

Your Actions, Your Consequences

Key Verse: “Now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; . . . I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.”
—**Jeremiah 7:13,15**

Selected Scripture:
Jeremiah 7:11-15,
II Kings 23:36,37
the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.”—vss. 2-4, *New American Standard Bible*

IN THE YEAR 609 BC, THE

Prophet Jeremiah rebuked the people of Israel in Jerusalem for their misplaced sense of confidence that the merit of the Temple would somehow prevent God’s wrath against their unacceptable behavior. Jeremiah was commanded by God to speak these words, “Stand in the gate of the LORD’S house and proclaim there this word and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah, who enter by these gates to worship the LORD! Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, This is

the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.”—vss. 2-4, *New American Standard Bible*

The audience that Jeremiah addressed was skeptical about the prophet’s warnings of the coming destruction of Jerusalem. They believed that the Temple could be

counted on as a source of forgiveness and restoration, but because of their trust in deceptive words and their idolatry, God would destroy the Temple and cast the nation of Israel from his sight and out of his favor.

In our Key Verse, we are given a beautiful picture of our Heavenly Father's love for his people. The people had rejected his leadings and followed the evil imaginations of their hearts (Gen. 6:5), but God still cared for them.

For the Christian, this passage carries a stern warning! Knowledge or profession of the Truth does not guarantee God's ever-present watchcare and guidance. If they come to prefer their own erroneous theories, the Apostle Paul explains that God will give them over to a "strong delusion," and let them believe the "lie" which they prefer, and let them suffer for not believing the Truth which they did not love.—II Thess. 2:11

If, in pride of heart or unholy ambition, any go about to establish their own ways, inevitably they may become self-deceived and may consequently be carried away by the error they embrace. God will give them over to the error they prefer, and this might even end in complete alienation from him. All that remains is the reward of the self-serving hypocrite—"Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."—Matt. 6:16

Those who have committed their way unto the Lord have a great advantage in every way. Their hearts should continually rejoice, and the more clearly they discern and the better they understand the Divine plan, the more they will be glad that the Father in his gracious love and providence does not give them over to their weakness nor permit them to lapse totally into sin. He holds them by his own right hand and chastens them that they may not be condemned with the world. Far more glorious and happy is the course of those who faithfully walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. They will not need the chastenings of the Lord, but judge themselves and continually have the Father's smile. ■