

Lesson 3: Jeremiah 7:1-11:17

To class attendees: Below, you will find some principles from our text that I would like you to help me finish and reflect on. There is also a table of contrasts to complete. If you cannot find the time to do all of these, then please pick the one(s) that most interest you. When you see a phrase that ends with "...", try to complete the thought based on your understanding of the immediate context. While consulting with the rest of Scripture is required to determine to what extent these principles may hold true today, what we are doing here is the first and (perhaps) most important step.

I. False Worship (7:1-10:25)

A. Trusting in deceptive words at the temple (7:1-15)

1. "The temple of the LORD x3" (verse 4 and 2-11 context)

Their lives contradict what the purpose of the Temple was about.

Principle: Uttering religious-sounding phrases (apparently as sort of a 'lucky charm') in a place historically related to the worship of the LORD is of little use if...

- *disobey & disrespect God*
- *it is contradicted or negated by a lifestyle contrary to God's commands.*

2. Example of Shiloh from earlier OT history (verses 12-15, also Josh 18:1, I Sam 1-4, Ps 78:60)

Place where Ark of the Covenant was kept.

Evil priesthood w/ 2 wicked sons - Eli & sons.

Turned Shiloh into a warehouse... sleeping around near the Ark of Covenant.

Principle: The LORD's use in the past of a particular 'spiritual' venue or group of people for His worship is no guarantee of His...

- *ongoing protection/loyalty to that place.* *Let's take Ark of covt with us into battle.*
- *Mainline denomination w/ history where God & moved & blessed in the past.*

Judgment on Shiloh -> MOST HOLY PLACE

Eating fat of the sacrifices for themselves.

B. No true 'Shema' (7:21-28, also I Sam 15:22, Mt 7:24-27)

1. 'Shema', the word for 'to hear/listen' also means 'to obey'. In this text, the term is used 5 times and our English translations dance between its different nuances according to context. The context also suggests that historically in the OT, the LORD desired His people's overall obedience more than their sacrificing. *Whole LIFE is patterned after God is uniquely God & we are to be about listening, hearing & obeying.*

2. Judah's problem (according to this text):

They've heard God's word for centuries & not putting it into practice.

3. Examples of this problem in surrounding verses:

- *Cakes for the queen (7:18) -> Babylonian female goddess. (is what shema is.)*
- *Sons and daughters in the fire (7:31)*

Down in the Valley of Hinnom. Sacrifice.

BOTH hear the word. But only one DOES it: that is what shema is.

"I'm about to pour out my wrath."
Rooftops.

Principle: One's exposure to regular hearing of Scriptural truth is of little use if...

you ignore it; don't put it into practice. Is there really hearing of Scripture.

"Get rid of our babies for own prosperity."

C. Jeremiah's sense of grief and intense frustration concerning his countrymen (8:18-9:2)

"My sorrow is beyond healing. My heart is faint within me."

Agonizing over what is going on.

"Daughter of my people" 4x Almost too much to bear.

D. Reasons for boasting: Human ability versus the characteristics of the LORD (9:23)

Not Shema is indication of peoples' LOYALTY but the essence of the people of God.

The big deal is NOT wise, mighty or rich.

Boast -> "Knowing & understanding God." NOT just obedience

Abandoning our kids to make money???
When I give a message Have I wept for them & their condition or do I just deliver a message to an unknowing of people.

The whole family is involved.

"I love them but can't stand to be with them."

E. Idols and the LORD: Contrasting objects of Judah's worship (10:1-16)

1. In the table below, please complete the contrasts drawn from verses 1-15:

Characteristics of Idols	For apart	Characteristics of the LORD
Created by man (v. 3,4)	←	Creator of all v. 12 He made EVERYTHING
Foolish and worthless (8, 15)		Wise (v. 7, 12) Source of wisdom
Will perish (v. 11)		Everlasting King (v. 10)
They can't do <u>any</u> good or harm.		He speaks, acts, rules He does it <u>all</u> .
<u>WORTHLESSNESS</u>		<u>WORTHINESS</u>

People of God, there's NO ROOM for this in your life

He wants to be known!

2. Jacob and his Maker (16):

The 4 lines of this verse are related. Lines 2 and 4 are somewhat parallel or synonymous in that they describe the LORD's greatness. Lines 1 and 3 are also parallel in that they describe the relationship between Israel and the LORD. Note that Jacob = Israel, and portion = inheritance. But there is a 'twist' in these 2 lines. Can you tell what it is?

The Lord belongs to Jacob
 "Not like these is He who is the portion of Jacob" (GOD)
 "He is the one who formed all things"
 "Israel is the tribe of His inheritance" Jacob belongs to the LORD.
 "The LORD of Hosts is His name"

You've been given this extraordinary gift ⇒ relationship with God. And you're worshipping sticks?! If you KNEW HIM you wouldn't do that.

Principle: The LORD and His people are naturally meant forEACH OTHER and in this divinely-appointed relationship, there is no reason nor use for ... idols. There's no room. No reason. No sense.

These people in day of Jeremiah do exactly the same thing. Place could even be an idol. Tangible & taste, see, feel. With God you can't do any of that so it takes FAITH.

II. The Curse of the Covenant (11:1-17)

Who or what is playing the role of God in our life?

A. Background information from Book of Deuteronomy as Israelites prepare to enter the promised Land (approx. 800 years prior to Jeremiah's time):

1. Promised consequences of covenant faithfulness (28:1-14)

You've had 600 years to sort this out? you haven't done it.

What/Who do we give our deepest affections to?

2. Promised consequences of covenant disloyalty (28:15-68)

3. Song of Moses: The LORD predicts varying phases of Israel's future covenant loyalty (32:1-43)

B. The enforcing of the curse in the days of Jeremiah (11:1-8)

11:4 "... so you shall be My people & I will be your God." This is the dream. What he wants.

Closing thought: Some of us may be asking, "Unlike the LORD's stern rebuke of Judah in Jeremiah's day, doesn't Jesus have only good thoughts toward His church today?!"

Perhaps the most balanced indication of His approach may be found in His messages to the 7 historic churches addressed in Rev 2:1-3:22, assuming their condition is somewhat emblematic of issues found among His people throughout the church age. If this is of interest to anyone, please take a look.

The curse is being enforced.