

## August 8 Answers

- 1) Jeremiah's prophecies to Judah during the last years of Josiah's reign (c. 620–609 BC). Josiah **required** the people to keep God's covenant, and they complied with his wishes (2 Chr 34:33). But although there was no open idolatry, the people's hearts did not stay true to God. 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 God. God wanted them to be His people and to bring praise and glory to His name, but they would not listen (Jer 13:11). They had become **worthless**, just like the waistband Jeremiah had buried near the river. So God 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 God to have mercy, but God 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). God's pity was exhausted, and He was tired of relenting. Jeremiah, understandably, began to feel **sorry** for himself. He had become the focal point of the people's rejection of God, and he was filled with frustration and pain. God 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). Are we allowing the world to squeeze us into its mold, or are we standing firm like a wall of bronze? God 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 His anger, God looked ahead to a time of future restoration, a time when all the nations will acknowledge God as LORD (Jer 16:19–21).