



Daily Verse and Comment

[Jeremiah 11:14](#)

(14) "So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble.

[Jeremiah 14:11-12](#)

(11) Then the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for this people, for *their* good. (12) When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence."

[Jeremiah 15:1](#)

(1) Then the LORD said to me, "*Even* if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind *would* not *be* favorable toward this people. Cast *them* out of My sight, and let them go forth.

New King James Version

Some feel God's words to Jeremiah are commands for His people from that time forward never to pray for the people of [the world](#). Is that the correct interpretation?

The prophet Daniel is taken captive early in Nebuchadnezzar's campaign against Judah, and soon after arriving in Babylon, he is handpicked to advise the emperor. As the years pass, Daniel is well aware of Jeremiah's prophecy that the Jews would return to Jerusalem at the end of seventy years in exile ([Jeremiah 29:10-14](#)). What do we find Daniel doing near the end of that

seventy-year period? He implores [God](#) so fervently on behalf of his nation that God sends Gabriel, one of the highest-ranking angels, to deliver a message directly from Him ([Daniel 9:1-24](#)).

What stands out in Daniel's prayer for his nation is his use of "we," not "they." He puts himself in the same boat as the sinning Jews. Daniel cries out, ". . . we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments" (verse 5).

In his prayer's conclusion ([Daniel 9:16-19](#)), Daniel is clearly praying for forgiveness for his sinful countrymen and himself. He prays for good things to start happening to his unconverted neighbors. And God hears: "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision" (verses 22-23).

As we study the inspired Scripture, we find holy men moved with deep feeling for their people, their city, their country—all the while realizing that they simultaneously look for another city with eternal "foundations, whose builder and maker is God" ([Hebrews 11:10](#)).

Ezekiel, another captive of the Babylonians, reminds us that God puts some kind of identifying mark on those who "sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done" around us ([Ezekiel 9:4](#)). Those who are moved by events spiraling out of control pray about the situation, entreating God to act, to come soon. Ezekiel records that God spares such concerned people.

By contrast, he records the horrific scene of thousands being slaughtered who do not grieve over the condition of the nation (verses 5-6). As the slaughter commences, Ezekiel prays and begs God to reconsider what He is doing: "Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?" (verse 8). God answers that, this time, He must punish and punish hard (verses 9-10). The point is that Ezekiel felt so deeply for his countrymen and nation that he implored God to extend mercy.

How did we do on September 11, 12, 13, and in the days since? Are we [sighing and crying](#) when we see "acts of God"—natural catastrophes like floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes—ripping through the countryside? God is moved when He sees us moved by the pain and suffering occurring around us, and not just that affecting our immediate circle of family and friends.

We know God will punish the [nations of modern-day Israel](#) increasingly in the years ahead. We will witness great sorrow and woe, but God is pleased when He sees us wholeheartedly interceding even for those who deserve discipline.

— Staff

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[**Should We Pray for the World?**](#)

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