

# The Bible Cannot Profit

“Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.”  
Jeremiah 7:8

## Introduction:

1. We have just studied the Bible as God’s Word for nine sermons, but such a study is not enough.
2. We cannot take confidence or comfort in having the Bible, for we must rather obey it diligently.
3. Our nation is facing adversity without repentance, and we see their false hope in His deliverance.
4. Our nation singing “God Bless America” without repentance is exactly the lying sin of this chapter.
5. The greatest danger facing saints today is carnal Christianity (Jer 7:2 cp II Tim 3:1 – 4:5), which is having a form of godliness by outward performance while denying full obedience to His precepts.
6. Our goal as a church is to be the most pleasing congregation in the earth to the Lord by His measure.
7. Our goal as families should be to have the Lord dwell among us and preserve a godly seed from us.
8. Our goal as saints should be to walk with God and have the same pleasing testimony as Enoch had.
9. Jeremiah follows the destruction of Israel (ten tribes) by the armies of the Assyrians for their sins.
10. Jeremiah prophesied to Judah (two tribes) and Jerusalem prior to Nebuchadnezzar coming to destroy.

## VERSE 1

1. The Lord sends messages for His people to His prophets, so esteem them highly (Mal 2:7).
2. The message is from the Lord, regardless of the prophet. So receive it soberly (I Thes 2:13).

## VERSE 2

1. The message was to be given in the Lord’s house, where the people of God would gather.
2. The message was to be proclaimed, for it was not mere conjecture or a group discussion.
3. The message was the Word of the Lord, and it should not be considered the word of a man.
4. The message was to those coming to worship the Lord, though in hypocrisy (II Tim 3:5).

## VERSE 3

1. All preaching should be based on “Thus saith the Lord,” for this is the rule (II Timothy 4:2).
2. The message was to amend their ways (habits, traditions, trends) and doings (actual acts).
3. This is the great message from God to us – to consider and change our ways under the Old Testament (Hag 1:5,7) and remember, repent, and do the first works under the new (Re 2:5).
4. **Amend.** To free (a person) from faults, correct, reform, turn from wrong, convert. To reform oneself, abandon one’s faults or evil ways.
5. The measure of our religion is action rather than ceremony, faith, hearing, or believing (Deut 29:29; John 14:15; II Pet 1:10; James 1:22; 2:19; I John 2:4).
6. God’s blessings are based on such a process – consider and amend (II Cor 7:1; Is 1:10-20).

## VERSE 4

1. They were trusting in lying words. They were confident in sin due to false hope in a lie.
2. The nature of deception is to believe and trust something to be true that is actually a lie.
3. All actions imply a faith in someone or something – and they had faith in something as well.
4. Trust = faith = assumptions; but any assumptions not based on the word of God are faulty.
5. When you sin, you are doing so in the trust you can get away with it by believing some lie.
6. Their trust was in the temple of the Lord: since they had His temple, He would bless them.
7. The three-fold repetition here indicates their constant, emphatic, and ceremonial trust in it.

8. They were correct in calling it the Lord's, for God had blessed Solomon to build this house.
9. "These" refers to the several parts of the temple – the court, the temple, and the holy place.
10. Compare Micah 3:11, "Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us."
11. Compare Jeremiah 2:14, "How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?"
12. Compare I Corinthians 10:5, "But with many of them God was not well pleased."
13. Compare Hebrews 10:30, "The Lord shall judge His people."
14. It is foolish vanity if we trust the Bible, the truth, the church, or a pastor without obedience.

#### **VERSE 5**

1. The duty God required was to thoroughly amend their ways and doings. Compare to verse 3.
2. **Thoroughly.** Fully, completely, perfectly; = thoroughly.
3. There is no room to protect or excuse favorite sins, sinful habits, popular sins, or any other.
4. The duty is to thoroughly conduct all relationships with others = righteous relationships.
5. The love of neighbor cannot be emphasized enough, as it is the whole law (Gal 5:14).
6. The true definition of neighbour is anyone whom you don't really like (See Matt 10:25-37).
7. For even the wicked know enough to be fair and kind to their friends (Matthew 5:43-48).

#### **VERSE 6**

1. The duty is to thoroughly, or thoroughly, avoid oppression, blood, and idolatry.
2. Oppression is how you treat weak persons you meet in life i.e. wife, children, servants, etc.
3. Consider well how the Lord views your oppression in marriage (Mal 2:10-16; I Peter 3:7).
4. "Innocent blood" was expanded by our Lord to include anger without a cause (Matt 5:22).
5. Idolatry is letting anyone or anything compete with the Lord for your affection (Col 3:5).
6. "To your hurt" reminds us God is not hurt by sin, but we certainly will be (Prov 13:15).

#### **VERSE 7**

1. The blessings of God – the promises of God – are conditional, no matter how trusted.
2. Remember the seven precious promises Paul identifies in II Corinthians 7:1 (See 6:16-18).
3. Even the churches of Jesus Christ must seek fellowship properly (See Revelation 3:14-22).

#### **VERSE 8**

1. Compare verse 4. Here the lying words are more fully explained about their false trust.
2. Lying words cannot profit; the nature of deception is to trust something false and vain.
3. All actions imply trust in something – what do your actions reveal as your trust?

#### **VERSE 9**

1. The sins for which Judah was known are here enumerated to warn them specifically.
2. These people of God had carnal lives filled with sins, much like the present generation.
3. There are four sins against neighbor, and there are two sins against God. Consider them.

#### **VERSE 10**

1. They came to the temple of the Lord, and there they performed the worship He required.
2. They presumptuously came before Him with all the sins mentioned in the previous verse.
3. They came, brought gifts, listened, spoke, and acted as if they were truly the Lord's people.
4. They based their trust in God's institution – the temple – as if that would save them (v.4).
5. They presumed upon His deliverance, both past and future, regardless of their conduct.

6. They did not say or sing the quoted words, but implied them by their false trust. To call their own actions abominations is too much to apply literally. The words they actually stated are in v.4. Compare this method of God's identification of sin in Malachi 1:7,12.
7. When we enter His house, we stand in the presence of a holy and jealous God (Ex 34:14).
8. There can be no trust in God's providence, where there is no zeal for God's righteousness.
9. This text has absolutely nothing to do with a condemnation of God's sovereignty or absolute predestination, as some have imagined by forgetting the great importance of context.

#### **VERSE 11**

1. Their presumptuous worship implied no greater esteem for the temple than a den of robbers.
2. Stealing was the first sin mentioned (9), and did they think that God approved of such sins?
3. The Lord sees it all. He sees every one of us; He sees everything of us; He does not miss.
4. God sees our actions, our thoughts, our lying confidence, and our disrespect for obedience.

#### **VERSE 12**

1. Shiloh was where God was first worshipped (Joshua 18:1; Judges 18:31; I Samuel 1:3).
2. Can they not remember that Israel had been destroyed and taken captive by Assyria?
3. Can they not remember false confidence Israel put in the ark of the covenant (I Sam 4-5)?

#### **VERSE 13**

1. There is a debt and responsibility that accrues to the Lord's peoples from having a pastor.
2. The Lord rose up early – He was diligent, faithful, energetic, and early to warn the people.
3. Disobedience combined with privileges of God's revelation deserves severe judgment.

#### **VERSE 14**

1. Judah was going to receive the same treatment as had Israel, which shows their arrogance.
2. We as a nation will receive the same treatment as other nations, unless we repent quickly.
3. We as a church, families, and saints will also receive the same judgment, unless we repent.

#### **VERSE 15**

1. God will reject those who despise His word in the way of carelessness and disobedience.
2. It is a horrible thing when God rejects and forsakes His own people due to their sins (v.29).

#### **VERSE 16**

1. God's mercy will only last so long. See Proverbs 29:1 and Revelation 2:21.
2. God swears in wrath against rebellious and presumptuous sinners (Ps 95:7-11). Take heed!
3. He swore against Israel in the wilderness, and He swore against them here; and He swore against them again as described in Hebrews 3-4, which believing Jews were to avoid.
4. There comes a time when rebellion is so great that it does not deserve prayer (I John 5:16).

#### **VERSE 17**

1. Having told Jeremiah the strong warning and condemnation, the Lord justifies the message.
2. The wickedness of Judah was not hid from sight, as they were impudent and flagrant in sin.

### **VERSE 18**

1. The whole family participated in false religious practices, which provoked God to anger.
2. How much does it matter if false religious practices include warm and fuzzy family time?
3. What is the queen of heaven? See also Jeremiah 44:17-19,25. Well, today it is Mary, by official decree of Pope Pius XII in 1954, though Catholics had long adored her as queen.
4. What is the queen of heaven? Most likely the Phoenician goddess Ashtoreth, whom embodied the female receptive principle of the moon and planet Venus.
5. How similar these cakes were in certain respects to the Catholic host we must study.
6. It is that time of year in which pagan practices will be observed nationwide in America.
7. What they are doing with their “quality family time” provokes me to anger!
8. What else do we do in “family time” that angers the Lord? Television? Movies?

### **VERSE 19**

1. In order to protect His impeccable character, the Lord denies any true harm to Himself.
2. Rather, the sin of these people was to the confusion of their own faces; for though they confidently trusted in lying words and evil deeds, they would soon be ashamed and fearful.

### **VERSE 20**

1. Men do not want a God, Who gets furiously angry with His own people, but this is the Lord!
2. His judgment would be thorough – man, beast, trees of the field, and fruit of the ground. He would destroy man, his means of production, and the product of his efforts.
3. There would be no remedy; for He would judge, and no man or group of men would limit it.

### **VERSE 21**

1. He mocks their form of godliness – sacrificial worship – by ironically telling them to do it.
2. He encourages them to multiply their offerings and eat them all, even though burnt offerings were not to be eaten, for that was all the profit the sacrifices would have – a full stomach.
3. Compare His use of irony in Ezekiel 20:39; Amos 4:4-5; Ecclesiastes 11:9; Matthew 26:45.

### **VERSE 22**

1. Though He did command burnt offerings and sacrifices with many verses in Exodus - Deuteronomy, He did not command them as end in themselves without a proper heart.
2. Compare I Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 58:3-7; Hosea 6:6; Matthew 12:7; Psalm 50:8-17; 51:16-17.

### **VERSE 23**

1. The main principle of God’s religion was and is still – obedience in all His ways (Ex 19:5).
2. Observe the promises in reward for obedience: He would be their God, they would be His people, and it would be well with them. This is the same rule of Paul (II Cor 6:16 – 7:1).

### **VERSE 24**

1. They would not hear, but rather they chose their own thinking and trusted in lying words.
2. They went backward – which is backsliding; they returned to their vomit, as the foolish dog.
3. They did not go forward – which is growing in grace; they squandered God’s grace.
4. Allowing your own thoughts to develop again in your heart is to backslide (Pro 14:14; 4:23).

### VERSE 25

1. God had not been negligent or unmerciful regarding prophets, for He sent many over time.
2. He was not late with the warning; He gave them advance notice; He was an early riser.
3. In this text the Lord is describing nearly 1000 years of prophets He sent to warn Israel.

### VERSE 26

1. They would not listen, and they hardened their neck; they even did worse than their fathers.
2. Remember the Lord's warning about those who harden themselves against reproof (Pr 29:1).

### VERSE 27

1. And though Jeremiah was presenting the word of the Lord, they would not answer him.
2. Our Lord is longsuffering, but He will not wait forever. He will swear in His wrath.

### VERSE 28

1. He was to condemn them by describing their rebellion and showing their foolishness.
2. Receiving correction is one of the highest measures of a man's character, and this is a fact that ought always to be considered when the Word of God is being preached. See Proverbs.
3. "Truth is perished." Their sins had so blinded and deceived them that truth had been cut off from their character and mouth. Their whole way of reasoning was corrupted in lies.
4. Sin is damning, blinding, and ruining; you cannot play with sin and avoid the consequences.

### VERSE 29

1. Cutting off hair was the sign of repentance and grief before the Lord (Job 1:20).
2. It was a time for great grief, like Job; for the Lord had rejected and forsaken His people.
3. The very worst thing that can happen to anyone is for the Lord to reject and forsake them.
4. His promise to never leave us nor forsake us is conditional upon our faithful obedience.

### VERSE 30

1. Rejecting and forsaking Judah was not a weakness in His character, but rather in theirs.
2. They had done evil in His sight, for His eyes are in every place seeing everything (Pr 15:3).
3. They were so confident in their lying words they even put up an idol in the Lord's house.
4. It is amazing how men will think their additions enhance His house, but He calls it pollution.

### VERSE 31

1. The high places of Tophet in the valley of the son of Hinnon were for child sacrifice. They were south of Jerusalem, and they later became a great place for burning the city's refuse.
2. **Tophet.** From the Hebrew *toph*, which means drum or percussion instrument, used to cover the sound of the screaming children, as they were sacrificed in the hands of the pagan god.
3. How do a people go so far as to commit such an atrocity? By not amending their ways when prophets warned, hardening their necks, and refusing to humble themselves to obey!
4. "Neither came it into my heart," describes His total rejection of such abominations. It does not imply at all He had no knowledge of the event or of its certain occurrence, for He did (Deut 29:29; Ps 76:15). It rather signifies their presumption in committing such an atrocity.
5. He designed, planned, and governed this sin as much as today's sodomy (Rom 1:24-32 cp Ezek 20:25-26; Psalm 81:11-12; Acts 7:42).

### **VERSE 32**

1. He would give an excellent reason for the place to be renamed, The Valley of Slaughter.
2. For the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar would produce so many dead bodies as to exceed the burial space in this place.

### **VERSE 33**

1. The judgment would be so great there would be many dead bodies unburied and uncovered.
2. There would not be enough survivors left to fray, or scare away, the birds from the bodies.

### **VERSE 34**

1. The happiness that should characterize the people of God would be taken away from Judah.
2. He would leave the land desolate, without inhabitant, as He would again later (Matt 23:38).
3. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord (Psalm 144:11-15), but the Lord being our God is only by our careful obedience (Psalm 84:11).

### **Conclusion:**

1. Jeremiah 7 contains the following warnings and instructions for all sincere Bible believers.
  - a. "Trust" is the basis for all action, even when trusting in lying words to excuse sin (4,8).
  - b. It is a lie to believe ordinances or institutions of the Lord will excuse your sin (4,12-15).
  - c. Trusting such delusions, no matter how noble they may appear, is truly terrible (9-10).
  - d. Thoroughly amending ways and doings is the only way to obtain God's blessings (3,5).
  - e. God sees everything we do, including false presumptions of hypocritical worship (11).
  - f. Obedience from the heart is more pleasing than outward keeping of sacrifices (22-23).
  - g. Careless hypocrisy is judged severely, completely, and finally (13-16,20,29,32-34).
  - h. God's gracious blessings are promised conditionally for simple obedience (3,7,23).
2. The greatest danger facing saints today is carnal Christianity (Jer 7:2 cp II Tim 3:1 – 4:5), which is having a form of godliness by outward performance while denying full obedience.
3. We cannot take confidence in the Bible, the church, the pastor, or any other external thing.
4. We must reject all hypocrisy, trust, and faith in mere religious worship as having any intrinsic value.
5. We must consider our ways and amend them all thoroughly, or severe and final judgment is coming.
6. We can only desire, hope, and expect God's blessings by thoroughly amending our lives.