

Jeremiah 11:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

Analysis

This verse prohibits intercession: 'Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.' Jeremiah is forbidden to intercede—an unprecedented restriction for a prophet whose role included intercession (1 Samuel 12:23, Amos 7:1-6). 'Lift up cry or prayer' (rinnah utephillah) describes urgent supplication. The double prohibition emphasizes finality. God's refusal to hear their cry repeats verse 11. The time for intercession has passed; judgment is determined. This reveals limits to prophetic intercession when persistent rebellion exhausts divine patience.

Historical Context

This command appears three times in Jeremiah (7:16, 11:14, 14:11), each intensifying the prohibition. Moses successfully interceded after the golden calf (Exodus 32:11-14) and at Kadesh (Numbers 14:13-20). Samuel interceded regularly. But by Jeremiah's time, centuries of prophetic warning rejected, even Moses and Samuel couldn't change the outcome (Jeremiah 15:1). The prohibition distressed Jeremiah, who genuinely loved his people.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What circumstances might make intercession futile, and how do we know when that point is reached?
2. How does this prohibition affect our understanding of intercessory prayer's effectiveness?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵלֵּהּ	אֵל	תִּתְפַּלֵּל	בְּעַד	הָעָם	הַזֶּה	וְאֵלֵּהּ
H859	H408	Therefore pray	H1157	not thou for this people	H2088	H408
		H6419		H5971		
אֵינֶנּוּ	נִי	כִּי	וְתִתְפַּלֵּל	הָרֶגֶז	בְּעַד	תִּשָּׂא
neither lift up			a cry	or prayer	H3588	H369
H5375		H1157	H7440	H8605		
בְּעַד	אֵלַי	קֹרָא	בְּעַת	שָׁמַע		
for them for I will not hear	them in the time	that they cry				
H8085	H413	H7121	H6256			
רָעָתָם:						
unto me for their trouble						
H7451						

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 7:16 (Prayer): Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee.

Jeremiah 11:11 (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

1 John 5:16 (Prayer): If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Jeremiah 14:11 (Prayer): Then said the LORD unto me, Pray not for this people for their good.

Exodus 32:10 (Parallel theme): Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

Psalms 66:18 (Parallel theme): If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Jeremiah 15:1 (Parallel theme): 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.

Hosea 5:6 (Parallel theme): They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them.