

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part XXX: God's Judgment On False Messengers And Their Inexcusable Hearers (Jeremiah 14:1-16)

I. Introduction

- A. James 3:1 NIV warns that not many of us Christians should presume to be teachers, for we who teach will be judged more strictly by the Lord than those who hear us.
- B. However, those who heed false teachers also bear responsibility for sin before God, and Jeremiah 14:1-16 explains just why this is so, what we do well to apply in our era (as follows):

II. God's Judgment On False Messengers And Their Inexcusable Hearers, Jeremiah 14:1-16.

- A. Jeremiah 14:1 explains Jeremiah 14:2-6 is a message God had Jeremiah give Judah about a drought she faced.
- B. The presence of a drought in Judah according to the Mosaic Covenant given to Israel by Moses long before signaled divine discipline for national sin, Deut. 28:15, 23-24. Everyone in Judah should have known that.
- C. Nevertheless, the people mourned and suffered under the drought without repenting before the Lord, 14:2-6:
 - 1. The mourning and wailing over the drought sprang forth from Judah's cities and Jerusalem, Jer. 14:2.
 - 2. The nobles sent their servants to fetch water from the cisterns made to collect and store rainwater only to find the cisterns empty, Jeremiah 14:3a. The servants returned with unfilled jars, despairing with their heads covered to signify grief and shame, Jeremiah 14:3b; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1147.
 - 3. The lack of rain cracked the ground and farmers were dismayed so that they covered their heads, Jer. 14:4.
 - 4. The wild animals suffered, too: the doe in the field deserted her newborn fawn as there was no grass (Jer. 14:4) and the wild donkeys stood on the barren heights panting like jackals for lack of water, their eyesight failing for lack of nutrition with the absence of pasture due to the drought, Jeremiah 14:5-6.
- D. Jeremiah reacted to all this suffering by asking God to grant merciful deliverance to Judah, Jeremiah 14:7-9:
 - 1. The prophet confessed that Judah had sinned, but he asked God to do something to alleviate the suffering for His own name's sake, for Jeremiah realized that Judah's backsliding was great against the Lord so that nothing virtuous in the people of Judah could move God to alleviate their suffering, Jeremiah 14:7.
 - 2. Jeremiah asked God why He, the Hope of Israel and typical Savior in times of distress, now seemed like a stranger who briefly passed through, staying overnight but not contributing any help, why He seemed like a warrior powerless to save, urging God not to forsake Judah because she bore His name, Jeremiah 14:8-9.
- E. The Lord responded to Jeremiah's plea regarding Judah, refusing to end His discipline, Jeremiah 14:10-12:
 - 1. God explained that the people greatly loved to wander away from Him, so He would no longer accept them in their efforts to worship Him, but recall their wickedness and punish them for their sins, Jer. 14:10.
 - 2. He added that Jeremiah was not to pray for the people. Though they fasted and sacrificed, God would not listen to their cry nor show regard for them, but destroy them with the sword, famine and disease, v. 11-12.
- F. Jeremiah offered an excuse for the people, that they faced prophets who told them they would not see the sword or suffer famine, that God would give them lasting peace, Jer. 14:13.
- G. God answered Jeremiah, claiming that the prophets were prophesying lies in His name, that He had not sent them, appointed them or spoken His word to them: they were prophesying false visions, divinations, idolatries and delusions of their own minds, Jeremiah 14:14 NIV. The Lord predicted that these prophets would perish by the sword and famine that they had falsely claimed the people of Judah would not face, Jeremiah 14:15.
- H. Also, the bodies of the people would be thrown out into the city streets as victims of the famine and sword with no one to bury them. God added that they deserved this fate (since they ignored the obvious warning of the drought and its signal of disobeying God's Word), Jeremiah 14:16.

Lesson: *Since Judah's people had neglected to heed God's Word that explained the presence of the current drought as a sign of divine discipline for sin, regardless if false prophets were lying to the people, God would judge them, holding them accountable, for they deserved it! Yes, He would judge the false prophets to fall by the sword and famine they predicted would not occur, but the people who heard them were likewise without excuse because of God's Word and His application of it by the presence of Judah's drought.*

Application: *If we heed false messengers, God will not only judge those messengers for their lies, but He will also hold us accountable for listening to them since (1) we have Scripture that exposes error (Isaiah 8:20) and (2) God applies His Word in our experience (such as the drought in Judah's era) as signals of His call for us to repent!*