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God's Determination to Punish Judah

14:1 to 17:27

609 to 598 BC during the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim



The section of **14:1** to **15:21** is bound together by the theme of drought; physical drought that illustrates spiritual drought. First comes the heartbreaking picture of drought so severe that even the **wild donkeys** cannot find any **grass**. In other words, **Y'hudah** was experiencing a spiritual drought (**to see link click [Cj - Judah's Terrible Drought](#)**). Once again **Jeremiah** is commanded by **the LORD** not to pray for the Judeans. The prophet interceded three times with **ADONAI** responding three times. Finally, **God** sent four destroyers to make **the Jews abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth** (see **[Ck - Jerusalem's Judgment Inescapable](#)**). **God's** pain is profound. **Judah** kept turning **her** back on **Him** and **He** describes **her** demise. **God's** love lasts forever, but **His** patience does not. **Yerushalayim's** destruction is described as if it had already occurred (see **[Cl - You Have Rejected Me, I am Tired of Relenting](#)**). **The prophet** was despondent and wishes **he** were never born. **YHVH** encourages **His servant** (see **[Cm - Woe to Me, Mother, That You Gave Me Birth](#)**).

The sixteenth chapter balances judgment and hope. More than half of the chapter (see **[Co - You Must Not Marry and Have Sons and Daughters](#)**) is a reflection on **Jeremiah's** celibacy, which is a warning of the deprivation that would come to **Y'hudah**. This is followed by the promise of a return from exile (see **[Cp - Judgment Before Final Restoration to the Land](#)**). A warning that **YHVH** will send **fishermen** and **hunters** to

search out **Jewish** idolaters from **the Land** is followed by the hope that finally the Gentile nations will be converted.

Chapter seventeen contrasts between life with **ADONAI** and life without **Him**. **God** chronicles **Judah's** indelible **sin** and the contrast between trust in man and trust in **God**. **The human heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure**. Then a parable is directed specifically to King Jehoiakim (see [Cr](#) - **Blessed is the One Who Trusts in the LORD, Whose Confidence is in Him**). Then **Jeremiah** issues **his** fifth complaint. **Jeremiah** asks **God** to **save him**, to rescue **him**, to vindicate **him**, from any situation because **the prophet** was being attacked and accused of being a false prophet (see [Cs](#) - **Heal Me, ADONAI, and I Will Be Healed, Save Me and I Will Be Saved**). **God** is always ready to forgive a repentant sinner (**26:2-3**). And it was **the prophet's** duty to indicate the remedy for the current evils of the people. It was therefore natural that **Yirmeyahu** should stress the importance of **Shabbat**, a basic institution of Judaism. Making **the Sabbath holy**, with its intensive spiritual influence, would tend to wean the people from other abuses and effect a reformation (see [Ct](#) - **The Sabbath and National Survival**).