

JEREMIAH 10

THE EVERLASTING KING

A solemn charge is here given to the people of God to not conform themselves to the ways and customs of the heathen. It is a bad thing when the Lord's people turn away to learn the customs of the heathen, and attempt to worship the true God with the same ceremonies as they use in the worship of their false deities. It was the way of the heathen to worship the sun, moon, and stars; they superstitiously observed the "signs of heaven" – such as eclipses of the sun and moon, or conjunctions of the planets – with a great deal of anxiety and trembling. But God does not wish for His people to be dismayed or fearful at the signs of heaven. Let us revere and worship the God of heaven, and then we shall not need to be dismayed at the movements of the heavenly bodies.

Various good reasons are given to re-enforce this charge. The first of these is that the way of the heathen is very ridiculous and absurd, and it is condemned even by the dictates of good logic and reasoning (verse 3). The statutes and ordinances of the heathen are vanity itself; they cannot even stand the test of a rational critique. This is again and again insisted upon here, just as it was by Isaiah. What was the idol that was being worshiped? It was a tree cut out of the forest! It was fitted up by the hands of the workman – squared, sawed, and worked into shape (Isa. 44:12). But after all, it was only a piece of a tree – more fit to be made a gatepost than anything else. It was a speechless chunk of wood, and it could not do the smallest thing for the relief of those who worshiped it. Very fitly, then, does the Lord's admonition come in here: "Be not afraid of them," any more than of the signs of heaven! Do not be afraid of incurring their displeasure, for they can do no evil; nor be afraid of forfeiting their favor, for they can do no good, either. Those who make and worship these idols are just like them – senseless and stupid (verse 14). Although the works of Creation plainly reveal the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator, such persons have become vain in their imaginations; for they do not like to retain God in their knowledge (Rom. 1:18, 21). Let us learn, then, to stand in awe; and let us never dare to provoke the Lord, by giving that glory to another which is due to Him alone! He is ready and willing to forgive and save all who repent and believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ. By faith, we may learn these blessed truths from the Word of God; but all knowledge that does not come from that Divinely inspired Source leads only to doctrines of vanity.

In verses 6 and 7, the prophet turns from speaking with the utmost disdain of the idols of the heathen (as well he might), to speak with the most profound reverence of the God of Israel. None of all the heroes which the heathen have deified can even come close to Him! Who would not choose to worship

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ The prophet speaks of the absurdity of idolatry – verses 1-16
- ❖ Destruction is denounced against Jerusalem – verses 17-25

such a God as this, Who can do everything, rather than such dead idols as the heathen worship, that can do nothing? The Lord is the true God; He is not a counterfeit and pretender, as they are; but He really is what He has revealed Himself to be! He is life itself, He has life in Himself, and He is the fountain of life to all His creatures. The gods of the heathen are dead things that are worthless and useless; but our God is living, and He has immortality. He is our King and absolute Monarch; He protects His creatures, provides for their well-being, and preserves peace among them. He is an everlasting King – the King of eternity. The idols whom men call their kings are of yesterday, and they will soon be abolished; and the kings of the earth, who set them up to be worshiped, will be in the dust shortly. But our Lord shall reign forever – unto all generations! He is the God of nature; all the powers of nature are at His command (verses 12-13). The God we worship is the One Who made the heavens and the earth, and He has a sovereign dominion over both; and so His invisible attributes are manifested and proved in the things that are seen. This God is the covenant-God of all His people, and the delight of each of His children. Those who have the Lord for their God have a full and complete happiness in Him. In Him, we have a worthy portion (Ps. 16:5); and He has a gracious delight in us as His people, Who are His possession and treasure! With us, He dwells; and by us, He is served and honored. Thus God's people are happy above all other people!

Having thus compared the gods of the heathen with the God of Israel, the prophet foretells the certain doom of all those who worship those idols. These gods have not made the heavens and the earth; and therefore, they are only usurpers of the honor that is due to Him alone Who did make heaven and earth. And so they shall perish; for they are vanity, and they are inferior rivals with Him. As for those who worship them – when God comes to reckon with idolaters, He will make them truly weary of their idols, and glad to be rid of them. Whatever runs against God and true religion will be run down at last.

In God's name, the prophet threatens the approaching ruin of Judah and Jerusalem (verses 17-18); and he makes a sad lamentation over these awful approaching calamities. This sermon (which began in chapter 7) closes with an imprecation of Divine wrath against the oppressors and persecutors of God's people (verse 25; see also Ps. 79:6-7), which is a prediction of the Lord's judgments upon all the impenitent enemies of His Church and Kingdom. The heathen, in their rage and malice, sometimes work mischief against the people of God. And although He uses these ungodly people as the instruments of His correction for His dear sons and daughters, yet He will eventually make them the objects of His just and righteous indignation.

Lord Jehovah, we ascribe all praise and worship to You as the one and only true God, the living God, and the everlasting King! Amen.

