**Jeremiah 7:1-15**

**1**This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:

**2**“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.

**3This 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.**

**4**Do not trust in deceptive words and say, “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!”

**5If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly,**

**6**if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm,

**7then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors forever and ever.**

**8**But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.

**9“‘Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known,**

**10**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?

**11Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the Lord.**

**12**“‘Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.

**13While you were doing all these things, declares the Lord, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer.**

**14**Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your ancestors.

**15I will thrust you from my presence, just as I did all your fellow Israelites, the people of Ephraim.’**

Good Morning! I greet you this morning with the words of King David. “I was glad when they said unto me to let us go into the house of the Lord.” This past week has been a very full week. We had a week of Vacation Bible School that included classes for all ages. We even had a new class, the men of the church gathered for VBS for the first time since I have been here. That is a testimony to the fact that God is still doing something new in FBC of Park Forest. I want to acknowledge the work of Daphney Colinet and her team and we will say and do more celebrating their accomplishments on next Sunday.

Now I would ask you to turn your hearts and your minds to the passage before us for consideration: Jeremiah 7:1-15. For the note takers in the building I am going to approach this scripture in sections with explanations and commentary and I pray that as I explain what I understand God will speak to your heart and mind.

Would you pray with me and for me as I work with this theme?

**SAME SERMON DIFFERENT PEOPLE**

God of heaven and earth I thank you for another opportunity to do what you have called me to do and that is to preach your Word, in season and out of season. I ask three things during this time of preaching: let the word I preach be your Word; let the Word you have sent fall on hearing ears, open minds and clean hearts; and finally grant those who hear and understand the courage to change and be pleasing to you. In the name of your Son, Jesus the Christ, I pray. AMEN and AMEN.

**SAME SERMON DIFFERENT PEOPLE**

Jeremiah was called to the unhappy task of announcing the destruction of the kingdom of Judah (~~thoroughly corrupted by the long and evil reign of Manasseh and only superficially affected by Josiah’s efforts at reform~~), it was Jeremiah’s commission to lodge God’s indictment against his people and proclaim the end of an era. At long last, the Lord was about to inflict on the remnant of his people the ultimate covenant curse:

*I will turn your cities into ruins and lay waste your sanctuaries,*

*and I will take no delight in the pleasing aroma of your offerings.*

*I myself will lay waste the land, so that your enemies who live there*

*will be appalled. I will scatter you among the nations and will draw*

*out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and*

*your cities will lie in ruins* (Lev 26:31–33)

God would undo all that he had done for them since the day he brought them out of Egypt. It would then seem that the end had come, that Israel’s stubborn and ~~uncircumcised~~ (unconsecrated) heart had sealed her final destiny that God’s chosen people had been cast off, that all the ancient promises and covenants had come to nothing.[[1]](#footnote-1)

***1 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:***

***2“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.***

***3This 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.***

Why did Judah so desperately need the stern admonition of the prophet which, in short, demanded that they immediately and completely change their behavior! Why? They were a nation of evil doers, violating every commandment in Exodus and repeated in Leviticus and yet frequenting the temple services and making the customary sacrifices, supposing that these external activities would assure their safety and protection from God, no matter what evil deeds they were guilty of.

There was also a wide-spread opinion among the people that as long as the Temple stood the whole nation was guaranteed by God Himself of their safety and security. Ash noted that, "The reforms of Josiah (superficial as they were) had focused attention on the temple, and had apparently created the illusion that God would never let it be destroyed."**[2]** Also as Robinson observed, "The remarkable deliverance of the city from Sennacherib in 701 B.C. had contributed to the belief that Jerusalem was inviolable."**[3]**

The correction of such erroneous opinions on the part of the populace was surely one of the purposes of Jeremiah's address.

**4Do not trust in deceptive words and say, “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!”**

**5If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly,**

**6if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm,**

**7then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors forever and ever.**

Note the triple repetition of "The temple of Jehovah." It appears that the people were using these words as a kind of charm or talisman to protect and bless them even in the pursuit of their wicked ways. As Matthew Henry stated it, "It was the cant of the times; it was in their mouths upon all occasions. If they received bad news, they lulled themselves to sleep again, saying, `We cannot but do well, we have the temple of the Lord among us.'"**[4]**

Jeremiah's breaking in upon that crowd of arrogant, overconfident, hypocrites with the stinging words of Jehovah, commanding them either to repent or perish must have been resented like a plague of smallpox. "Is it any wonder that this `temple sermon' caused a terrific uproar and almost cost Jeremiah his life ([Jeremiah 26:7](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+26:7&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)ff)?" **[5]**

**~~"Shed not innocent blood in this place ..."~~**~~([Jeremiah 7:6](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+7:6&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). Cook and other scholars believe that the reference here is to, "The innocent blood shed there judicially. Of one such judicial murder, Jehoiachim had already been guilty ([Jeremiah 26:23](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+26:23&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank))."~~**~~[6]~~**~~There were probably many other such crimes.~~

The particular sins mentioned here, which God through Jeremiah commanded the Jews to cease from committing, were merely a representative list; and the list will be greatly expanded in later verses. All of these sins of lustful selfishness were the result of Judah's having first rejected their primary obligation to Jehovah as spelled out in the Mosaic covenant at Sinai. "All of their sins were the consequence of their breach of the covenant and their rejection of God's sovereignty."**[7]** We consider this statement from Thompson as a profoundly accurate declaration. Many people seem to be unaware that once man's primary obligation to Almighty God is either neglected or forsaken, all of the other sins may be expected to follow immediately. They are merely the consequences of man's violation of that higher obligation to his Creator.

**"The land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever ..."** ([Jeremiah 7:7](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+7:7&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). "This is the very strongest formula in the Hebrew tongue for a perpetual gift, meaning, `from forever unto forever.' Why then do not the Jews still possess the land eternally given to them? Because God never bestows anything unconditionally."**[8]**

The Jews received the land of Canaan under the terms of a covenant, itself called a covenant of eternity ([Genesis 17:7](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Genesis+17:7&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)); but that covenant had conditions which the Jews were obligated to observe, as spelled out in the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, with the divine warning that if they rebelled against the covenant God would indeed "pluck them off the land" ([Deuteronomy 28:63](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Deuteronomy+28:63&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). In this connection, be sure to read[Jeremiah 18:5-10](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+18:5-10&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank).

**8But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.**

**9“‘Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known,**

**10and 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?**

**11Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the Lord.**

**"Behold, ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah."**

The sins enumerated here constituted violations of the ~~Decalogue~~ commandments as given in Exodus and Deuteronomy. The specific commandments broken were the 1st, 2nd, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th, with the necessary inference that the 10th also was broken, stealing and adultery both being a direct result of the covetousness forbidden in the last commandment. As Green noted, "This amounted to a near-total breach of the covenant stipulations." **[9]**

"Here is further and conclusive evidence of Jeremiah's deep anchorage in the Mosaic faith."**[10]**

**"We are delivered ..."** ([Jeremiah 7:10](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+7:10&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). The Jews actually believed that merely because they frequented the temple and brought their sacrifices as usual, that, they were fully protected in the commission of every crime in the catalogue, "all of this on the mere grounds of their external presentation of themselves before God at the place called by his name."**[11]** They deluded themselves into thinking they were safe no matter what they did.

**"Behold, I, even I have seen it, saith Jehovah ..."** ([Jeremiah 7:11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+7:11&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). Anchor Bible suggests a paraphrase here: "God says, Look! I'm not blind! Of course, I've seen it!"**[12]**

**"Is this house ... become a den of robbers ..."** ([Jeremiah 7:11](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Jeremiah+7:11&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank))? These very words were spoken by Christ himself as a solemn indictment of the temple during his personal ministry, "Ye made it (the temple) a den of robbers" ([Matthew 21:13](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+21:13&t1=en_nas" \t "_blank)). This is a reference to the blasphemous manner in which the Jews used that temple. The Hebrew word here "actually means a robber's `cave,' "**[13]** The figure is that of a den, or cave, or some other supposedly safe and secure place to which robbers retired after each of their crimes. What a terrible misuse of holy religion was this abuse by the Jews.

**12**“‘Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.

The terrible lesson from Shiloh applies to all generations. No church, however careful to observe the outward forms of holy religion, can be acceptable to God unless the moral character of the people corresponds to their holy profession. No mere formal observances of worship and devotion can take the place of true repentance and sincere worship of God.

**13While you were doing all these things, declares the Lord, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer.**

**14**Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your ancestors.

**15I will thrust you from my presence, just as I did all your fellow Israelites, the people of Ephraim.’**

1. http://www.biblica.com/en-us/bible/online-bible/scholar-notes/niv-study-bible/intro-to-jeremiah/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)