

Jeremiah 10:1-7 – Their God is Pathetic; Yours is not!

Delitzsch, INT, Expositor, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Trapp, Geneva, JFB, Armstrong, Gaebelein, Clarke, Barnes, Henry, Calvin, Brothers and Sisters in the Lord: This statement might seem unkind, even arrogant, doesn't it? But I'm not arrogant at all in stating this. Rather, this is a life and death statement. Their God *is* pathetic but yours in not!

The fact is, if you don't have the right God, but you have a pathetic one, you will spend eternity in hell. So this *is* important.

This was exactly what God wanted to remind his people of when they **started looking to other gods**...gods that **would allow them to abuse the poor** and **corrupt the Sabbath**. God had to call them to account. So see this contrast between Yahweh and the gods of this world today.

Our headings are:

The Pathetic gods of non-believers

The Powerful God of true believers

Our goals are: **That seeing the foolishness of worshiping false gods, gods that don't really exist, and seeing the benefits of worshiping the true God - through salvation in Jesus Christ - you will have new found passion for serving God.**

The Pathetic gods of non-believers

1 Hear the word which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel.

1. God continued to address his people through Jeremiah and reminded his people he was their Covenant God – Yahweh!

They were in a committed covenant relationship with Yahweh from many years before. So God had an obligation to speak when they strayed.

God addressed the whole house of Israel, even though the northern 10 ½ tribes had long been taken captive by the Assyrians.

2 Thus says the LORD: "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, For the Gentiles are dismayed at them.

2. God warned his people not to follow the way of the Gentiles who received instruction from reading the signs in the heavens.

The Babylonians and Egyptians were known to be worshipers of the stars. They rejected God as the first cause of everything! They thought eclipses, comets, and meteors were signs of judgment. The Israelites adopted some of those lies.

But if the Jews looked to stars for direction, they would give credit to the stars, they would rob God of his glory, and they would spit at his Word. God warned them against this!

Deuteronomy 18:9 "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, **you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.**

But you may ask, "Didn't God give the heavenly bodies as signs—the sun to rule the day and the moon the night?"

The heavenly bodies were given as signs of time, day and night...for seasons...and for tides. The 12 constellations are useful as signs as well. We can know when the sun appears in "Cancer" for example, that it affects the temperature on earth. But the heavenly bodies weren't given to predict personal futures and direct how one were to live.

So those who got direction from stars were dismayed by the outcome!

3 For the **customs of the peoples** are futile; For **one cuts a tree** from the forest, The work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. 4 They **decorate it with silver and gold**; They **fasten it with nails** and hammers So that it will not topple. 5 They are upright, like a **palm tree**, And **they cannot speak**; They **must be carried**, Because they cannot go by themselves. **Do not be afraid of them**, For they cannot do evil, Nor can they do any good."

3. God showed how foolish the Gentiles were in their custom of following these pathetic gods.

Pagans called astrology their "laws" but God calls it their "customs." It was a direct slap at the heathens and rightly so!

They cut their god from a tree and decorated it for worship.

They had to carry their god instead of being carried by their god.

They could make a gate post out of their god. Their god was a dead trunk!

Isaiah 44:12 The blacksmith with the tongs works one in the coals, Fashions it with hammers, And works it with the strength of his arms. Even so, he is hungry, and his strength fails; He drinks no water and is faint.

They had to decorate their god to make him special. Silver and gold added value

to their god, so cheap he was!

They had to nail their god into place so he wouldn't totter or topple. Their god was literally like a scarecrow.

Their god had no breath. (How could it then give breath to others!)

Their god was not capable of making any judgments!

Psalms 115:5 They have **mouths, but they do not speak;** Eyes they have, but they do not see;

Isaiah 46:1 **Bel bows down, Nebo stoops; Their idols were on the beasts and on the cattle.** Your carriages were heavily loaded, A burden to the weary beast. 7 **They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it And set it in its place, and it stands; From its place it shall not move.** Though one cries out to it, yet **it cannot answer Nor save** him out of his trouble.

No wonder God told his people to avoid those impotent gods!

4. Lessons:

a. Take the time to learn how pagans worship their gods! See the hopelessness of their idolatry. See their useless fear of that which should not be feared. Read about the easy, achievable demands of their gods! See how idolatry is attractive because it is easy and does not demand a godly life.

Then compare their gods with Yahweh!

b. More specifically to our text, run from astrologers, for they worship the stars. If astrologers deal with real demons, they may know about your past but they don't know about your future! Only God does. They may fool you into believing the future when they speak of your past.

Hear God's warnings about the uselessness of astrologers:

Isaiah 47:13 "You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators **Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you.**"

Deuteronomy 12:30 "**take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them,** after they are destroyed from before you, and that you **do not inquire after their gods,** saying, 'How did these

nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.'

Astrologers and fortunetellers can make you self-fulfill their predictions. King Mulcasses of Tunis believed from stargazing he would lose his kingdom and his life, so he left his kingdom and lost his kingdom and his life. He self-fulfilled!

c. Prosperity and adversity do not depend on the stars. God holds the stars and tells them where to go and when to shine!

d. Those who run to astrology deny Christianity! In astrology there is **no room for faith, no recognition of punishment, no acknowledgment of God's blessings, and no basis for sin!**

Astrology is a **violent attack against the sovereignty of God.** Astrology is contemptible...very contemptible.

The stars control nothing! God controls everything!

e. Judgment always follows idolatry, guaranteed! It may not be a physical image that some worship, but this includes all forms of idolatry... including worship of reputation...and sports cars.

The Powerful God of true Believers

6 Inasmuch as there is none like You, O LORD (You are great, and Your name is great in might),

1. In contrast to the Gentile foolishness, Jeremiah declared the true Covenant God, Yahweh, was greater than all other gods!

Exodus 15:11 "Who is like You, **O LORD, among the gods?** Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Psalms 86:8 Among the gods **there is none like You,** O Lord; Nor are there any works like Your works. 10 For You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.

God is great in himself! God is great in his power!

Psalms 77:13 Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; Who is so great a God as our God?

Psalms 95:3 For the LORD is the great God, And **the great King above all gods.**

Psalms 145:3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; And **His greatness is unsearchable.**

2. Jeremiah, in order to prove the greatness of God, repeats it for emphasis.

7 **Who would not fear You,** O King of the nations? For this is Your **rightful due.** For among all the wise men of the nations, And in all their kingdoms, **There is none like You.**

3. Jeremiah stated God is due fear because of who he was; he was not a statue made out of stone or wood.

(“Fear” means “reverence.”) God is wiser than all the wise men from nations and wiser than the gods they worship. Do you have any idea how many books have been written and read about the greatness and goodness of God?

Malachi 1:14 "But cursed be the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished — For I am a great King," Says the LORD of hosts, "**And My name is to be feared among the nations.**"

Revelation 15:4 **Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?** For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested."

God was subtly telling the Jews not to fear the Babylonians, for God controlled them...and their gods... **The wise fear God. The foolish run to idols.**

4. Lessons:

a. The fact that God is better, wiser, and more powerful than any other god is a fact only rejected by foolish men.

b. The fact that your God is better, wiser, and more powerful than any other god doesn't make you better than others. So keep your feet on the ground. You were merely privileged to be God's child.

c. Take time to read and listen to sermons about the greatness and goodness of God. (We have 13 sermons!) If you learn about Yahweh, you wouldn't run to lesser gods who are neither great nor good!

d. The wise would fear God and listen to him. The dumb would look for direction from stars and constellations and continue in their foolishness.

Jeremiah 10: 8 But they are altogether dull-hearted and foolish; **A wooden idol is a worthless doctrine.** 10 But the **LORD is the true God**; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation. 11 Thus you shall say to them: "**The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth** and from under these heavens."

Isaiah 30:22 You will also defile the covering of your graven images of silver, And **the ornament of your molded images of gold. You will throw them away as an unclean thing;** You will say to them, "Get away!"

Conclusion:

The Jews were fools to worship idols as the pagans. Idols did nothing, not even for themselves. Those who worshipped idols could not even get breath from them. Idols had no morality- no standard of right and wrong. Idols didn't acknowledge the fall and original sin, so how could they lead the Jews to the cross for repentance and restoration? Idols couldn't take them to heaven to receive their rewards-only to hell and judgment. Yahweh could! Only he had power and glory! No one adds glory to him. He never has to be nailed down or carried!

Brothers in the Lord Jesus:

1. This one true God did everything you needed so he could adopt you as his son again, though you fell in sin and judgment! He did this through Jesus.

2. Live like the redeemed of God – as ones who have been redeemed by the blood Christ. Live Victoriously! Worship the one true God of heaven and earth. Serve him with passion!

3. When you are tempted to stray, remember your God's greatness and his goodness to you at the cross!

4. Introduce others to this one true God! They need to be rescued. Tell them your God lives and desires to save them!

Finally, if you are not a Christian, your god is nothing. This is not to insult you. This is to warn you you will have to give an account to Yahweh for your life. Ask God to make you wise and show you in his Word that your good works would not satisfy him, but only the life and death of Jesus on the cross will do so. Call him today.