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Demonstrate Your Trust In God Jeremiah Chapter 7

- Jeremiah was called by God to bring a message of impending judgment on the nation of Israel. In chapter 2, God through Jeremiah, reminded the people of their loyalty to Him and His love for them. The Hebrew word for loyalty is translated kindness, mercy, unfailing love, steadfast love, or covenant love. This word is most often used to describe God's faithfulness for His people.
- This love was demonstrated time and time again. When He delivered the people out of Egyptian slavery, and numerous times of protection against other nations who tried to attack Israel. God was faithful to the covenant or agreement with the nation. God demonstrated this love also by providing redemption for all mankind, once and for all through His Son Jesus. God is faithful and He wants us to trust Him, and our lives should reflect that trust.
- Here in Jeremiah, the problem and the reason for this coming judgment is not God's unfaithfulness, it is the unfaithfulness of the people. This is always the problem, SIN. In chapter 2 God said "I brought you into a fertile land, but after you entered, you defiled My land". The leaders were to blame. They were guilty, rulers and priests refused to seek God and instead they pursued worthless idols. Jeremiah singles them out because of the significance of their influence.
- God is unchanging. He is the same today as He was then. He loves mankind tremendously, but we need to understand that He is righteous and just. And He is to be obeyed. Disobedience brings correction by a loving and caring Father.
- God loves people and desires a relationship with us in which our lives demonstrate our love for Him and our trust in Him. Jeremiah's message is more than just "you have sinned and now you will pay". God continues to love His people, He continues to call them back to Him. Jeremiah's message was also one of repentance. God told Jeremiah in chapter 3 to go and proclaim these words to the people, "return, and I will not cause My anger to fall on you, for I am merciful". God makes this plea to the people to return to Him all through chapter 3 and into 4. He proclaims His love for them and wants them to be restored into a right relationship with Him. God said to repent and acknowledge you have done these things and I will not destroy you.
- But the people didn't want to hear this. God is a God of salvation. He promised He would heal the people of their unfaithfulness if they returned to Him. Repentance is a word that carries the meaning of a change of direction. To Turn. It involves a change of attitude and actions. True repentance is to turn away from the path you are on. Turn away from sin

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- and selfish pursuits. But you not only turning away, you are turning towards God.
- Today that message is the same. For those who have never believed, we are turning away from a life that is mastered by self and sin, and accepting God's salvation through His Son Jesus. We are accepting freedom from the penalty of sin and freedom from the bondage of sin. For those who have accepted and believe but have been unfaithful, we are turning back to our commitment to our Lord and Savior. The same promise God made here in Jeremiah, applies to us today, return to God and experience His mercy and forgiveness. Be free to be all that God intends for you to be.
 - Now many times in the bible, sin is described with the term yeast or leaven. The characteristics of yeast are that it will permeate the entire loaf. As scripture puts it, "a little leaven, leavens the whole lump". Yeast will also swell the loaf to many times its original size. These are the characteristics of sin as well. I have heard it said, that sin will take you where you never intended to go, and keep you longer than you wanted to stay, and cost you more than you were willing to pay. This is the state of people here in Jeremiah.
 - The people are so far gone in their sin, so committed to it, that they were unable to recognize how far they were alienated from God. I believe we are in this same situation today.
 - In chapter 5 verse 1 God actually tells Jeremiah to go through the streets of Jerusalem and search for one righteous person. If you can find one, just one, I will forgive Israel. Jeremiah did search for a righteous person, an extensive search. At first he looked at the lower class, he said well these are poor people they have been foolish, he assumed ok these guys are poor, they lack education, they not the most reliable bunch. So I will go to the most powerful and speak to them, surely I can find one there. Well we know from history that he was not able to and God's judgment did indeed pour out on Judah.
 - God said in the 2nd verse of 5, that they may say the right words, but their actions don't reflect what they say. We can see how important the way we live is to God. He wants our lives to reflect the love we say we have for Him. We say "I am a Christian". That means I am a follower of Christ. So then our lives should reflect that commitment. This is what God word tells us.
 - Look in chapter 7. Read -1-20. This is a record of Jeremiah's temple sermon. Here he emphasized the need for faithfulness and the consequences for disobedience. The people were the ones who broke the covenant. The covenant was made with the Ten Commandments as the foundation. God said, "I am holy, therefore you be holy also". Live by My commands so that it will be well with you. Jeremiah's sermon here proclaims a coming judgment on a people who have refused to change their ways.
 - Look in verse 3. Amend your ways and doings. Correct your ways is

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- what he is saying. Or repent. Turn, change your direction, turn away from sin and self and turn back to God. But they didn't believe or maybe they didn't understand because of lack of teaching from the temple, that their behavior had anything to do with being in God's favor. They believe nothing is going to happen to us, because we are bringing out tithes into the storehouse and we are dutifully practicing the rituals in the law.
- What did the Lord Jesus say is the most important of all the laws? **Love God**, above all else Love God with all your being, and love others. All others. You can only love this way when you understand and know how God loves you.
 - Anyone is capable of loving their child, or their spouse. True love, true Godly love, with which God loves you is more than caring about someone else. This love is an action. This is a love that is described in the New Testament with the Greek word "**agape**". This is a self-sacrificing love. This is an unconditional, self-giving, self-sacrificial love. This is how God loves people. This is the love God demonstrated when He sent Jesus here to die for humanity. This is the love Jesus displayed as He hung on the cross and asked God to forgive those who sought His death. God is displaying this same love here in Jeremiah as He continues to poke and prod His people to return to Him and repent.
 - But these people had forgotten and ignored the teachings of Deuteronomy. Flip over to Deut. 28:1-2. Read. God promised that Israel would be set above *all* nations, **if you are obedient**. Obedience brings blessings, now look in verse 15, disobedience brings rebuke and correction.
 - The people had a false security. They had placed their trust in rituals and ceremonies instead of placing their trust in God Himself and adhering to the statutes He set. Back over in Jeremiah 7 verse 4, they are trusting of lying words, "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord". This was their 4-leaf clover. This became their talisman, this is where their security was.
 - This misplaced trust doesn't just apply to the folks Jeremiah was preaching to. This reveals a lot about people today. They go to church every Sunday. They are always there. Many still attempt to substitute ceremonial ritual for humble repentance and obedience. God wants people to devote themselves to Him, not to meaningless rituals.
 - Jeremiah's message was simple. Look in verse 5, Correct your ways and deeds, live like you love Me, then in verse 7, I will allow you to live in this place forever. Unfortunately the people put their hope in a building (the Temple), rather than a living relationship with the God of Creation. Instead of reciting "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord", the correct response was to recite, "Father forgive us, Father forgive us, Father forgive us".
 - To help the people repent, the Lord identifies specific sins that need to be addressed and reminds them of what happened at Shilo in the days of the

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- judges. The identification was redemptive in nature, if they changed their ways and turned away from this behavior, God would bless them (verse5).
- 1st they must “execute judgment between a man and his neighbor (NKJ)”. The Holman Christian Standard Bible translates this phrase “act justly toward one another”. The Hebrew word that is translated “judgment or justly” is used in Isaiah chapter 30 as an attribute of God. This is a Godly characteristic that God expects us to display to others around us. Jesus told us that the great commandment is to love God above all else and to **love others as yourself** (Matt 22:37).
 - Loving God and Loving others is the very essence of the law. If we love God, we will not have any other god but Him, or make idols for ourselves, or take His name in vain, and we will honor the Sabbath. If we practice loving others, then we will not kill, steal, lie, commit adultery, or covet what others have. And we will honor our parents.
 - This is the point here in verse 6. Do not take advantage of vulnerable people. People like the orphans or widows or the strangers in your land. We see many people like this victimized by others with control and power. Remember the mercy God has shown to us
 - The Lord also identifies the shedding of innocent blood. Proverbs tells us that this is something the Lord hates (Prov 6:17). And this verse finishes with God telling them not to walk after other gods. So what we have here is a reiteration of the Ten Commandments.
 - God is so patient. He loves us so much and wants us to love Him in return. Time after time, again and again, God calls His people back to Him so that they will not suffer judgment. Here He continues to call them back, He tells the citizens of Judah to remember My commands, do them and I will let you dwell here forever and ever (verse7).
 - This is the covenant. The covenant between God and the descendants of Abraham. If you look closely, there is no reference to the temple. The temple of the Lord doesn't have any bearing on the covenant. Jeremiah compares the temple to a “den of thieves” in verse 11. A thief's den is a hideout where a bandit could go when being chased by the law. After the chase died down they could come out to commit more crimes.
 - The people were using the temple as a hideout. They could live however for 6 days and then hideout in the temple on the Sabbath. They assumed they were safe to go out and continue their sinful behavior. Jesus quoted this phrase from Jeremiah's temple sermon when He cleansed the temple and threw out the moneychangers (Matt 21:12). They were violating the very heart of Mosaic Law; the Ten Commandments. The people were blatantly disobeying God then claiming they were safe “in the temple of the Lord”.
 - God has standards for His people; God has expectations of those who call themselves by His name (**Christians**). Turn over to Ephesians chapter 4:17-19. Read. Paul tells us that we are no longer to walk as the rest of the world walks. The world's understanding has been darkened and

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- alienated from the life of God. They have been desensitized and hardened by years of sin.
- Our purpose as believers is to edify (buildup) the body of Christ. Look over in chapter 5 of Ephesians, 5:8-21. Read. We once were in darkness, but now, as believers, we have been brought into the light of the Lord. Paul says to walk as children of the light (you are a child of God, ACT LIKE IT!). Distance yourself from the unfruitful works of the darkness.
 - Now we are not to wrap ourselves up in a little Christian bubble, and keep the rest of the world away. We are to go into the world as a candle, a light in the darkness. We are God's ambassadors, so go and let God's Spirit that indwells you influence those you meet, "as you go".