

FALSE FAITH VERSUS REAL FAITH!

Jeremiah 7:1-29

IN THIS SECTION GOD SENDS JEREMIAH TO THE TEMPLE GATES TO CONFRONT FALSE BELIEF THAT SAYS GOD WILL NOT LET HARM COME TO THE TEMPLE AND THOSE WHO LIVE NEAR IT.

JEREMIAH STANDS AT THE TEMPLE GATES AND PROCLAIMS A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE AND JUDGMENT.

WHY DID GOD INSTRUCT JEREMIAH TO PROPHECY AND PROCLAIM IF THE EFFORT WOULD BE FRUITLESS?

- GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS CONSISTENCY
- GOD WAS GOING ON RECORD FOR THOSE BEYOND JEREMIAH'S GENERATION
(1 Corinthians 10:11 These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come.)

REFORM YOUR WAYS AND ACTION AND I WILL LET YOU LIVE IN THIS PLACE

1. PEOPLE FOLLOWED A WORSHIP RITUAL, BUT MAINTAINED A SINFUL LIFESTYLE.

v2 "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message: "Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. v3 This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place.

IT WAS RELIGION WITHOUT COMMITMENT TO GOD

2. THE PARALLELS BETWEEN HOW PEOPLE OF JUDAH VIEWED THEIR TEMPLE, AND HOW MANY TODAY VIEW THEIR CHURCH.

v9 "Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, v10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe"-safe to do all these detestable things? v11 Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.

- THEY DIDN'T MAKE THE TEMPLE PART OF THEIR DAILY LIVING.
WE GO TO BEAUTIFUL CHURCHES WELL PREPARED FOR WORSHIP, BUT OFTEN WE DON'T TAKE THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH US THROUGH THE WEEK
- THE IMAGE OF THE TEMPLE BECAME MORE IMPORTANT THAN SUBSTANCE OF FAITH.
THE IMAGE OF GOING TO CHURCH AND BELONGING TO A GROUP CAN BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN A LIFE CHANGED FOR GOD.
- PEOPLE USED THEIR TEMPLE AS A SANCTUARY.
MANY OF US WE USE RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AS A HIDEOUT.

3. THIS VERSE ANSWER THE QUESTION, "WHO GETS HURT WHEN WE TURN AWAY FROM GOD?"

v18 The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the Queen of Heaven. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to provoke me to anger. v19 But am I the one they are provoking? declares the LORD. Are they not rather harming themselves, to their own shame?

WE DO! GOD IS OUR ONLY SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH.

4. JEREMIAH REMINDED PEOPLE THAT ACTING OUT RELIGIOUS RITUALS WAS MEANINGLESS UNLESS THEY WERE PREPARED TO OBEY GOD IN ALL AREAS OF LIFE.

v21 "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves! v22 For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, v23 but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you. v24 But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubborn inclinations of their evil hearts. They went backward and not forward. v25 From the time your forefathers left Egypt until now, day after day, again and again I sent you my servants the prophets. v26 But they did not listen to me or pay attention. They were stiff-necked and did more evil than their forefathers.' v27 "When you tell them all this, they will not listen to you; when you call to them, they will not answer. v28 Therefore say to them, 'This is the nation that has not obeyed the LORD its God or responded to correction. Truth has perished; it has vanished from their lips. v29 Cut off your hair and throw it away; take up a lament on the barren heights, for the LORD has rejected and abandoned this generation that is under his wrath.

5. JEREMIAH CLOSES THIS SECTION WITH A RETHORICAL QUESTION.

*Jeremiah 8:22 **Is there no balm in Gilead?** Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?*

- THE OBVIOUS ANSWER IS YES- GOD IS
- BUT ISRAEL WAS NOT APPLYING THE BALM
- GOD COULD HEAL THE SPIRITUAL SICKNESS

CONCLUSION

JESUS IS THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN REFORM OUR WAYS AND ACTIONS

LUKE 9:35 "THE VOICE CAME FROM THE CLOUD, SAYING "THIS IS MY SON, WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN LISTEN TO HIM."

HEBREWS 4:14-16 WE HAVE A GREAT HIGH PRIEST. LET US HOLD FIRMLY TO THE FAITH WE PROFESS. OUR PRIEST WAS TEMPTED IN EVERY WAY JUST AS WE ARE YET HE DIDN'T SIN. LET US THEN APPROACH GOD'S THRONE OF GRACE WITH CONFIDENCE. SO THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY AND FIND GRACE.