states that God should do it (punish Israel) "for thy name's sake." Later in this chapter, verse 21, Jeremiah will plead for mercy for the nation from God based "on His name's sake." Ultimately, God's actions toward nations or individuals are a vindication of His righteousness - "for thy name's sake," **bold added below.**

Ezekiel 36:

- 16 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
- 17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.
- 18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:
- 19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.
- 20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.
- 21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.
- 22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, **but for mine holy name's sake**, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.
- 23 And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you **for his name's sake**," 1 John 2:12.

"For his name's sake"

"God has a "great name" (1 Sam. 12:22). Fifteen times the phrase *For My name's sake* appears in the Bible (NKJV). God's name extols His character. His integrity, reputation, holiness, and even His glory are all closely linked to His name. And often God acts to sanctify His name and prevent it from being disgraced.

"Many people seem to misunderstand God's motives. God often acts to protect His holy name. He has promised to restore Israel's kingdom, not due to any merit on Israel's part but, rather, for His name's sake. It brings glory to Him to keep His promises. If He ever failed to keep a promise, He would be a liar or a weakling. He is neither. "God is not a man, that He should lie" (Num. 23:19). "Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it" (Isa. 46:11)."

Rev. Tom Simcox, *Israel My Glory*, 'For My Name's Sake', November/December 2016.

When children of God are disobedient, God disciplines His children. He does this because His children represent Him and His name among the ungodly.

Hebrews 12:

- 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.
9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?
10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

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

"The hope of Israel" - מִקְוֵה mik-veh' of Israel

1. The Jewish background of baptism (*mikveh*), being a picture or symbol ("symbolically enacts this kind of profound change for individuals"), suggests that the introduction of believer's baptism should be understood consistent with the prior use of baptism, that is, as a symbol or picture of the reality that has taken place. It is, thus, reasonable to conclude that in this Jewish book, the New Testament, every reference to baptism should be considered in light of the Jewish cultural background of *mikveh*, that is, it is symbolic or illustrative.
2. The late introduction of the *mikveh* (100 B.C.) was providential in God's plan. Consider the use of *mikveh* in the 3 Jeremiah passages: Jeremiah 14:8, 17:13, 50:7

"O the hope מִקְוֵה mik-veh'] **of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?"**

"O LORD, the hope מִקְוֵה mik-veh'] **of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters."**

"All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope מִקְוֵה mik-veh'] **of their fathers."**

The "hope of Israel" is Messiah, here referred to as the "mikveh of Israel."

Mikveh was/is always a picture/symbol of a reality of what happened:

"The mikvah personifies both the womb and the grave; the portals to life and afterlife. In both, the person is stripped of all power and prowess. In both, there is a mode of total reliance, complete abdication of control. Immersion in the mikvah can be understood as a symbolic act of self-abnegation, the conscious suspension of the self as an autonomous force. In so doing, the immersing Jew signals a desire to achieve oneness with the source of all life, to return to a primeval unity with G-d. Immersion indicates the abandonment of one form of existence to embrace one infinitely higher. In keeping with this theme, immersion in the mikvah is described not only in terms of purification, revitalization and rejuvenation, but also, and perhaps primarily, as rebirth." Bold added

Chabad http://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/1541/jewish/The-Mikvah.htm

In light of the Jeremiah usage and the introduction of the *mikveh* (100 B.C.) in the late 2nd Temple period (538 B.C. - 70 A.D.) consider the use of "baptism" with John and Jesus (bold added).

John 1:29-31, 33

- 29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.
- 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.
- 31 And I knew him not: **but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.**
- 33 And I knew him not: **but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.**

Matthew 3:13-17

- 13 **Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.**
- 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?
- 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, **Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.** Then he suffered him.
- 16 **And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water:** and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:
- 17 **And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

The *baptism* of Jesus, and God's approval of Him, symbolized that the "hope (*mikveh*) of Israel" has now come. In the same way, every usage of baptism (Acts 2, Romans 6, 1 Peter 3, etc.) should be understood as symbolic, representing the "hope of Israel," Messiah Jesus!

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

Jeremiah compares the impotence of man, every a "mighty man," with the omnipotence of the LORD, who not only can save, but is in the midst of Israel. Jeremiah appeals to God that the Jewish people "are called by His name" thus, "leave us not."

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

The sin of the people put them in a position that God can't refrain from punishment and must mete out penalty for their sins.

11 Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good.

This is the third time God says not to pray for this people (Jeremiah 7:16, 11:14).

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

Religious activities will avail nothing. It is a matter of the heart.

13 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! 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.

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

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD 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.

The false prophets in the land told the people they were okay. God is not going to send judgment. These prophets speak in God's name but it comes from the deceitfulness of their hearts.

False prophets are a major issue in this book. In chapter 23 we will look at false prophets and their message in a more in-depth way and the possibility that chapter 23 is speaking of false prophets in the last days.

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.

The message of "peace and safety" of the false prophets will be shown to be a lie when the people suffer because of their wickedness.

17 Therefore 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 blow.

18 If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not.

Jeremiah's burden for the people is seen in "let mine eyes run down with tears day and night."

19 Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul lothed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!

20 We acknowledge, O LORD, 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 Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

Vs. 19 Jeremiah speaks from his emotions to God asking if He hates the people

Vs. 20-21 Jeremiah is heartbroken over the plight of the people. Once again, after acknowledging the sin of the nation, he appeals to God to have mercy .

1. "for thy name's sake" - the appeal in verse 7 for judgment based on "His name's sake" is not contradictory with this appeal for mercy based on "His name's sake." The disobedience to the Mosaic Law requires a righteous God to punish. The eternal promise of the Abrahamic Covenant requires God to show mercy (not entirely destroy the Jewish people).
2. "Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory" - This would be the Temple
3. "Break not thy covenant" - This would refer to the Abrahamic Covenant and not the Mosaic Covenant.

Vs. 22 Jeremiah than states that the gods of the Gentiles are impotent and only the God of Israel can control the weather.

In resignation, Jeremiah realizes the only option is to wait on the LORD.

The commentary of The Expositor's Bible Commentary on Jeremiah makes a salient comment on what Jeremiah was hoping and asking God for:

"Surely God will not turn a deaf ear to a petition such as this. Surely, his mercies will prevail, and his jealousy for his name and his people will override his need to bring judgment. Surely it cannot be too late...Or can it?"