

Jeremiah 14:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

Analysis

The reason for refusing their prayers: 'When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them.' Religious observances (fasting, offerings) without heart repentance are rejected. God's refusal to 'hear' and 'accept' shows that ritual divorced from righteousness is worthless. The threat follows: 'but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.' This triad of judgment (sword, famine, pestilence) appears frequently in Jeremiah. The verse teaches that external religious activity cannot manipulate God into blessing when the heart remains rebellious.

Historical Context

Judah maintained temple worship and religious observances while practicing idolatry and injustice. This hypocritical religiosity provoked God's rejection more than outright paganism might have.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How can religious observance become a substitute for genuine repentance?
2. What makes worship acceptable versus unacceptable to God?
3. Why does hypocritical religion often provoke God's judgment more than open irreligion?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	יָצָמוּ	אֵינִי נִי	שִׁמְעֵנָה	אֶל	רִנָּתָם	וְכִי
H3588	When they fast	H369	I will not hear	H413	their cry	H3588
	H6684		H8085		H7440	
וְיַעֲלוּ	עֹלָה	וּמִנְחָה	אֵינִי נִי	רָצָה	כִּי	
and when they offer	burnt offering	and an oblation	H369	I will not accept	H3588	
H5927	H5930	H4503		H7521		
בְּחֶרֶב	וּבְרָעָב	וּבִדָּבָר	אֲנֹכִי			
them by the sword	and by the famine	and by the pestilence	H595			
H2719	H7458	H1698				
מִכָּל הֶ	אוֹתָם:					
them but I will consume	H853					
H3615						

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 1:28 (Parallel theme): Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

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.

Jeremiah 6:20 (Sacrifice): To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

Ezekiel 8:18 (Parallel theme): Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

Zechariah 7:13 (Parallel theme): Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

Ezekiel 14:21 (Word): For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

Micah 3:4 (Parallel theme): Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Jeremiah 16:4 (Word): They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcases shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

Jeremiah 24:10 (Word): And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.