

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing Part XIX: God's Condemnation Of Judah's False Worship (Jeremiah 7:16-8:3)

I. Introduction

- A. Our worship of God is very important to Him: the first two commands of the Ten Commandments deal with our not worshipping any god but the Lord and our not making any idol to replace Him, Exodus 20:1-6.
- B. Jeremiah 7:16-8:3 reveals God's condemnation of Judah's false worship, and it provides rich insight and application for how we should function in our worship of Him today (as follows):

II. God's Condemnation Of Judah's False Worship, Jeremiah 7:16-8:3 NIV.

- A. God condemned Judah for worshiping other gods besides Himself, Jeremiah 7:16-20:
 - 1. The Lord directed Jeremiah not to intercede for the people of Judah because He would not listen, Jer. 7:16.
 - 2. He explained that in Judah's towns and Jerusalem's city streets, the children gathered the wood, the fathers lit the fire and the women kneaded the dough to make cakes in the shape of and unto the Queen of Heaven, Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love and fertility, Jer. 7:17-18b; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1140.
 - 3. In addition, the people poured out drink offerings to other pagan gods, inciting God's anger, Jer. 7:18c.
 - 4. Yet, in provoking Him, the people only harmed themselves, for God's wrath would be poured out on the people and objects used in this worship -- on man, animal, trees and crops, Jeremiah 7:19-20.
 - 5. [Mary is worshiped (in hyperdulia worship) as the Queen of Heaven in Roman Catholicism today (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 134, 150-151), so such a practice is utterly abhorrent to the Lord!]
- B. God condemned Judah for worshiping Him with false motives instead of with true devotion, Jer. 7:21-29:
 - 1. The Lord was so angry at Judah's people that He told them to go ahead and eat all of their sacrifices rather than burn them up on the alter unto Him, for He had rejected such offerings, Jeremiah 7:21.
 - 2. He explained that when He led their forefathers out of Egypt, He had not only directed them how to sacrifice, but to obey His Word in their lives that they might be blessed, Jeremiah 7:22-23.
 - 3. However, Judah's forefathers had not listened to the Lord, and though God had sent prophets unto them and to their succeeding generations, they not only had not listened, but became more and more sinful in succeeding generations until the people of Judah in Jeremiah's time were ripe for judgment, Jer. 7:24-26.
 - 4. God told Jeremiah that the people would not listen to these words (Jer. 7:27), so he was to tell them they as a nation had not obeyed God or heeded His correction, that truth had perished from their speech, Jer. 7:28.
 - 5. They were thus to cut off their hair to prepare to mourn, for God had abandoned them to judgment, v. 29.
- C. God condemned Judah for rebellious idolatry -- putting idols in God's temple and child sacrifice, Jer. 7:30-34:
 - 1. Judah's people had even set up pagan idols in God's temple, profaning it, Jeremiah 7:30.
 - 2. They had also built the high places in the Hinnom Valley to practice idolatrous child sacrifice, what God had never commanded nor had it entered His mind that they were to do so, Jeremiah 7:31; *Ibid*.
 - 3. Accordingly, the day would come when that valley would be called the Valley of Slaughter, for so many people would be buried there that there would be no more room for more burials, Jeremiah 7:32.
 - 4. At that time, the dead would be left unburied so that their carcasses would be food for scavenging animals with none to frighten them away (Jer. 7:33), and God would end the sounds of joy, gladness and wedding celebrations in the countryside and the city of Jerusalem, with the land becoming desolate, Jeremiah 7:34.
- D. Accordingly, the Lord's judgment would be very severe and fitting for all such sins, Jeremiah 8:1-3:
 - 1. After death, the buried bodies of Jerusalem's kings, officials, priests, prophets and people would be unearthed by the invading army, exposed to the sun, moon and stars they had worshiped in life, becoming refuse on the ground as an insult to conquered Judah, Jer. 8:1-2; Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, ftn. to Jer. 8:1.
 - 2. Those in Judah who survived the invasion would be banished to other lands where they would prefer death to life due to the humiliation and hardship they would be facing, Jeremiah 8:3.

Lesson: *God condemned Judah's worship of false gods, her false worship of Himself while she disobeyed Him in living and of rebellious idolatry in her putting pagan idols in His temple and practicing child sacrifice. Thus, God would cause many in Judah to be slain, their bodies to be desecrated before the stellar bodies they had worshiped in life, and those who survived would face humiliating hardship so great that they would prefer death to life.*

Application: *May we truly, humbly worship God alone and obey Him in life to avoid discipline and be blessed.*