***Jeremiah 14:13-22 Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’ 14And the Lord said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart. 15Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not be in this land’ - ‘By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed! 16And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have no one to bury them - them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters - for I will pour their wickedness on them.’ 17“Therefore you shall say this word to them: ‘Let my eyes flow with tears night and day, And let them not cease; For the virgin daughter of my people Has been broken with a mighty stroke, with a very severe blow.
18If I go out to the field, Then behold, those slain with the sword! And if I enter the city, Then behold, those sick from famine! Yes, both prophet and priest go about in a land they do not know.’ 19Have You utterly rejected Judah? Has Your soul loathed Zion? Why have You stricken us so that there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, but there was no good; And for the time of healing, and there was trouble. 20We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness And the iniquity of our fathers, For we have sinned against You. 21Do not abhor us, for Your name’s sake; Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory. Remember, do not break Your covenant with us. 22Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these.***

We join Jeremiah again tonight as droughts plague the land of Judah. This is part of God’s judgement on the land. Time and again, we see God using natural phenomenon such as droughts and insects, floods and animals to bring judgement on rebellious nations, including Israel and Judah. We have no doubt that, if God did it then, He will do it now. This leaves Jeremiah heartbroken for his people, but obedient to God in all ways, first and foremost.

Verse 13 *Then I said, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’’* Now, Jeremiah speaks again – Ah Lord God! He exclaims this – this is a very animated speech from Jeremiah – Behold, the prophets say – the false priests and prophets are lying to the people, preaching peace, peace, while God is planning their captivity. The people receive these pleasant words, and the prophets scratch their itching ears. The prophets reassure the people and, regardless of the obvious calamities all around, the people receive pleasantries rather than the Truth that Jeremiah brings.

Verses 14-16 *And the Lord said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart. 15Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not be in this land’ - ‘By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed! 16And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have no one to bury them—them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.* Now the Lord speaks again – And the Lord said. What God says will come to pass. His Word will not return void. God reveals that these prophets were not speaking in His name – He didn’t send, didn’t command, nor has He spoken to them! They lie when they say there will be no sword and no famine, because that is exactly what is coming. By the very sword and the very famine that they lied about, these same prophets will be consumed. They will fall into the very judgement that they denied in order to tickle others ears. And the people who believed the delusions no matter how they were warned and what evidence they saw to the contrary, these people will be punished as well because they blinded their own eyes to the truth. God offers ample evidence always. It is the people who refuse to see and believe the truth.

Verses 17-18 *“Therefore you shall say this word to them: ‘Let my eyes flow with tears night and day, And let them not cease; For the virgin daughter of my people Has been broken with a mighty stroke, with a very severe blow. 18If I go out to the field, Then behold, those slain with the sword! And if I enter the city, Then behold, those sick from famine! Yes, both prophet and priest go about in a land they do not know.’* God now instructs Jeremiah in words that he will say to the people. He will lament over the people. Jeremiah will wail and cry for this people both night and day. He’s known as the Weeping Prophet. He sees their folly and foolishness. These people, so dear to Jeremiah, will sustain a mighty blow. The virgin daughter of my people represents a way that God describes the people of Judah. Until now, they have sustained only light blows compared to the severe blow coming. This should be shocking to the people, given the calamities that they are already witnessing. Jeremiah is speaking as though he is witnessing this in real time - witnessing the breakdown of the government and the dissolving of society. Miseries are coming and Jeremiah speaks as though he sees them now. In the field are many slain with a sword. In the city, famine is killing many. The false prophets and priests that preached no sword, no famine, and flattered the people with lies will go as captives to a strange land. They paid no regard to truth, but lied to enrich themselves and gain popularity and political offices. Now, they will be led away captive to Babylon as prisoners, falling prey to the very things that they denied to the people.

Verses 19-21 *Have You utterly rejected Judah? Has Your soul loathed Zion? Why have You stricken us so that there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, but there was no good; And for the time of healing, and there was trouble. 20We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness And the iniquity of our fathers, For we have sinned against You. 21Do not abhor us, for Your name’s sake; Do not disgrace the throne of Your glory. Remember, do not break Your covenant with us.* Jeremiah now speaks to God, imploring and begging Him once again for mercy for the people. He seeks to intercede, even though God had given him direction not to in verse 11. He, like Moses, intercedes. Have you rejected Judah? Has Your soul loathed Zion? It’s as if Jeremiah is saying, “Zion was once Your delight. Why have You stricken us and smitten us with no healing? We are wounded beyond recovery. We looked for peace, but found none and found no hope of there being peace. Jeremiah again acknowledges the accumulated wickedness of the land and the people, the iniquity of the fathers. He sees that the people have imitated and emulated the wickedness of the fathers. They have openly sinned and deserve punishment. Jeremiah is confessing for the people in hopes that God will forgive. Do not abhor, meaning to despise or reject us. Jeremiah prays that sword and famine and drought will all be lifted. He pleads that God will honor his prayer for God’s name’s sake. Let not the heathen nations think God unable or unwilling to forgive. He pleads that the temple and the ark of the covenant not be disgraced and captured by a heathen nation. Let not those that worship foreign gods be given occasion to reproach and sneer at God. Let not these glorious places be used for idol worship. Let not people believe that the false gods of Babylon overcame Jehovah. He further pleads that God will remember His promise and covenant and not break the promises. That God will continue to be their God and protect them. He knows that the people are not deserving of this. It will be God’s mercy and grace, not their righteousness, that brings deliverance.

Verse 22 *Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these.* Jeremiah now recalls to God that there are no idols that can cause it to rain. None of these false and dead idols have that power. They’re not alive. They have to be carried from place to place. Without God’s providence, showers will not fall. Can the heavens give showers? In other words, can showers just come because of natural occurrence, regardless of the decisions of God. The answer is no. God is the controller of all things in heaven and in earth. Scripture often highlights the giving of rain in due season as a providential act of God. The prophet implores God to remove the drought, knowing that relief will not come any other way. Are You not He, O Lord our God? Meaning You alone will give the rain just as You alone can withhold the rain. Therefore, we will wait for You – we will wait upon You for this blessing and trust that it will come, and You will supply our needs once again.

And so we leave Jeremiah tonight, interceding, praying on behalf of the people. Praying on behalf of a people who have not only rejected God, but have also rejected Jeremiah. He is hated, despised, and rejected, yet he continues to come and pray on behalf of the people. And so we continue to pray on behalf of our nation, even for those that despise us, hate us, and reject us. Our hope is in Jesus and that He will turn this nation back to Him before it is everlasting too late. In the time of darkness and trouble, let our Light shine, let our belief in Jesus show, that some may see and turn to glorify our Father in Heaven.