

Jeremiah 9:23-26 – Man Thinks He Is Really, Really Smart, but He Isn't!

Gaebelein, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Henry, Poole, Trapp, Armstrong, Delitzsch, Eclectic, Clarke, Barnes, JFB, Calvin, INT, Beloved in the Lord: God's bride became foolish and she turned away from God. What made her situation worse, was that she thought she was wise. So God had to show her how foolish she had become and show her what she really ought to be.

You will see that today.

Our headings are:

God's bride was foolish

Gods' bride had to be smart

God's bride had to face judgment if she stayed foolish

Our goals are: **That you will be concerned about the ignorance of Christ's church that has been fooled into thinking material success and power are proofs of God's approval and that you will help her to understand the danger of her ignorance.**

God's bride was foolish

23 Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man **glory in his wisdom**,
Let not the mighty **man glory in his might**, Nor let the rich man **glory in his riches**;

1. God declared the Jews who had rejected him were foolish because they gloried in their wisdom!

In their foolishness, they assumed financial prosperity was evidence of godliness. It is true God usually blesses obedience with spiritual and material blessings (Dt 28), but the financial prosperity the Jews were seeing was just about to end. **There is often the tail end of prosperity as wickedness begins to take over**, and that tail end of prosperity should never have been taken to mean God were pleased with bad behavior.

They also assumed their wisdom gave them their high culture and they were a very "tolerant" and enlightened place.

Rehoboam, for instance, thought he had great advice from his friends and ignored the fact his father Solomon received wisdom from God. As a result, he lost most of his kingdom. **Rehoboam truly lacked wisdom.**

Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

Just as Adam's first sin – the sin of pride – caused him to commit many other sins, so too Judah.

2. God declared the Jews who had rejected him were foolish because they gloried in their might – their power!

The Jews saw, not just their wealth, but their high walls around Jerusalem and thought they were impregnable. They trusted in their guards rather than in their God.

Goliath's strength and his trust in his protection did not save him. His armor left him exposed to God's judgment.

Psalms 33:16 No king is saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength. 17 A horse is a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver any by its great strength.

The Jews should have had moral strength to obey God...rather than trust in their physical strength...which they had little.

They thought their wisdom brought them their military might.

3. God declared the Jews who had rejected him were foolish because they gloried in their wealth.

The Jews thought their abuse of the widows, orphans, and foreigners was justified because God was blessing them. They thought that working on the Sabbath was justified because God was blessing them.

Hezekiah gloried in his wealth and showed it to foreign kings. He soon lost everything, first to the Assyrians, and then to the Babylonians. Similarly, the Jews would lose their wealth too.

The Jews should have had spiritual wealth...that would have helped them in this life and in their future life!

4. Lessons:

a. God wants to drive the church today from her castle of lies and self-deception and cause her to confess her sins to her husband who speaks the truth and has the Words of Life. God wants to drive you individually from your nest of lies and self-deception to confess your sins before your Father in heaven.

b. God wants you to know that by yourself, you lack true wisdom and you are only self-destructive.

John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, **that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ** whom You have sent.

The one who glories must glory in the fact that he knows God. Only God has true wisdom.

c. God wants you to know you are weak and you can't protect yourself from the least of your enemies. You need him. You could not even fight a simple virus without God.

d. God wants you to know everything you have is because of him and it belongs to him. Wealth is from God!

e. We too are at the tail end of prosperity. We think God approves our behavior because we can still buy a new iPhone and we have a strong military. This is a mistake. Your comfort comes from being in Jesus, not that you are wise, strong, or wealthy.

God's bride had to be smart

24 But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD.

1. God warned the Jews to glory in the fact they knew him and were instructed by him.

1 Corinthians 2:13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Jesus is wisdom personified! He's the one to whom the bride should have looked...not to Chemosh, Ashtaroth, or Baal.

2. God warned the Jews to glory in the fact that he is kind; he was the personification of kindness.

3. God warned the Jews to glory in the fact that he (the personification of justice) brought justice on their enemies

God had standards that were fair and standards that never changed.

4. God warned the Jews to glory in the fact that he was righteous – the one who would perfectly obey God for them.

5. God wanted the Jews to know those who lived for his glory – and he deserved all glory- would bring him delight!

1 Corinthians 1:31 that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

6. Lessons:

a. You can't fully know God without knowing yourself. If you don't understand the rottenness of your condition and your spiritual poverty, you can't understand the grace and mercy of God.

b. No one can claim any credit for being innovative in their salvation and life. The best you can do is to plead for God's wisdom, mercy, and grace. And when it is all said and done, say, "I have done but my duty."

c. True delight must come from the fact you are becoming more and more like the image of God because you were rescued from sin and darkness. Jesus is true righteousness. He is true kindness. He is true justice. Delight in the fact you were chosen by God to be his! This brings greater joy than having a million dollars or have power to fight the Russians.

John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "**If you abide in My word**, you are My disciples indeed. 32 "**And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**"

God's bride had to face judgment if she stayed foolish

25 "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "**that I will punish all who are circumcised with the uncircumcised** — 26 "**Egypt, Judah, Edom**, the people of **Ammon, Moab**, and all who are in the farthest corners, **who dwell in the wilderness**. **For all these nations are uncircumcised**, and all the house of **Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.**"

1. Having a tential relationship with God did not cause the Jews to avoid punishment.

That relationship had to be close. That relationship had to be worked on. **The uncircumcised nations were devastated** by the Babylonian army and the Jews

thought because they had God's mark on their body, they would be protected. But neither the temple of God nor their circumcision would save them from what was coming. The fact is, they lived just like the uncircumcised nations lived! So

2. The Jews had to face judgment with Egypt, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and the Arabs- their worst enemies!

These were the scummiest nations.

"Who dwell in the wilderness," is an interpretation. The words literally mean, "those who have their hair cut short on the sides." (Leviticus 19:27) So what was so concerning about these nations?

Ammon and Moab, the incestuous children of Lot, were so wicked, they had to wait for 100's of years after they were converted to enter into God's temple.

Deuteronomy 23:3 "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever,

Egypt enslaved the people of God and murdered their babies.

Edom, their half-brother, would stand up and laugh as the Jews were taken into captivity.

Kedar – the wilderness people – maybe Ishmaelites, would also be targeted by Nebuchadnezzar.

Jeremiah 49:28 Against Kedar and against the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall strike. Thus says the LORD: "Arise, go up to Kedar, And devastate the men of the East! 29 Their tents and their flocks they shall take away. They shall take for themselves their curtains, All their vessels and their camels; And they shall cry out to them, 'Fear is on every side!' 30 "Flee, get far away...

God was showing the Jews they were no better...in fact, they were worse than these nations, since they knew God's love and strayed from it.

3. Here is the lesson to the Jews:

Romans 2:28 For **he is not a Jew who is one outwardly,** nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is **a Jew who is one inwardly;** and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

The true Jew, the true believer in God, was circumcised, not merely in the flesh, but in the heart!

This had to be so because all Jews were just as sinful as all men in all the earth.

Romans 10:12 For there **is no distinction between Jew and Greek,** for the same Lord over all is rich to **all who call upon Him.**

4. Lessons:

a. God does not look at your outward actions alone, so don't think your baptism or church membership will merit anything toward your salvation. God looks to see if your heart has been circumcised -baptized...washed. The Jews made that fatal mistake in thinking they were saved merely by their outward sign. (It is possible to be baptized and not be saved!) So baptism means nothing without faith and repentance. In fact, baptism, will condemn you if you don't believe Jesus died on the cross for your sins but you take it!

b. Jesus died as your circumcision. He causes your heart to be clean if you receive what he did by faith!

c. You are obligated to warn the nations that the only way to be saved from eternal destruction is to look to the work of Christ on the cross. If you don't do this, it means you don't love your neighbor and they will die and spend eternity in hell. **But you are commanded to love them.**

Conclusion:

God's bride was foolish to reject God. But she thought **she was smart and it was her wisdom that brought her power and wealth, and her uppity culture!** But God **showed her her wisdom was foolishness** and her wisdom **turned her away from eternal life!**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Power and wealth, when they are grounded on human wisdom, are not true successes. Knowing, loving, and trusting Jesus, who is true Wisdom, true Kindness, and true Righteousness, is true success. If you get power from knowing Jesus, that is good power. If you get wealth from knowing Jesus, that is good wealth.

2. Teach your children that knowing and being close to God is more rewarding than anything else they could accomplish in this world. If fact, nothing else means anything without being a **true child of God.**

3. Have pity on a world and many churches that think raw power and wealth are man's greatest goals. Share true wealth – the Wisdom of Jesus Christ– so their names

will be in the Lamb's Book of Life and they will store treasures for heaven – the greatest inheritance of all. This will bring glory to God.

Finally: If you are not a Christian, you might think you know how to get the important things in life – by your knowledge, power, and wealth. But if you don't have a circumcised heart, meaning your sins aren't removed and you aren't cleaned, something only Christ can do, then you will die and go to hell.

If you don't want to go there, but want to please God and be in eternal joy in heaven, ask God for help. Ask him to clean you out because of Jesus' work, and he will!

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