

## The “I Wills” of I AM Jeremiah 24: 1-7

This was a time of great mourning and despair for the people of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jerusalem and carried away king Jeconiah, all the nobles, skilled laborers, and men of valor captive into Babylon. A remnant was left of poor people to work the land under the rule of Zedekiah.

It is after this national tragedy that Jeremiah sees the vision of the baskets of figs. The good figs represent the captives and the bad figs, the remnant. Life looked hopeless for the captives, but all hope wasn't lost. God allowed their captivity, but they were not forsaken, [V.5b](#).

We live among a people much like those of Judah. Most in America no longer regard the Lord. I can't predict the future of our nation. I do believe that God will judge us for our sin and rejection of Him. However, there are some promises for those who abide in the Lord. This passage was written for the people of Judah and there is application for America. If judgment comes, there is hope for the Christian.

I want to look at this text from a personal point of view. Judah's corruption was a result of individual choices. The people chose to abandon God. We've all been guilty of straying from the Lord. If we can see our need and turn to God, He will extend forgiveness. In [Vv.6-7](#), God says “I will” six times. Those “I wills” are what I'm interested in today. God has made some [promises](#) to those who seek Him. Let's consider: [The I Wills of I AM](#), for those who turn to the Lord. We find:

**I. God will Respond** (6a) – [I will set mine eyes upon them for good](#). The people were already in captivity. They had been taken away from the homeland, uprooted and carried off. Their life of self indulgence and neglect of the Lord had ended in captivity. Most likely they felt as if all hope had been lost. Their rebellion had resulted in total rejection from the Lord. They found themselves in a distant place, far away from the comforts of home.

- God had been patient, sending one prophet after another preaching repentance, and yet they would not heed. As they faced the reality of what their sin had caused, they likely felt abandoned of God. He would've been just to have consumed them all, but He is a God of mercy. Even in chastisement, God is merciful. He had not forsaken His people. He was watching over those who had a repentant heart. God would keep them in their captivity and bless them again. [Ps.34:15 – The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.](#)
- We've all had those times when we've strayed from the Lord and found ourselves in a distant land, far from God. Aren't you glad that God didn't forsake you? He is always aware of

where you are. We may bring disappointment and hurt unto our blessed Lord, but His love remains steadfast. For those who will seek Him, He will respond. You may be distant today, but God still has His watchful, loving eye upon you. He wants nothing more than to help you overcome captivity!

**II. God will Restore (6b)** – [I will bring them again to this land.](#) God made a covenant with Abraham to raise up a nation that would occupy the Promised Land. As long as the people served the Lord they would remain in the land. Judah had broken the covenant and been expelled from the land.

- Many of them probably wondered if they would ever see home again. Would they ever enjoy the abundance and beauty of the homeland? They were no longer free to enjoy the benefits of God's blessing. Although they had been taken captive, God would bring them home again; He would restore them to the land of promise. God is faithful unto His own.
- There have been times that I've left my land of promise. I have sought the lure of this world. I have traded the goodness and abundance of God for the pleasure of sin. God would've been just to have left me in that foreign land, but He restored me unto the fold. The Shepherd of my soul came unto me. He lovingly picked me up, took care of my wounds, and carried me safely home.
- For those who will seek the Lord and turn to Him, He will always restore! Sin often takes us down a long, lonely road. We may get so far away that we fear we'll never find our way back. The fact is: we can't in ourselves, but Jesus will welcome you in. Notice [Jam.4:8-10](#).

**III. God will Repair (6c)** – [I will build them up and not pull them down.](#) The people had spent some 850 years in their land. They had built homes and lives there. The magnificent temple was in Jerusalem. Judah enjoyed the very best that God could give.

- Now all that was gone, their homes had been destroyed, the temple had been ravaged, families had been separated, and life as they knew it had completely fallen apart. This proud, blessed people had been reduced to slaves in captivity.
- God has promised to rebuild the lives that had been destroyed. He would once again build this people up and not tear down as the Babylonians had.
- Sin always causes destruction. When we stray from God and submit to sin, it tears down what God has built through us. Sin has destroyed many homes, relationships, churches, and lives. There is hope for those who turn to God. He can rebuild what has been torn down. God alone has the ability to pick up the pieces and lovingly put them back together again.

- Are there problems in your life? Are there things that need rebuilt? You can't do it alone, but God can. He will repair the damage that sin has caused if you'll seek Him!

**IV. God will Revive (6d)** – [I will plant them, and not pluck them up](#). Consider the horror and difficulty associated with the captivity. The day likely began as many before. The people were going about their daily routine and all at once the enemy began to attack. There was no time to return home and gather anything or kiss a loved one goodbye. They were herded up like animals and marched off in captivity.

- What a difference a day can make. The peace and tranquility of home was gone. The people had been plucked out of their homeland and forced to face the brutality of captivity. This promise from the Lord must've been especially comforting. God would not only bring them back and rebuild what had been destroyed, but He would also help them plant their roots again. The security they once knew would come again.
- God still offers that promise today. He can take a life that has been uprooted by sin, turned upside down, and plant it in His grace again. God can revive that inner peace that has been taken captive by sin. Your life can once again be prosperous and fruitful for the Lord. [Psalm 1:3 - And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper](#). Sin causes an environment of chaos, but God can plant us by the rivers of water, that we may draw from His deep well once again!

**V. God will Reward (7a)** – [I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD](#). This was the very thing that resulted in their captivity, a heart that was hard toward God and wouldn't recognize Him. Once the people were brought again into the land, God would give them the very thing they needed most.

- Rather than a God of wrath, allowing us to suffer in judgment, He is a God of mercy willing to touch and soften hearts that are hard and defiant. I am undeserving of any of the mercies of God. He would've been just to have condemned me to hell. He would've been right to have allowed me to suffer the consequences of sin, even after I was saved, but He always forgives.
- I don't have the ability within myself to serve God and live for Him. He has given that to me and I bless His holy name. Were it not for the mercies of God we would all be consumed. He has placed the desire that we have in our hearts to serve Him!

**VI. God will Remain (7b)** – *I will be their God*. I have preached this entire message to get to this point. The people faced difficulty because of their sin. They were responsible for the hardship they endured. They may have felt that all they had was lost forever.

- Much changed for them in their captivity, but God did not. He was the one constant in their ever changing situation. He was God before their captivity and He remained God as they were restored from captivity. God had not forsaken them and He never would.
  
- We all face times of difficulty, maybe even thinking God has abandoned us, but He is still our God! He is the Almighty, the Great I AM, the First and the Last. He alone is the true and living God. We may turn our backs upon Him and cause Him great disappointment, but He is still our God. He loved us enough to give His only begotten Son for our sin. There is nothing that will ever separate us from our God. The saved belong to Him!

**Conclusion:** We all have those times when we stray from the Lord. That certainly isn't pleasing to Him, but He is faithful to those who belong to Him. Maybe you need to come and claim the "I wills" of I AM. He will restore you if you will come to Him. Maybe you have never been saved and do not know Christ as your Savior. He stands ready to save. Won't you come?