

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You are my strength and my fortress, my refuge in time of distress (Jer 16:19). I will listen when you speak and obey what you command (Jer 13:15). My desire is to cling to you in love and bring honor and praise to your name. You said, “Give glory to the LORD your God”—I say Amen!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me some of Jeremiah’s prophecies to Judah during the last years of Josiah’s reign (c. 620–609 BC). Josiah required the people to keep your covenant, and they complied with his wishes and obeyed your law (2 Chr 34:33). But although there was no open idolatry, the people’s hearts did not stay true to you. Their idols may have been destroyed, but their desire for other gods had not been quenched. As the fervor of Josiah’s religious reforms cooled over the next decade, Jeremiah warned the people of coming judgment and captivity. He began by comparing Judah to a waistband, one of the more intimate pieces of clothing that clings tightly to the body. He said that Judah, like a waistband, had once been close to you. You wanted them to be your people and to bring praise and glory to your name, but they would not listen. They had become worthless, just like the waistband Jeremiah had buried near the river. So you brought hardship on the land, and a severe drought cracked the ground (Jer 14). But instead of repenting, the people hardened their hearts and listened to the false prophets who promised them that all would be well. Jeremiah pleaded with you to have mercy, but you told him to stop praying for the people: “Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my heart would not turn toward this people” (Jer 15:1). Your pity was exhausted, and you were tired of relenting. Jeremiah, understandably, began to feel sorry for himself. He had become the focal point of the people’s rejection of you, and he was filled with frustration and pain. You rebuked him and told him not to let himself be influenced by the people. They might turn to him, but he was *not* to turn to them (Jer 15:19). You also told Jeremiah not to marry, for had he done so, his wife and children would have perished in the coming destruction of Judah. But then, in the midst of your anger, you looked ahead to a time of future restoration, a time when all the nations will acknowledge you as Lord (Jer 16:19–21).

Reflection

Jeremiah is an example of how a prophet can sometimes be influenced by his people. Am I allowing the world to squeeze me into its mold, or am I standing firm like a wall of bronze?

Request

Father, give me the strength you gave to Jeremiah. Help me to overcome evil with good.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the promise that you will be with me and will save me (Jer 15:20b)!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Sound the Battle Cry](#)” – William F. Sherwin.

Meditation Verse: Jeremiah 15:19.