

Jeremiah 17

From the parents to the children, what is taught will remain. The deceitfulness of the human heart leads people to trust in men rather than God and is the cause of self-righteousness and self-justification. True peace and riches come from God and not from our labors. These and other truths are part of this 17th chapter of Jeremiah.

1 The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars;

In a very picturesque way, Jeremiah states that the sin of the nation is set, with no hope of remedy. This has been a recurring message of Jeremiah.

- 2 Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills.**
3 O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders.
4 And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not: for ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever.

The children have been taught by their parents that idolatry, sin, is acceptable. The heritage of God's people has been lost for the foolishness of impotent idols.

In the beginning of this book, Jeremiah 2:11-14, this action was commented on.

- 11 Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.
 12 Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.
 13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

TRAINING A CHILD IN BIBLICAL VALUES - A GENERAL TRUISM

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it," Proverbs 22:6

"Proverbs, as a literary form, are not direct promises; rather, they are general observations of life that are typically true. This helps to explain why some parents faithfully raise their child to follow God, yet the child rebels against God as an adult." <https://www.gotquestions.org/godly-parenting.html>

"A good definition of a biblical proverb is "a short saying that expresses a general truth for practical, godly living." The Hebrew word translated "proverb" comes from a root word meaning "to be like"; thus, the book of Proverbs is full of comparisons showing us how various images illustrate the fundamental truths of life. The purpose of a proverb is to present wisdom in a short, memorable format. Proverbs are simple yet profound. Many deal with the commonplace yet clarify the deepest realities of life. The Bible refers to proverbs as "sayings of the wise" (Proverbs 24:23) and "sayings and riddles of the wise" (Proverbs 1:6)." <https://www.gotquestions.org/proverb-Bible.html>

NOT TRAINING A CHILD IN BIBLICAL VALUES - WHAT THEN?

"He (Douglas K. Stuart, a professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) in Bibliotheca Sacra (Volume 171, Number 683, July-September 2014), part 3 of a 4 part series called, "My Favorite Mistranslations," has me convinced that we have essentially biffed the translation and interpretation of this verse, and that it means pretty much the opposite of what we've taken it to mean. It is not a promise to good parents, but a warning to bad parents, those who shirk their responsibilities to guide their children, especially teenage children, in the ways of the Lord.

What Does Proverbs 22:6 Mean?

It is a simple warning to parents as their children enter the adolescent years (though the warning also applies to parents of small children). We must not simply let children go their own way and do their own thing. Solomon had a deep sense of the broken nature of the human soul. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child and the rod of discipline will drive it far from him." We are not only born sinful, but also foolish with a tendency to make the wrong choices that bring devastating consequences on our lives. We must be guided, instructed, and disciplined to walk in the ways of God. That is a parent's job – to go to war against the inborn sin and folly in a child's heart and drive it out.

And the parent who sits back and says, "I'll just let my child pick his own way" is an utter fool. That child will go his own way and develop character flaws that will follow him and plague him all his life."

<https://sbcvoices.com/train-up-a-child-what-does-proverbs-226-actually-mean/>

- 5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.**
- 6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.**
- 7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.**
- 8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.**

In these four verses we have two basic truths that reverberate throughout history concerning the affairs of men. The result of these basic truths is illustrated in verses 6 and 8 with the use of a "desert" compared to a "tree planted by the waters."

1. Cursed is the person who trusts in man.
2. Blessed is the person who trusts in God.

Consider Psalm 2:12 and the deity of the Messiah.

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

A person is cursed who trusts in man but blessed who trusts in God. In Psalm 2:12 we are told those who trust in the Son are blessed. Thus, the Son must be God.

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

The people were trusting in the false prophets (men) and the promises of the politicians (men). The heart of man is deceitful and they believed they were doing the right thing in trusting in their political and religious leaders. Remember Jeremiah 16:10.

"And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?"

They believed their deceitful feelings instead of the word of God.

10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Every person will be judged by God. He knows our innermost thoughts and beliefs. We will be judged by a God who knows everything.

The people might argue that they don't deserve judgment, but God searches our hearts which reveals their rebellion and hypocrisy and they will be judged accordingly.

11 As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

The ASV gives the clearest understanding of the first part of this verse.

"As the partridge that sitteth on eggs which she hath not laid, so is he that getteth riches, and not by right; in the midst of his days they shall leave him, and at his end he shall be a fool."

"The translation, "sitteth on eggs which it has not laid," alludes to the ancient notion that she stole the eggs of other birds and hatched them as her own; and that the young birds when grown left her for the true mother." Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary

Just as the babies when hatched will ultimately leave this bird because she is not their mother, so people that get rich will lose everything and in the end of his life he will be seen as a fool.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?," Mark 8:36.

12 A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.
13 O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.

The only sanctuary is the LORD. The LORD is the "hope [mikveh] of Israel" and man's only hope. Those who forsake the LORD will be ashamed and their names written in the earth meaning their names are not written in heaven. The illustration of God as the fountain of living waters is again mention (cf. Jeremiah 2:13)

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.
15 Behold, they say unto me, Where is the word of the LORD? let it come now.

Jeremiah's plea for healing is likely from the response and persecution he is receiving from the people. His main focus (at this point of time) is the LORD.

The mocking of the people criticize Jeremiah because he has preached about God's coming judgment which has not yet occurred. The people ask him where is the fulfillment of God's word ridiculing Jeremiah, and God.

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:3-4

16 As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee.
17 Be not a terror unto me: thou art my hope in the day of evil.
18 Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction.

Jeremiah further appeals to God in the day of evil:

1. I have been a pastor to the people.
2. I have not desired their destruction.
3. I have faithfully spoken for you.

Thus:

1. Don't cause terror for me, or let me be confounded, or be dismayed.
2. Let the people that persecuted me be confounded, let them be dismayed, let them experience the day of evil and destruction.

Some principles for a believer's life.

1. As Jeremiah was a pastor (a shepherd) to the people he was called to reach, so Christians should have a shepherd's heart toward the people of our community.
2. Our desire should be for the salvation of the lost, not for their destruction.
3. Christians need to faithfully share the word of God, nothing else will help.
4. Christians need to continuously walk with the Lord so "the peace of God which passes all understanding," and not terror, will be ours, Philippians 4:6-7.
"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
5. Christians should not be confounded (ashamed).
"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels," Mark 8:38.

- 19** Thus said the LORD unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem;
- 20** And say unto them, Hear ye the word of the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates:
- 21** Thus saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;
- 22** Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

In light of Jeremiah's request, God tells him to go the city gates, where the people are, and say "hear the word of the LORD," and tell them to keep the Sabbath. In other words, put to practice that which you asked me about.

- 23** But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

The people refused to hear the message Jeremiah preached. They hardened their heart and didn't have any desire to hear the truth.

- 24** And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;
- 25** Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever.
- 26** And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD.

It is unfortunate that the people wouldn't listen, for, if they would have there would have been peace and rejoicing in the land.

- 27** But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

The result of the people's refusal to listen to God, through his messenger Jeremiah, would be their destruction.