

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

This verse is actually a tribute from YHWH to Moses and Samuel. He is telling Jeremiah that even if Moses and Samuel were standing before Him interceding for the people of Judah, I would not heed their prayers. This seems to be establishing Moses and Samuel as men of great influence before the LORD and scripture gives evidence to their intercession on behalf of the people and God answering their prayers. The psalmist made note of this truth.

Psalms 99:5–6 “Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.”

The last part of the verse seems to be a statement emphasizing God’s intent to let their enemies take them captive.

It would seem that Jeremiah is to understand that he is no longer to intercede for his people in prayer as referenced in the previous chapter.

Jer. 15:2 And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith 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 the captivity, to the captivity.

Jer. 15:3 And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

Jer. 15:4 And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.

In this section of verses YHWH details the coming judgment and makes specific reference to the actions of King Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, as the cause. The people will die in judgment by pestilence, sword, or hunger or will be taken captive by their enemies. He then gets even more graphic by declaring that they will die by the sword and their bodies given to the dogs and carnivorous birds and beasts. This is the ultimate in exposing their shameful position before YHWH.

King Manasseh is singled out for his idolatrous actions before the people who became willing followers of his example.

2 Kings 21:1–9 “Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Hephzibah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. For he built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever: Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel."

I can't help but be reminded from my study in Isaiah that Manasseh was born after God had granted Hezekiah's prayer to extend his life. Though God knew what would be the outcome, He did not let it affect His response to Hezekiah's prayer for healing made in sincerity and faith. Though that goes against my human logic and understanding, I am blessed to know that God is focused on His relationship with individuals just as surely as with nations and that He deals with each individual according to his/her walk of faith and obedience before Him.

I think it is also important to note that Manasseh is singled out because he *seduced* the people by his actions; he led them into sin. Webster used the phrase "induce to surrender chastity" in defining *seduce*. He influenced the people by his example to give up their spiritual purity before the LORD; he led them into spiritual adultery and evil activity that God assessed to be worse than the practices of the heathen nations according to the record in 2Kings.

I think King Manasseh is probably one of the greatest examples in scripture of God's grace, mercy and forgiveness. It is recorded that Manasseh eventually repented of his sin and turned back to God in faith and obedience.

2 Chronicles 33:10–16 "And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken. Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God. Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel."

I think it is also important to note that although Manasseh repented of his sins and the LORD forgave him, there were unmitigated consequences of his sin. It was his sin that was singled out as the root cause of God's judgment against Judah. The people were ready and willing to follow him in sin, but not so ready and willing to follow him in repentance and obedience.

Jer. 15:5 For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?

Jer. 15:6 Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.

I think the wording of the NLT states the meaning of these verses clearly: *"Who will feel sorry for you, Jerusalem? Who will weep for you? Who will even bother to ask how you are? You have forsaken me and turned your back on me," says the LORD. "Therefore, I will raise my clenched fists to destroy you. I am tired of always giving you another chance."*

Though the LORD is longsuffering, His patience is not without limit.

Jer. 15:7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children, I will destroy my people, *since* they return not from their ways.

Jer. 15:8 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 spoiler at noonday: I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

Jer. 15:9 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 ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

The LORD continues-----Judgment is certain because "my people" have refused to repent of their sinful ways. This judgment would be unnecessary if He did not care about His people. Because He cares, He is determined to refine them in the fire of judgment. The number of widows in the land will be too many to number. Mothers will mourn from being left childless and many will die at the point of the sword wielded by their enemies.

Jer. 15:10 ¶ 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 neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me.

It seems that Jeremiah in this verse is bemoaning the fact that he was born because the people of his nation consider him an adversary (from the Hebrew) and one who causes discord and controversy. Evidently, the main reason most men would find themselves at odds with one another was over finances—lending and borrowing. Jeremiah had done neither, yet he was still treated with contempt. Though Jeremiah was a great prophet, he was human; at this point he

is feeling sorry for himself.

Those who are used by the LORD to identify the sins of those around him/her should always expect to be treated with contempt and/or persecution.

Jer. 15:11 The LORD said, **Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.**

Jer. 15:12 Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?

Jer. 15:13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

Jer. 15:14 And I will make *thee* 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.

The LORD basically answers Jeremiah with an assurance that He would take care of him. The time would come when Jeremiah's enemies would seek his help because of the evil confronting them.

I think verse 12 is referencing the enemy coming from the north as strong as a mixture of iron and steel. In other words, there is no possible way that Judah could stand against the advance of these enemies without YHWH's intervention. Even worse is that YHWH is not going to intervene; He is going to judge His people by giving them into the hands of their enemies.

Not only will they be destroyed and many taken captive, the enemy would also take away their national treasures.

Again the point is made that this judgment is because of their sins against YHWH that have "kindled His anger." They fueled His anger as a great fire and would now be burned from the fire of their own making.

Jer. 15:15 ¶ O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

Jer. 15:16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

Jer. 15:17 I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

Jer. 15:18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters *that* fail?

Jeremiah is still very down in the dumps. He is asking the LORD to avenge him of the injustice of those who are persecuting him. Jeremiah does not want to die or be taken captive. He is asking the LORD to spare him that in light of the fact that he has suffered rebuke because of his obedience to Him.

He had willingly proclaimed God's message to the people, a message that

Jeremiah rejoiced in because he was jealous for his LORD's name, God Almighty. One can't help but think of Job as Jeremiah pours out his heart in this section. Both have questions as to the why of God's ways regarding their personal life, but both have faith in the promise of His word.

Job 23:12 "Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

Jeremiah has been isolated from his people because of his commitment to the LORD. He has responded with God's heart toward their sin. He doesn't understand why faithfulness and obedience to his call has resulted in continual pain and fresh wounds to his spirit. He is beginning to question if he has been deceived in his understanding of God's call and paints a word picture of going to a stream from which you expect to find water and finding it dry.

This is one of the truths in scripture that really speaks to my heart. I don't ever want to fail the LORD because of His actions/inaction vs. my expectations. Even God's chosen prophets found themselves yielding to despair in the circumstances because things didn't come down how they expected at times. Our life is to be a walk of faith. We tend to think more about the importance of taking a firm *stand* on the truth of God's word, and that is very important. One must stand before one can walk. Life, however, involves walking in faith—not standing still.

Jer. 15:19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

Jer. 15:20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen 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 the LORD.

Jer. 15:21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

I can almost hear the gentle loving tone in which the Father rebukes His discouraged servant. He tells Jeremiah that if he will repent and make a fresh start, he can count on God's provision as he serves Him in obedience. If he will choose to speak with the weight of God's authority and not give in to words that undermine His power and authority, God will continue to speak through him. This is a direct rebuke of the fear and doubt that Jeremiah has revealed in the previous verses. I liked the CJB translation for the last part of verse 19: *"It will then be they who turn to you, not you who turn to them."*

The LORD promises to make Jeremiah like a strong bronze wall that they cannot destroy. YHWH will personally deliver him from his enemies. He promises to defend/preserve/rescue (all from the Hebrew for *deliver*) him from the wicked. He promises to sever/preserve/rescue (from the Hebrew for *redeem*) him from the terrible. The repetition seems to serve as an exclamation point to the promise of deliverance.