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Trusting in Lying Words

by Bill Faith

There is a strange saying that the Jews had, but God called lying words. It is found in Jeremiah 7: 4, 8 and says, *"Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these.' Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit."*

What were these lying words? *"The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, etc."* The various commentaries disagree somewhat on the meaning, although their final conclusion is the same. For instance, The Matthew Henry Commentary referring to, *"the temple of the Lord"* expression explains, *"Here He resides, here He is worshipped, here we meet three times a year to pay our homage to Him as our King in this palace."* This, they thought, was security enough."

The Jameson, Fausset & Brown Critical, Experimental & Practical Commentary states that the Jews falsely thought that because their temple had been chosen by God as His dwelling, that it could never be destroyed. And the triple repetition of *"The temple of the Lord"* expressed the intense confidence that they had in this belief.

But God told them to not trust in these lying words; and that He would destroy the temple if they did not repent of their sins. *"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Do not trust in these lying words... Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'? But go now to My place*

which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.... Therefore I will do to this house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh" (Jeremiah 7:3,4,9,10,12,14).

God warned them that unless they truly repented of their ways that He would do to the temple as He had done to Shiloh where the Ark of the Covenant once was.

Is there a lesson in this story that we can apply to ourselves? Yes, there certainly is!

Under the new covenant the Holy Spirit is freely given to us. And because God's Spirit is in us, we don't have a temple building as they did under the old covenant. Rather, our bodies are the temple of God.

Yet, some people now have the same attitude that the Jews had then. They believe that they need not be all that concerned about observing God's commandments. They reason that Christ kept the commandments for them; therefore, they don't have to be that concerned about trying to observe them themselves. But as God said, *"... Will you stand before Me in this house (now our own body) and say, 'We are delivered to do all these abominations'"* (Jeremiah 7:10).

The apostle Paul spoke on this subject. In I Corinthians 3:16-17 he wrote, *"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are."* This Scripture is very plain.

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Because we are the temple of God, if we defile ourselves, He will destroy us! Therefore we must keep ourselves from sin as much as possible.

Also, in II Corinthians 6:16-17:1 Paul wrote, “*And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.’ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*”

Hopefully, we will not falsely believe as the Jews in the past believed, that because God chose their temple that He would never destroy it under any circumstances. Nor that we will falsely believe that just because we attend church at the appointed times that there is nothing more we need to do.

The fact is we need to live a life that is worthy of our calling. Yes, we sin. And we are sinners. Nevertheless, we cannot use our weaknesses as an excuse to turn God’s grace into licentiousness. Just because we fail at times, we can’t begin thinking that God doesn’t expect us to keep His laws. Jesus paid a heavy price for us. It cost Him His life. We need to try and put forth the best effort possible to obey Him. And if we fail now and then, we need to repent of our sins and ask Him for forgiveness. He will understand.

A very comforting Scripture is found in II Timothy 1:12 where we are told, “*...For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He (Jesus) is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.*” What have we committed to Christ? Those who have repented of their sins, were baptized and received the Holy Spirit have committed their lives to Him. And as Paul believed, we should also believe, that Jesus is

able to keep what we have committed to Him. That is, our life.

Remember the picture of the “Footprints in the sand?” A picture showing two sets of footprints walking along the beach side by side. Then for a while there was only one set of prints. The picture was portraying a person’s walk with Christ and the person asked Him, “Why is there only one set of footprints for a while? Jesus answered, “That was when I had to carry you.” It is a reminder that we are indeed weak, but Christ in us is strong. We must remember the words of the apostle Paul when he said, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Philippians 4:13).

(All Scripture references are NKJV)

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