Jeremiah 15:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> 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.

Analysis

This verse opens with a shocking divine declaration: 'Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people.' Moses and Samuel were Israel's greatest intercessors—Moses turned aside God's wrath after the golden calf (Exodus 32:11-14) and at Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 14:13-20); Samuel's intercession was legendary (1 Samuel 7:5-9, 12:19-25). Yet even their combined intercession could not avert this judgment. 'Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.' The Hebrew shalach me'al panai (שַׁלַּח מֵעַל פָּנַי, send away from my presence) indicates complete dismissal—exile from God's protective presence. When the greatest intercessors cannot prevail, judgment is fixed.

Historical Context

This pronouncement responds to Jeremiah's intercession in chapter 14. God had already forbidden Jeremiah to pray for the people (7:16, 11:14, 14:11), but this verse adds that even Moses and Samuel's prayers would be ineffective. The historical reference acknowledges Israel's intercessory tradition while declaring its limits. By Jeremiah's time, centuries of rejected prophetic warning had accumulated guilt beyond intercession's reach.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the ineffectiveness of even Moses and Samuel's intercession reveal about the limits of prayer when sin has reached its full measure?
2. How does this verse inform our understanding of both intercessory prayer's power and its boundaries?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּ֨אמֶר	יְהוָ֜ה	אֵלַ֗י	אִם	יַעֲמֹ֨ד	מֹשֶׁ֤ה	וּשְׁמוּאֵל֙
Then said	**the LORD**	H413	H518	**stood**	**unto me Though Moses**	**and Samuel**
H559	H3068			H5975	H4872	H8050

פָּנַ֔י	אֵ֤ין	נַפְשִׁי֙	אֶל	הָעָ֣ם	הַזֶּ֔ה
before	H369	**me yet my mind**	H413	**could not be toward this people**	H2088
H6440		H5315		H5971	

שַׁלַּ֥ח	מֵעַל֙	פָּנַ֖י	וְיֵצֵֽאוּ׃
cast them out	H5921	**before**	**and let them go forth**
H7971		H6440	H3318

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 14:14 (References Lord): Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.

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

Jeremiah 11:14 (Parallel theme): 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.

Psalms 106:23 (References Moses): Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.

Psalms 99:6 (References Lord): Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

1 Samuel 12:23 (References Lord): Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

1 Samuel 7:9 (References Lord): And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him.

2 Kings 17:20 (References Lord): And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.

Jeremiah 52:3 (References Lord): For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Jeremiah 23:39 (Parallel theme): Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: