



THINKING DIFFERENTLY, LIVE DIFFERENTLY!

Jer 17: 5 *This is what the LORD says: "Cursed are those who put their trust in mere humans and turn their hearts away from the LORD. 6 They are like stunted shrubs in the desert, with no hope for the future. They will live in the barren wilderness, on the salty flats where no one lives. 7 "But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they go right on producing delicious fruit.*

This passage of scripture is divided into two parts. It's as if the traveller has reached a fork in the road. He now has to make a choice. Which one does he take? Does he go left or does he go right?

Often we are confronted with similar choices. The real challenge is not roads well take but the heart behind the decisions we make.

Mt 6: 21 *Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.*

In the case of those who chose to follow the flesh, their treasure was not with God. They found substitutes to worship.

In Jeremiah's time as it should be in the time in which we live, we should be trusting God. Jehovah God. We should be relying on Him.

Let's look at those scriptures again:

Cursed are those who trust in mere humans! I.e. there is no blessing in relying on the arm of flesh. Put your trust in God. Some of us have already started the journey or the process of trusting God. Some are taking small steps. Some are talking about doing it. That's fine. It's a good start. Don't turn back.

Cursed, not blessed, are you when you rely on human strength. You can sort it out. Right! You know people that know people. Right!

Jeremiah then makes a very serious statement. Almost a given conclusion... and turn their hearts away from God!

We must be very careful where we put our treasure. Where we invest what we value most. It will either lead us to eternal life or away from eternal life. Lead us to God or away from God.

Now let's look at the external, the visible form of somebody that has decided to trust but not trust God. Somebody who relies on human strength, human ingenuity!

They have stunted growth. Implies limited development. Not just spiritual but mental, social, emotional and physical as well. A narrow-minded approach to life.

A sense of hopelessness or lost-ness often overwhelms such an individual. The place where you are in is barren. No life, no hope, no future. No prospects. You can add no value because you have chosen to put your trust and confidence in another source. MAN! Man will disappoint you

Paul puts it differently;

Gal 5:19 *When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, 20 idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 22 But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

Lets go back tpu our text:

7 *"But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they go right on producing delicious fruit.*

The word "BUT", introduces a new thought. A change in direction. We're going another way now.

The word blessed; blessing denotes a sense of praise, happiness, well-being, enjoyment of Divine favour.

What is the source of this Divine Favour? Does God have favourites? Does the word not say that He has no favourites?

These that are blessed are blessed because they have learnt to put their hope and their confidence in God. They have a confident expectation that God will not disappoint them.

Heb 10: 35 *Do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! 36 Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.*

Confidence referring to 'your bold expectation' that God will. Like the story of the boys saying my dad is bigger than your Dad. Better than your Dad etc. That type of confidence in God.

Ps 146: 3 Don't put your confidence in powerful people; there is no help for you there.

Ps 20: 7 Some nations boast of their armies and weapons, but we boast in the LORD our God.

Ps 33: 16 The best-equipped army cannot save a king, nor is great strength enough to save a warrior. 17 Don't count on your warhorse to give you victory -- for all its strength, it cannot save you.

Ps 60:11 Oh, please help us against our enemies, for all human help is useless

Let's look at the ones that have made that decision to trust in God. The blessed ones!

Jer 17: 8 They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they go right on producing delicious fruit.

Implies that they are close to the water. Water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. A symbol of purification and obviously a source of life. The trees roots go in search of that source. Part of that search is subjecting itself to being purified.

Most times we want the benefits of the life that comes from the water, but we choose not be purified.

These trees are not bothered by the heat of the day. They know that as part of life, there will be times of extra-ordinary testing and severe challenges. Whatever shape and size they may come in, they will come. They won't be thrown off-course and look for 'feel-good' answers. They will continue to trust and go through life because their strength is from God.

Even when they're experiencing drought as the other trees around them will. They do not panic, because they know the source. They know their God. They have experienced HIM. They do not rely on another man's experiences or get carried away by some fancy fangle experience. They know God.

Ps 40: 4 Oh, the joys of those who trust the LORD, who have no confidence in the proud, or in those who worship idols.