

Jeremiah 7:21-28 – God Rejects His Bride’s Gift

Calvin, Poole, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Henry, Trapp, Armstrong, Gaebelin, INT, Delitzsch, JFB, Clarke, Barnes, Gill? 51,
Brothers and Sisters in the Lord: Imagine what it would be like if a wife gave her husband a Valentine’s present and he said, “No, I don’t want it. You don’t love me. Keep the gift for yourself!”

That was what God was saying to his bride. The Jews thought as long as they had the temple and went through the rituals, it didn’t matter if they lived corrupt lives, abused people, and ran to other gods on the side to fulfill their religious feeling. This is the sad subject today.

Our headings are:

God rejected Unacceptable Gifts (This is what I don’t want!)

God desired Faithful Obedience (This is what I do want!)

God predicted Blatant Disobedience (But you’re not going to do it!)

Our goals are: **That you will remember God does not want what you think is best, but what he has commanded, and you will then examine your life to see if you are living worthily, as one who has been redeemed by Jesus.**

God rejected Unacceptable Gifts

21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Add your **burnt offerings** to **your sacrifices** and eat meat.

1. God, using his judgment name, Lord of Armies, told the Jews they could just as well eat the meat from their burnt offerings and sacrifices because they had no value to him.

“Olah,” the burnt offering, was not to be eaten by the offerer or the priest but was wholly consumed by fire and offered to God. The burnt offering pictured reconciliation between God and man!

So God was saying: “You might as well enjoy a few bites from the sacrifices you are allowed to eat and mix it with the burnt offerings you are not allowed to eat, because that is all the benefit you will get from them.”

The Jews could no longer get protection from God. Even if they offered all the clean animals and birds in the land, that meant nothing to God. Their offerings were unacceptable to the Lord...

Look what God said before the northern 10 ½ tribes were taken into captivity:

Hosea 9:4 They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, **Nor shall their sacrifices be pleasing to Him.** It shall be like bread of mourners to them; **All who eat it shall be defiled...**

Amos 5:21 "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. 22 Though you offer Me **burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them,** Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.

22 "**For I did not speak to your fathers,** or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, **concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.**

2. God reiterated he did not want their sacrifices and burnt offerings!

Is this really true...that God did not want their sacrifices? Answer: In order to make a stronger emphasis on something, God would often minimize something else.

It is a common style of speech. So you must read this verse this way: "*For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, **concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices [only, but obedience also].*** So God did not want sacrifices without obedience.

Look at one more example of deemphasizing one thing to emphasize another, but there are others. (Exodus 16:8, John 5:45)

Genesis 45:8 "So now **it was not you who sent me here [only], but God [also];** and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Did Joseph's brother sell him to people going to Egypt? Yes. But to emphasize God's providence, God deemphasized what Joseph's brothers did.

3. Lessons:

a. God will not protect you from judgment if you offer polluted lives to him. He wants a clean bride.

b. Don't expect to bribe God and get a license to sin by coming to church on Sundays and being a member of New Horizon. It won't work. God sees through that and will punish you if you try to do that. Sacrifices without obedience is squat.

c. With that said, know God does not need your worship! He commands you to worship because **men should glorify him.** He commands you to worship because

that is the means by which he gifts man with all the things he needs to do the work he had called him to do.

Exodus 15:26 and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."

God desired Faithful Obedience

23 "But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.'

1. Instead of offering sacrifices – let alone deceitful sacrifices - God required the Jews obey his voice.

He wanted them to know obedience was better than sacrifice.

1 Samuel 15:22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

And even when they offered sacrifices, the sacrifices had to be pure and clean.

John 4:24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

2. God wanted the Jews to walk worthily in every way, not pick and choose how they wanted to live.

In order to encourage them to live according to his law, God promised them if they obeyed his voice, they could be assured of all the blessings they needed. This was a common theme.

Deuteronomy 5:29 'Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!

Jesus himself rebuked the Jews of his day who emphasized tithing but not faith, justice, and mercy. (Matthew 23:23)

24 "Yet they **did not obey or incline their ear**, but **followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts**, and went backward and not forward. 25 "**Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt** until this day, I have even **sent to you all My servants the prophets**, daily rising up early and sending them.

3. God wanted the Jews to walk worthily by reminding them of their failures of the past when they ignored his laws and prophets sent to encourage them to obey his laws.

They chose rather to follow the dictates of their evil laws! (This stubbornness was still evidenced later in the days of Nehemiah in Nehemiah 9.) They literally turned their backs to God.

And this pattern continued from the time they entered Canaan. They consistently rejected the judges and the prophets God sent, in love, to teach them.

26 "Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.

4. God wanted the Jews to walk worthily by reminding them of the consequences of being stiff-necked!

They set up their own will in competition with God's, but God does not compete with men.

5. Lessons:

a. Present your life as living sacrifices, wholly and holy! This is the only reasonable thing you might be expected to do for someone who redeemed you from hell! Live holily before the Lord.

Psalm 51:16 For You do not desire sacrifice [only], or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, **A broken and a contrite heart [also]**— These, O God, You will not despise.

b. If you continue to sin, God might break your spiritual neck! He has to break the necks of madmen who know there has never been success without God and yet they walk wickedly hoping they would bring success to themselves. He who is continually reprov'd, but hardens his neck, will suddenly be cut off...

c. Woe to the church that does not want Gospel preachers. Woe to the nations that rejects God's Gospel truth. Woe to the family who cupboards are barren of the Gospel.

d. Of course there is no obedience without the regeneration of the heart – something only God can do and only through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Then and only then can one live an obedient life before him...a life enraptured with love for God and for man...not a life driven by lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...not a life driven by ritual obedience.

God predicted Blatant Disobedience

27 "Therefore **you shall speak all these words to them**, but they **will not obey you**. You shall also call to them, but they will not answer you.

1. God declared that, though the Jews should repent, they wouldn't do it.

They would understand God's voice clearly, but would stick their finger in their ears. But Jeremiah wouldn't be discouraged when he saw the people rejecting him! He would become bolder.

28 "So you shall say to them, '**This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD** their God **nor receive correction**. **Truth has perished** and has been cut off from their mouth.

2. God declared Jeremiah should declare to the people they were stubborn, rejecting his voice and his correction.

3. God declared that Jeremiah should declare that truth has died...and had become a distant memory.

The Jews had a funeral for truth.

4. Lessons:

a. It is your job as God's prophets to speak God's truth to the world, even if they don't obey! (And often they won't want to hear.) Maybe they need to hear the message many times before they repent. Maybe God wants to judge them for the refusal to obey the words you speak.

The Scripture teaches that preaching is a savor of life to some and savor of death to some. *2 Corinthians 2:15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.*

b. In the midst of so many who refuse the Gospel, there are some who will receive it. Remember them! Don't ever stop preaching. Isaiah 58:1 "Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

c. God hates profession without practice. But this is what he expects from people without a heart to serve him... **people who have no regard for what he has done for them.**

Conclusion:

The Jews gave God what they thought was best, but God rejected their unacceptable gifts. God expected **good sacrifices** (that pictured Jesus' death) and **faithful obedience**. God warned his bride to get her life right, but he knew she wouldn't.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Just like then, today the church is willful! It wants to offer God ritual obedience. It wants to offer God what it thinks is best – not what God has commanded. But God is disgusted with it. He rejects it.

2. So start a self-examination and a church-examination and see what we've been offering to God.

If you have been doing well, praise God. Continue doing so!

If you haven't and been just going through the motions, ask God to forgive you. Ask him to make you draw close to him and renew your passion for your Savior.

And for the churches around: It is time to challenge them to live godly lives...to have an ear to hear what God wants.

Don't be afraid.

3. In the midst of all the rejection, there are still God's elect who will hear and be helped by the preaching of the Word of God! So don't stop speaking. Let them come and serve God as he has commanded.

Finally: If the Christian's best doesn't please God, a non-Christian's best certainly won't please God. What will please God? It will please God if you plead the blood of Christ for your sins. Nothing else will please God. Then you will be able to begin to please God by obedience and bring glory to his name.