

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing
Part XXX: God's Clarification Of A Genuine Confession
(Jeremiah 14:17-22)

I. Introduction

- A. Judah's artificial spirituality rendered even her confessions to the Lord as hollow expressions of religiosity, for they failed to acknowledge her sin so that she might turn from her wickedness to the Lord, Jeremiah 11:14-15.
- B. God Himself then directed His prophet in Jeremiah 14:17-22 to proclaim words that reflected true repentance, what we do well to imitate in dealing with our sins before the Lord (as follows):

II. God's Clarification Of A Genuine Confession, Jeremiah 14:17-22 ESV.

- A. In the major translations (KJV, NIV, ESV, NASB) as well as the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 731), the sentence, "You shall say to them this word" in Jeremiah 14:17a ESV appears in poetic form along with what follows it in Jeremiah 14:17b-22.
- B. Thus, it was **God** in Jeremiah 14:17a Who directed Jeremiah to give Judah the words of Jeremiah 14:17b-22, what are words of genuine repentance to God as a pattern for Judah's sinful people to heed:
 - 1. Jeremiah was to express how his eyes would not cease to run down with tears night and day because "the virgin daughter of my people," a term of endearment for Judah's people, was shattered with a great wound, a grievous blow in divine judgment, Jeremiah 14:17b.
 - 2. The prophet would grieve that if he went out into the field he would see the bodies of his countrymen pierced by the swords of the coming Babylonian invaders (v. 18a), but if he entered the city of Jerusalem, he would only see disease and famine, presumably referring to suffering under extended siege, Jer. 14:18b.
 - 3. The cause of this disaster would be that prophet and priest, assigned as messengers of the Lord, had plied their trade through the land, selling their false predictions of peace when they had no knowledge of the Lord and of His ways so that they could not inform the people of their need to repent, Jeremiah 14:18c.
 - 4. Jeremiah then turned his attention to the Lord, asking if He had utterly rejected Judah, if His soul loathed Zion and asking why God had struck them down so that the people had no healing for their wound, v. 19a.
 - 5. The people had looked for peace but no good came, for a time of healing but only terror arrived, v. 19b.
 - 6. Accordingly, in heartfelt contrition, Jeremiah acknowledged Judah's wickedness before the Lord her God, confessing that the people of Judah along with their forefathers had sinned against Him, Jeremiah 14:20.
 - 7. Jeremiah then pleaded with the Lord not to spurn Judah for His name's sake, not to dishonor His glorious throne in Jerusalem by graciously recalling His Davidic (and Abrahamic) covenant with them, Jer. 14:21.
 - 8. Jeremiah asked the rhetorical question that expected a negative answer, asking if there were any among the false gods of the Gentiles that could bring rain or make the heavens give showers, Jer. 14:22a. This is a revealing and applicable statement given Judah's current state:
 - a. The Baal gods Judah worshiped (Jer. 11:13, 17) were fertility gods believed to bring rain (Z. P. E. B., v. One, p. 431-433), so the Baals had discredited themselves in failing to end the drought, Jeremiah 14:1-6.
 - b. The presence of this drought rather proved God was the True God, and that He was judging Judah for having turned away from Him to false gods!
 - 9. Jeremiah thus concluded that only the Lord their God was the One Who could provide the blessing of rain so that Jeremiah with the people of Judah should set their hope on Him, Jeremiah 14:22b.

Lesson: *By directing Jeremiah to tell the people of Judah the words of repentance found in Jeremiah 14:17b-22, God revealed that by TRUE repentance, He sought (1) deep-seated grief at the pain of God's punishment as especially seen in the failure of God's messengers to give the truth (v. 17b-19b) and to (2) acknowledge their sins and the sins they had followed of the fathers (v. 20). Judah was also to (3) trust God in His grace of keeping His unconditional covenants with Judah (by Abraham and David, v. 21) and to (4) admit that none of the false gods they had worshipped could bring the blessings of rain and fertility that the Lord Himself could bring (v. 22a,b).*

Application: *May we realize that true repentance as GOD views it involves (1) facing the pain of God's discipline for sin and for sinful failures of God's messengers that is being delivered to us by the Lord and grieving over them so that (2) we confess our sins to Him, including the sins that copy the sins of the forefathers. (3) Then, we must trust that God as fully forgiven us and (4) admit that the false crutches to which we had turned in sin for blessing are false idols that cannot bless us like only the true God of Scripture can bless.*