

# CHAPTER 14

This chapter was penned upon occasion of a great drought, for want of rain. This judgment began in the latter end of Josiah's reign, but, as it should seem, continued in the beginning of Jehoiakim's: for less judgments are sent to give warning of greater coming, if not prevented by repentance. This calamity was mentioned several times before, but here, in this chapter, more fully. Here is,

- I.** A melancholy description of it (v. 1-6).
- II.** A prayer to God to put an end to this calamity and to return in mercy to their land (v. 7-9).
- III.** A severe threatening that God would proceed in his controversy, because they proceeded in their iniquity (v. 10-12).
- IV.** The prophet's excusing the people, by laying the blame on their false prophets; and the doom passed both on the deceivers and the deceived (v. 13-16).
- V.** Directions given to the prophet, instead of interceding for them, to lament them; but his continuing notwithstanding to intercede for them (v. 17-22).

## ◀244▶ JEREMIAH 14:1-9

### LAMENTATION CAUSED BY A GREAT DROUGHT

The first verse is the title of the whole chapter: it does indeed all *concern the dearth*, but much of it consists of the prophet's prayers concerning it; yet these are not unfitly said to be, *The word of the Lord which came to him* concerning it, for every acceptable prayer is that which God puts into our hearts; nothing is our word that comes to him but what is first his word that comes from him. In these verses we have,

- I.** The language of nature lamenting the calamity. When the heavens were as brass, and distilled no dews, the earth was as iron, and produced no fruits; and then the grief and confusion were universal.

**1.** The people of the land were all in tears. Destroy their vines and their fig-trees and you cause all their mirth to cease, <sup><301></sup>Hosea 2:11, 12. All their joy fails with the joy of harvest, with that of their corn and wine. *Judah mourns* (v. 2), not for the sin, but for the trouble — for the withholding of the rain, not for the withdrawing of God's favour. *The gates thereof*, all that go in and out at their gates, *languish*, look pale, and grow feeble, for want of the necessary supports of life and for fear of the further fatal consequences of this judgment. *The gates*, through which supplies of corn formerly used to be brought into their cities, now look melancholy, when, instead of that, the inhabitants are departing through them to seek for bread in other countries. Even those that sit in the gates languish; *they are black unto the ground*, they go in black as mourners and sit on the ground, a the poor beggars at the gates are *black in the face* for want of food, *blacker than a coal*, <sup><208></sup>Lamentations 4:8. Famine is represented by a black horse, <sup><105></sup>Revelation 6:5. They fall to the ground through weakness, not being able to go along the streets. *The cry of Jerusalem has gone up*; that is, of the citizens (for the city is *served by the field*), or of people from all parts of the country met at Jerusalem to pray for rain; so some. But I fear it was rather the cry of their trouble, and the cry of their prayer.

**2.** The great men of the land felt from this judgment (v. 3): *The nobles sent their little ones to the water*, perhaps their own children, having been forced to part with their servants because they had not wherewithal to keep them, and being willing to train up their children, when they were little, to labour, especially in a case of necessity, as this was. We find Ahab and Obadiah, the king and the lord chamberlain of his household, in their own persons, seeking for water in such a time of distress as this was, <sup><105></sup>1 Kings 18:5, 6. Or, rather, *their meaner ones*, their servants and inferior officers; these they sent to seek for water, which there is no living without; but there was none to be found: *They returned with their vessels empty*; the springs were dried up when there was no rain to feed them; and then *they* (their masters that sent them) *were ashamed and confounded* at the disappointment. They would not be ashamed of their sins, nor confounded at the sense of them, but were unhumiliated under the reproofs of the word, thinking their wealth and dignity set them above repentance; but God took a course to make them ashamed of that which they were so proud of, when they found that even on this side hell their nobility would not purchase them a drop of water to cool their tongue. Let our reading the account of this calamity make us thankful for the mercy of water, that we may not by

the feeling of the calamity be taught to value it. What is most needful is most plentiful.

**3.** The husbandmen felt most sensibly and immediately from it (v. 4): *The ploughmen were ashamed*, for the ground was so parched and hard that it would not admit the plough even when it was so *chapt* and cleft that it seemed as if it did not need the plough. They were ashamed to be idle, for there was nothing to be done, and therefore nothing to be expected. The *sluggard, that will not plough by reason of cold*, is not ashamed of his own folly; but the diligent husbandman, that cannot plough by reason of heat, is ashamed of his own affliction. See what an immediate dependence husbandmen have upon the divine Providence, which therefore they should always have an eye to, for they cannot plough nor sow in hope unless God *water their furrows*, <sup><160></sup>Psalm 65:10.

**4.** The case even of the wild beasts was very pitiable, v. 5, 6. Man's sin brings those judgments upon the earth which make even the inferior creatures groan: and the prophet takes notice of this as a plea with God for mercy. Judah and Jerusalem have sinned, but the hinds and the wild asses, what have they done? The hinds are pleasant creatures, lovely and loving, and particularly tender of their young; and yet such is the extremity of the case that, contrary to the instinct of their nature, they leave their young, even when they are newly calved and most need them, to seek for grass elsewhere; and, if they can find none, they *abandon* them, because not able to suckle them. It grieved not the hind so much that she had no grass herself as that she had none for her young, which will shame those who spend that upon their lusts which they should preserve for their families. The hind, when she has brought forth her young, is said to have *cast forth her sorrows* (<sup><130B></sup>Job 39:3), and yet she continues her cares; but, as it follows there, she soon sees the good effect of them, for *her young ones* in a little while *grow up*, and trouble her no more, v. 4. But here the great trouble of all is that she has nothing for them. Nay, one would be sorry even for the *wild asses* (though they are creatures that none have any great affection for); for, though the *barren land* is made *their dwelling* at the best (<sup><130B></sup>Job 39:5, 6), yet even that is now made too hot for them, so hot that they cannot breathe in it, but they get to the *highest places* they can reach, where the air is coolest, and *snuff up the wind like dragons*, like those creatures which, being very hot, are continually panting for breath. *Their eyes fail*, and so does their strength, *because there is no grass to support them*. The tame ass, that serves her owner, is welcome to *his crib*

(~~2008~~ Isaiah 1:3) and has her keeping for her labour, when the *wild ass*, that *scorns the crying of the driver*, is forced to *live upon air*, and is well enough served for not serving. *He that will not labour, let him not eat.*

**II.** Here is the language of grace, lamenting the iniquity, and complaining to God of the calamity. The people are not forward to pray, but the prophet here prays for them, and so excites them to pray for themselves, and puts words into their mouths, which they may make use of, in hopes to speed, v. 7-9. In this prayer,

**1.** Sin is humbly confessed. When we come to pray for the preventing or removing of any judgment we must always acknowledge that our *iniquities testify against us*. Our sins are witnesses against us, and true penitents see them to be such. They testify, for they are plain and evident; we cannot deny the charge. They testify against us, for our conviction, which tends to our present shame and confusion, and our future condemnation. They disprove and overthrow all our pleas for ourselves; and so not only accuse us, but answer against us. If we boast of our own excellencies, and trust to our own righteousness, our iniquities testify against us, and prove us perverse. If we quarrel with God as dealing unjustly or unkindly with us in afflicting us, our iniquities testify against us that we do him wrong; “for *our backslidings are many* and our revolts are great, whereby *we have sinned against thee* — too numerous to be concealed, for they are many, too heinous to be excused, for they are against thee.”

**2.** Mercy is earnestly begged: “*Though our iniquities testify against us*, and against the granting of the favour which the necessity of our case calls for, yet *do thou it*.” They do not say particularly what they would have done; but, as becomes penitents and beggars, they refer the matter to God: “Do with us as thou thinkest fit,” (~~2015~~ Judges 10:15. Not, *Do thou it* in this way or at this time, but “*Do thou it for thy name's sake*; do that which will be most for the glory of thy name.” Note, Our best pleas in prayer are those that are fetched from the glory of God's own name. “Lord, do it, that thy mercy may be magnified, thy promise fulfilled, and thy interest in the world kept up; we have nothing to plead in ourselves, but every thing in thee.” There is another petition in this prayer, and it is a very modest one (v. 9): “*Leave us not*, withdraw not thy favour and presence.” Note, We should dread and deprecate God's departure from us more than the removal of any or all our creature-comforts.

**3.** Their relation to God, their interest in him, and their expectations from him grounded thereupon, are most pathetically pleaded with him, v. 8, 9.

**(1.)** They look upon him as one they have reason to think should deliver them when they are in distress, yea, though their iniquities testify against them; for in him mercy has often rejoiced against judgment. The prophet, like Moses of old, is willing to make the best he can of the case of his people, and therefore, though he must own that they have sinned many a great sin (<sup>Exod</sup>Exodus 32:31), yet he pleads, *Thou art the hope of Israel*. God has encouraged his people to hope in him; in calling himself so often the *God of Israel*, the *rock of Israel*, and the *Holy One of Israel*, he has made himself the *hope of Israel*. He has given Israel his word to hope in, and caused them to hope in it; and there are those yet in Israel that make God alone their hope, and expect he will be *their Saviour in time of trouble*, and they look not for salvation in any other; “Thou hast many a time been such, in the time of their extremity.” Note, Since God is his people's all-sufficient Saviour, they ought to hope in him in their greatest straits; and, since he is their only Saviour, they ought to hope in him alone. They plead likewise, “*Thou art in the midst of us*; we have the special tokens of thy presence with us, thy temple, thy ark, thy oracles, and *we are called by the name*, the *Israel of God*; and therefore we have reason to hope thou wilt not leave us; *we are thine, save us*. Thy name is called upon us, and therefore what evils we are under reflect dishonour upon thee, as if thou wert not able to relieve thy own.” The prophet had often told the people that their profession of religion would not protect them from the judgments of God; yet here he pleads it with God, as Moses, <sup>Exod</sup>Exodus 32:11. Even this may go far as to temporal punishments with a God of mercy. *Valeat quantum valere potest — Let the plea avail as far as is proper.*

**(2.)** It therefore grieves them to think that he does not appear for their deliverance; and, though they do not charge it upon him as unrighteous, they humbly plead it with him why he should be gracious, for the glory of his own name. For otherwise he will seem,

**[1.]** Unconcerned for his own people: *What will the Egyptians say?* they will say, “Israel's hope and Saviour does not mind them; he has become *as a stranger in the land*, that does not at all interest himself in its interests; his temple, which he called *his rest for ever*, is no more so, but he is in it *as a wayfaring man, that turns aside to tarry but for a night* in an inn,

which he never enquires into the affairs of, nor is in any care about.” Though God never is, yet he sometimes seems to be, as if he cared not what became of his church: Christ slept when his disciples were in storm.

[2.] Incapable of giving them any relief. The enemies once said, Because the Lord *was not able to bring* his people to Canaan, he let them *perish in the wilderness* (<sup><0416></sup>Numbers 14:16); so now they will say, “Either his wisdom or his power fails him; either he is *as a man astonished* (who, though he has the reason of a man, yet, being astonished, is quite at a loss and at his wits' end) or as a *mighty man* who is overpowered by such as are more mighty, and therefore *cannot save*; though mighty, yet a man, and therefore having his power limited.” Either of these would be a most insufferable reproach to the divine perfections; and therefore, why has the God that we are sure *is in the midst of us* become *as a stranger*? Why does the almighty God seem as if he were no more than a mighty man, who, when he is astonished, though he would, yet cannot save? It becomes us in prayer to show ourselves concerned more for God's glory than for our own comfort. Lord, *what wilt thou do unto thy great name*?

## <244> JEREMIAH 14:10-16

### DIVINE THREATENINGS

The dispute between God and his prophet, in this chapter, seems to be like that between the owner and the dresser of the vineyard concerning the barren fig-tree, <sup><0417></sup>Luke 13:7. The justice of the owner condemns it to be cut down; the clemency of the dresser intercedes for a reprieve. Jeremiah had been earnest with God, in prayer, to return in mercy to this people. Now here,

**I.** God overrules the plea which he had offered in their favour, and shows him that it would not hold. In answer to it thus he says concerning *this people*, v. 10. He does not say, concerning *my people*, for he disowns them, because they had broken covenant with him. It is true they were *called by his name*, and had the tokens of his presence among them; but they had sinned, and provoked God to withdraw. This the prophet had owned, and had hoped to obtain mercy for them, notwithstanding this, through intercession and sacrifice; therefore God here tells him,

**1.** That they were not duly qualified for a pardon. The prophet had owned that *their backslidings were many*; and, though they were so, yet there was hope for them if they returned. But *this people* show no disposition at all to return; they have wandered, and *they have loved to wander*; their backslidings have been their choice and their pleasure, which should have been their shame and pain, and therefore they will be their ruin. They cannot expect God should take up his rest with them when they take such delight in going astray from him after their idols. It is not through necessity or inadvertency that they wander, but they love to wander. Sinners are wanderers from God; their wanderings forfeit God's favour, but it is their loving to wander that quite cuts them off from it. They were told what their wanderings would come to that one sin would hurry them on to another, and all to ruin; and yet they have not taken warning and *refrained their feet*. So far were they from returning to their God that neither his prophets nor his judgments could prevail upon them to give themselves the least check in a sinful pursuit. This is that for which God is now reckoning with them. When he denies them rain from heaven he is *remembering their iniquity* and *visiting their sin*; that is it for which their *fruitful land* is thus *turned into barrenness*.

**2.** That they had no reason to expect that the God they had rejected should accept them; no, not though they betook themselves to fasting and prayer and put themselves to the expense of burnt-offerings and sacrifice: *The Lord doth not accept them*, v. 10. *He takes no pleasure in them* (so the word is); for what pleasure can the holy God take in those that take pleasure in his rivals, in any service, in any society, rather than his? "*When they fast* (v. 12), which is a proper expression of repentance and reformation, — *when they offer a burnt offering and an oblation*, which was designed to be an expression of faith in a Mediator, — though their prayers be thus enforced, and offered up in those vehicles that used to be acceptable, yet, because they do not proceed from humble, penitent, and renewed hearts, but still they *love to wander*, therefore *I will not hear their cry*, be it ever so loud; *nor will I accept them*, neither their persons nor their performances." It had been long since declared, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; and those only are *accepted that do well*, <sup>OR</sup>Genesis 4:7.

**3.** That they had forfeited all benefit by the prophet's prayers for them because they had not regarded his preaching to them. This is the meaning of that repeated prohibition given to the prophet (v. 11): *Pray not thou for*

*this people for their good*, as before, <sup><2475></sup>Jeremiah 7:15; 11:14. This did not forbid him thus to express his *good-will* to them (Moses continued to intercede for Israel after God had said, *Let me alone*, <sup><0320></sup>Exodus 32:10), but it forbade them to expect any good effect from it as long as they *turned away their ear from hearing the law*. Thus was the doom of the impenitent ratified, as that of Saul's rejection was by that word to Samuel, *When wilt thou cease to mourn for Saul?* It therefore follows (v. 12), *I will consume them*, not only by this famine, but by the further sore judgments of sword and pestilence; for God has many arrows in his quiver, and those that will not be convinced and reclaimed by one shall be consumed by another.

**II.** The prophet offers another plea in excuse for the people's obstinacy, and it is but an excuse, but he was willing to say whatever their case would bear; it is this, That the prophets, who pretended a commission from heaven, imposed upon them, and flattered them with assurances of peace though they went on in their sinful way, v. 13. He speaks of it with lamentation: "*Ah! Lord God*, the poor people seem willing to take notice of what comes in thy name, and there are those who in thy name tell them that they *shall not see the sword nor famine*; and they say it as from thee, with all the gravity and confidence of prophets: *I will continue you in this place*, and will *give you assured peace* here, peace of truth. I tell them the contrary; but I am one against many, and every one is apt to credit that which makes for them; therefore, Lord, pity and spare them, for *their leaders cause them to err*." This excuse would have been of some weight if they had not had warning given them, before, of false prophets, and rules by which to distinguish them; so that if they were deceived it was entirely their own fault. But this teaches us, as far as we can with truth, to make the best of bad, and judge as charitably of others as their case will bear.

**III.** God not only overrules this plea, but condemns both the blind leaders and the blind followers to fall together into the ditch.

**1.** God disowns the flatteries (v. 14): *They prophesy lies in my name*. They had no commission from God to prophesy at all: *I neither sent them, nor commanded them, nor spoke unto them*. They never were employed to go on any errand at all from God; he never made himself known to them, much less by them to the people; never any word of the Lord came to them, no call, no warrant, no instruction, much less did he send them on this errand, to rock them asleep in security. No; men may flatter



themselves, and Satan may flatter them, but God never does. It is a *false vision, and a thing of nought*. Note, What is false and groundless in vain and worthless. The vision that is not true, be it ever so pleasing, is good for nothing; it is the *deceit of their heart*, a spider's web spun out of their own bowels, and in it they think to shelter themselves, but it will be swept away in a moment and prove a great cheat. Those that oppose their own thoughts of God's word (God indeed says so, but they think otherwise) walk in the *deceit of their heart*, and it will be their ruin.

**2.** He passes sentence upon the flatterers, v. 15. As for the prophets, who put this abuse upon the people by telling them they shall have peace, and this affront upon God by telling them so in God's name, let them know that they shall have no peace themselves. They shall fall first by those very judgments which they have flattered others with the hopes of an exemption from. They undertook to warrant people that *sword and famine should not be in the land*; but it shall soon appear how little their warrants are good for, when they themselves shall be cut off by sword and famine. How should they secure others or foretel peace to them when they cannot secure themselves, nor have such a foresight of their own calamities as to get out of the way of them? Note, The sorest punishment await those who promise sinners impunity in their sinful ways.

**3.** He lays the flattered under the same doom: The *people to whom they prophesy lies*, and who willingly suffer themselves to be thus imposed upon, *shall die by sword and famine*, v. 16. Note, The unbelief of the deceived, with all the falsehood of the deceivers, shall not make the divine threatenings of no effect; sword and famine will come, whatever they say to the contrary; and those will be least safe that are most secure. Impenitent sinners will not escape the damnation of hell by saying that they can never believe there is such a thing, but will feel what they will not fear. It is threatened that this people shall not only fall by *sword and famine*, but that they shall be as it were hanged up in chains, as monuments of that divine justice which they set at defiance; their bodies shall be *cast out, even in the streets of Jerusalem*, which of all places, one would think, should be kept clear from such nuisances: there they shall lie unburied; their nearest relations, who should do them that last office of love, being so poor that they cannot afford it, or so weakened with hunger that they are not able to attend it, or so overwhelmed with grief that they have no heart to it, or so destitute of natural affection that they will not pay them so much respect. Thus will God *pour their wickedness upon them*,

that is, the punishment of their wickedness; the full vials of God's wrath shall be poured upon them, to which they have made themselves obnoxious. Note, When sinners are overwhelmed with trouble they must in it see their own wickedness poured upon them. This refers to the wickedness both of the false prophets and of the people; the blind lead the blind, and both fall together into the ditch, where they will be miserable comforters one to another.

## 2447 JEREMIAH 14:17-22

### THE PROPHET'S INTERCESSION

The present deplorable state of Judah and Jerusalem is here made the matter of the prophet's lamentation (v. 17, 18) and the occasion of his prayer and intercession for them (v. 19), and I am willing to hope that the latter, as well as the former, was by divine direction, and that these words (v. 17), *Thus shalt thou say unto them (or concerning them, or in their hearing)*, refer to the intercession, as well as to the lamentation, and then it amounts to a revocation of the directions given to the prophet not to pray for them, v. 11. However, it is plain, by the prayers we find in these verses, that the prophet did not understand it as a prohibition, but only as a discouragement, like that <sup>2456</sup>1 John 5:16, *I do not say he shall pray for that*. Here,

**I.** The prophet stands weeping over the ruins of his country; God directs him to do so, that, showing himself affected, he might, if possible, affect them with the foresight of the calamities that were coming upon them. Jeremiah must say it not only to himself, but to them too: *Let my eyes run down with tears*, v. 17. Thus he must signify to them that he certainly foresaw *the sword* coming, and another sort of famine, more grievous even than this which they were now groaning under; this was in the country for want of rain, that would be in the city through the straitness of the siege. The prophet speaks as if he already saw the miseries attending the descent which the Chaldeans made upon them: *The virgin daughter of my people*, that is as dear to me as a daughter to her father, *is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow*, much greater and more grievous than any she has yet sustained; for (v. 18) *in the field* multitudes lie dead that were *slain by the sword*, and in the city multitudes lie dying

for want of food. Doleful spectacles! “*The prophets and the priests, the false prophets that flattered them with their lies and the wicked priests that persecuted the true prophets, are now expelled their country, and go about either as prisoners and captives, whithersoever their conquerors lead them, or as fugitives and vagabonds, wherever they can find shelter and relief, in a land that they know not.*” Some understand this of the true prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, that were carried to Babylon with the rest. The prophet's eyes must run down *with tears day and night*, in prospect of this, that the people might be convinced, not only that this woeful day would infallibly come, and would be a very woeful day indeed, but that he was far from desiring it, and would as gladly have brought them messages of peace as their false prophets, if he might have had warrant from heaven to do it. Note, Because God, though he inflicts death on sinners, yet delights not in it, it becomes his ministers, though in his name they pronounce the death of sinners, yet sadly to lament it.

**II.** He stands up to make intercession for them; for who knows but God will yet return and repent? While there is life there is hope, and room for prayer. And, though there were many among them who neither prayed themselves nor valued the prophet's prayers, yet there were some who were better affected, would join with him in his devotions, and set the seal of their *Amen* to them.

**1.** He humbly expostulates with God concerning the present deplorableness of their case, v. 19. It was very sad, for,

**(1.)** Their expectations from their God failed them; they thought he had avouched Judah to be his, but now, it seems, he has *utterly rejected* it, and cast it off, will not own any relation to it nor concern for it. They thought Zion was the beloved of his soul, was his rest for ever; but now *his soul even loathes Zion*, loathes even the services there performed, for the sake of the sins there committed.

**(2.)** Then no marvel that all their other expectations failed them: *They were smitten*, and their wounds were multiplied, but there was *no healing* for them; they *looked for peace*, because after a storm there usually comes a calm and fair weather, after a long fit of wet; but *there was no good*, things went still worse and worse. They looked for a *healing time*, but could not gain so much as a *breathing time*. “*Behold, trouble at the door, by which we hoped peace would enter. And is it so then? Hast thou indeed*

*rejected Judah? Justly thou mightest. Hath thy soul loathed Zion? We deserve it should. But wilt thou not at length in wrath remember mercy?"*

**2.** He makes a penitent confession of sin, speaking that language which they all should have spoken, though but few did (v. 20): "*We acknowledge our wickedness, the abounding wickedness of our land and the iniquity of our fathers, which we have imitated, and therefore justly smart for. We know, we acknowledge, that we have sinned against thee, and therefore thou art just in all that is brought upon us; but, because we confess our sins, we hope to find thee faithful and just in forgiving our sins.*"

**3.** He deprecates God's displeasure, and by faith appeals to his honour and promise, v. 21. His petition is, "*Do not abhor us; though thou afflict us, do not abhor us; though thy hand be turned against us, let not thy heart be so, nor let thy mind be alienated from us.*" They own God might justly abhor them, they had rendered themselves odious in his eyes; yet, when they pray, *Do not abhor us*, they mean, "Receive us into favour again. *Let not thy soul loathe Zion*, v. 19. Let not our incense be an abomination." They appeal,

**(1.)** To the honour of God, the honour of his scriptures, by which he has made himself known — his *word*, which he has *magnified above all his name*: "*Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, that the name of thine by which we are called and which we call upon.*" The honour of his sanctuary is pleaded: "Lord, do not abhor us, for that will *disgrace the throne of thy glory*" (the temple, which is called *a glorious high throne from the beginning*, <sup>and</sup> Jeremiah 17:12); let not that which has been the *joy of the whole earth* be made a *hissing* and an *astonishment*. We deserve to have disgrace put upon us, but let it not be so as to reflect upon thyself; let not the desolations of the temple give occasion to the heathen to reproach him that used to be worshipped there, as if he could not, or would not, protect it, or as if the gods of the Chaldeans had been too hard for him. Note, Good men lay the credit of religion, and its profession in the world, nearer their hearts than any private interest or concern of their own; and those are powerful pleas in prayer which are fetched thence and great supports to faith. We may be sure that God will not *disgrace the throne of his glory* on earth; nor will he eclipse the glory of his throne by one providence without soon making it shine forth, and more brightly than before, by another. God will be no loser in his honour at the long-run.

(2.) To the promise of God; of this they are humbly bold to put him in mind: *Remember thy covenant with us, and break not that covenant.* Not that they had any distrust of his fidelity, or that they thought he needed to be put in mind of his promise to them, but what he had said he would plead with himself they take the liberty to plead with him. *Then will I remember my covenant,* <sup><83></sup>Leviticus 26:42.

4. He professes a dependence upon God for the mercy of rain, which they were now in want of, v. 22. If they have forfeited their interest in him as their God in covenant, yet they will not let go their hold on him as the God of nature.

(1.) They will never make application to the idols of the heathen, for that would be foolish and fruitless: *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain?* No; in a time of great drought in Israel, Baal, though all Israel presented their prayers to him in the days of Ahab, could not relieve them; it was that God only who *answered by fire* that could answer *by water* too.

(2.) They will not terminate their regards in second causes, nor expect supply from nature only: *Can the heavens give showers?* No, not without orders from the God of heaven; for it is he that has the key of the clouds, that *opens the bottles of heaven* and *waters the earth from his chambers.* But,

(3.) All their expectation therefore is from him and their confidence in him: “*Art not thou he, O Lord our God! from whom we may expect succour and to whom we must apply? Art thou not he that causest rain and givest showers? For thou hast made all these things; thou gavest them being, and therefore thou givest them law and hast them all at thy command; thou madest that moisture in nature which is in a constant circulation to serve the intentions of Providence, and thou directest it, and makest what use thou pleasest of it; therefore we will wait upon thee, and upon thee only; we will ask of the Lord rain,* <sup><80></sup>Zechariah 10:1. We will trust in him to give it to us in due time, and be willing to tarry his time; it is fit that we should, and it will not be in vain to do so.” Note, The sovereignty of God should engage, and his all-sufficiency encourage, our attendance on him and our expectations from him at all times.