

Jeremiah 14:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.

Analysis

The drought affects even the nobility: 'And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty.' The fact that nobles send servants shows water scarcity across all classes. The fruitless search ('found no water,' 'returned with their vessels empty') depicts futility under judgment. The response: 'they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads'—gestures of humiliation and mourning. This shows that privilege provides no immunity from God's judgments. When He withdraws blessing, all human status proves meaningless.

Historical Context

Ancient cities depended on cisterns, wells, and springs. Prolonged drought meant even traditionally reliable water sources failed. Covering the head indicated shame and distress (2 Samuel 15:30; Esther 6:12).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does drought's effect on all classes demonstrate that privilege cannot protect from divine judgment?
2. What does empty vessels returning symbolize about human efforts apart from God's blessing?
3. How should prosperity and comfort's removal produce humility and repentance?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵד רִיָּהֶם	שָׁלַח וְ	צְעוּרֵיהֶם	מִיָּם	בָּאוּ	עַל	גִּבֹּרֵם
And their nobles	have sent	their little ones	no water	they came	H5921	to the pits
H117	H7971	H6810	H4325	H935		H1356
לֹא	מָצְאוּ	מִיָּם	שָׁבוּ	כְּלֵיהֶם	רִיקִם	
H3808	and found	no water	they returned	with their vessels	empty	
	H4672	H4325	H7725	H3627	H7387	
בָּשׁוּ	וְהִכְלָמוּ	וְחָפּוּ	רֹאשָׁם:			
they were ashamed	and confounded	and covered	their heads			
H954	H3637	H2645	H7218			

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 15:30 (Parallel theme): And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

Psalms 40:14 (Parallel theme): Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil.

2 Kings 18:31 (Parallel theme): Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and

then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

Jeremiah 2:13 (Parallel theme): For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Amos 4:8 (Parallel theme): So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

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