

Jeremiah 17:5-8 – Don't trust in yourself or any other man!

HebrewLexicon, TSK, Handfuls, Armstrong, Gaebelein, Trapp, Henry, Geneva, JFB, Delitzsch, Clarke, Poole, Maclaren, Calvin, Barnes, Eclectic, Congregation of the Lord Jesus: **Don't trust in yourself or in any other man to save you.**

Man has neither the desire nor the ability to save you.

Consider for a moment man's wisdom: **Man tells you, "Nothing produced everything, non-life produced life, randomness produced precision, and chaos produced order!"**

Can you have faith in such ridiculous notions?

Man can't even stop a tiny virus; how can man stop the course of history and guarantee you a good future?

How can man bring a remedy for sin? Man doesn't even know what sin is, how can he fix it?

No wonder God told Jeremiah to warn the people not to trust in the arm of flesh! Jewish high walls, great wealth, and strong neighbors couldn't save them! This is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

A man is cursed if he trusts in his own strength

A man is blessed if he trusts in the Lord's strength

Our goals are: **That knowing Christ bore the curse of sin for you, you will then keep your trust in him and live like a tree that's planted by fresh nourishing waters!**

A man is cursed if he trusts in his own strength

5 Thus says the LORD: "**Cursed is the man who trusts in man** And **makes flesh his strength**, Whose heart departs from the LORD. 6 **For he shall be like a shrub in the desert**, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the **parched places** in the wilderness, In **a salt land** which is not inhabited.

1. A man is cursed who trusts in human wisdom, wealth, or strength – whether his own or another man's.

("Flesh" is used to show temporary nature of man.)

a. Man tries to have salvation and success by his wisdom.

Psalm 118:8 It is **better to trust in the LORD** than to put confidence in man.

Isaiah 2:22 Sever yourselves from such a man, whose breath is in his nostrils; For of what account is he?

b. Man tries to have salvation and success by trusting in his wealth.

Psalms 52:7 "Here is the man who did not make God his strength, **But trusted in the abundance of his riches**, And strengthened himself in his wickedness."

c. Man tried to have salvation and success in Israel and Judah by running to nations as Egypt and Assyria for help.

Isaiah 31: 3 Now **the Egyptians are men, and not God; And their horses are flesh**, and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out His hand, both he who helps will fall, and he who is helped will fall down; They all will perish together.

There is no equality among the gods.

Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, two of the last kings of Judah, did exactly this! They showed how the flesh of men was impotent. The Egyptians, to whom they ran for help, could not save them.

2. Who specifically are these "cursed ones?"

These are the Jews who had hearts of unbelief – who did not trust God. Jesus pointed them out as well.

3. What will happen to these cursed ones?

The cursed ones will be unproductive as a shrub in the desert in this life and the next. (The desert juniper is an example of this ugly stunted tree of the desert.) **The fresh waters (Psalm 1, 23) of God deserted the desert.**

One of Job's friends said:

Job 8: 11 "**Can the papyrus grow up without a marsh?** Can the reeds flourish without water? 12 While it is yet green and not cut down, It withers before any other plant. 13 So are the paths of all who forget God; And the hope of the hypocrite shall perish, 14 Whose confidence shall be cut off...

The cursed man will be as a blind man in a desert or in a salt pit. These were pictures of barrenness. The salt of the desert might glimmer with hope but it is the cause of death.

This was what Judah looked like when the Babylonians came!

4. Lessons:

a. Man might not trust in high walls, but he trusts in technology and wealth to live forever! But man's technology and wealth are no better than broken reeds.

Even the best technology and the greatest wealth can't deal with man's greatest problem -sin.

Faith in humanity is therefore a clear denial of God. You can talk how much you love God, but in not trusting him you show yourself a liar.

If God is your hope and stay, how could you run to money for help?

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD.

b. Salvation is of the Lord! You need the power of God to save and to sustain you, for the enemy is not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers, and rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places! What can flesh do against these enemies? Human flesh is always dying! How can it then save? But God is King!

c. Those who depart from God can expect to find dryness and salt pits in their lives. Yes, they may appear to thrive financially and even socially, but inwardly, they are dry and dying.

d. Ultimately, you have to deny yourself and put your hand in the hand of the one who can still the roaring waters and the one who can wash your soul and make it clean.

A man is blessed if he trusts in the Lord's strength

7 "**Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD**, And whose **hope is the LORD**.

1. The man is blessed who trusts in God, putting strong hope in him.

But this is more than just believing in God. This is trust that Jesus Christ died for all his sins. It is **confidence of heaven!**

Psalm 2: 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put

their trust in Him.

Psalms 146:5 Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope is in the LORD his God,

The man who trusts in the Lord **will be near to him**. This is the way to identify a true Christian.

The Jews had trusted in Egypt and Assyria...so they treated God with contempt and ignored his promises! Not so with the true Christian.

8 For he shall be like a **tree planted by the waters**, Which **spreads out its roots by the river**, And will **not fear when heat comes**; But its **leaf will be green**, And will **not be anxious in the year of drought**, **Nor will cease from yielding fruit**.

2. What will happen to the blessed?

a. The blessed is well-placed. He is a tree planted by waters – plural. Jeremiah likely alluded to this:

Psalms 1:3 He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

He is not like the tree in the heat of the parched deserts and salt pits. He was planted – **cultivated - transplanted**. When you transplant something, you are putting in better soil. He is not growing wild.

b. The blessed is well-nourished. He could spread his roots to the waters! The rivers bring down the nutrients from the mountains – even Mt. Zion, and the roots receive them.

Psalms 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; **Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

This is pictured in the New Testament of being ingrafted into Christ and drawing sap from him. John 15.

c. The blessed is without anxiety or fear! He knows God will protect him. He knows God will always give him the nutrients he needs to keep him alive...now and forever.

Psalms 112:7 He will **not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.**

Isaiah 26: 3 **You will keep him in perfect peace,** Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

d. The blessed will have evergreen leaves which means he will never wither, die, and fall.

Psalm 92:12 The righteous shall **flourish like a palm tree,** He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 Those who are planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They shall still **bear fruit in old age;** They shall be fresh and flourishing,

Green leaves also speak of luxury.

Proverbs 28:25 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but **he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.**

Revelation 22:2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

This is not referring to heaven, but was symbolic of the church. After all, why would a tree be needed for healing when everyone will be perfect? So Judah could be revived!

e. The blessed will never worry, but live in freedom! Troubles will come, but they won't destroy him!

Psalms 32:10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; **But he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him.**

Nahum 1:7 The LORD is good, **A stronghold in the day of trouble;** And He knows those who trust in Him.

f. The blessed will always be bearing fruit.

John 15: 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

In fact, for that very purpose you were created.

John 15: 16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and **appointed you that you should go and bear fruit**, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

3. Lessons:

a. God wants you to trust him. He wants you to be near him. Don't trust in any other god. **They are all hopeless.** God does not **want you to trust in man. Nothing man has can save!** Man may think he is god, but he isn't.

b. The God in whom you trust God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory. He will take you home when you need to go home and keep you alive till then. **Don't hope in yourself!**

Luke 12:29 "And do not **seek what you should eat or what you should drink**, nor have an anxious mind.

1 Peter 5:7 **casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.**

c. God wants you to be prosperous – in the biggest way possible – in your soul! Don't get hung up on lesser things. If you are financially poor, alone, old, sickly...you can still prosper in a way that counts!

d. When you have God's peace, it will make up for all the lacking things in this life. Remember, God doesn't give you all the things you want in this life, even if your faith is the greatest in the world, but he would give you the best things to you need to endure: hope and peace. So you don't have to rush to marry! You already have peace! You don't have to steal. You don't have to compromise! You have more!

e. When troubles come, you will be able to stand because you are planted in God's courts.

2 Corinthians 4:8 We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed —

Conclusion:

You are Christ's! Remain in him. Draw from him. Enjoy him. Produce good fruits. **Don't trust in yourself or any man or anything man makes to save you. Don't trust in your RRSP's, your great job, or your high-ranking position. They can't save!** Sin can't be fixed by man!

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ;

1. Take time to read, understand, and act on God's Word. That is sap for your soul. That will remind you of the great hope you have in Jesus. It will remind you Jesus lived and died for you. This will give you peace with God and peace with your heart.

2. If you don't take time in God's Word and learn the ground of your hope, you will find yourself being pulled to "salvation by man." You might not say that, but that is what your action will be like if you don't remind yourself how much God loves you. But your money, your technology, and your knowledge will fail you.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you can't do anything to secure your future. Stop trying. Your future isn't tied up in your stock or bonds, in your RRSP and your life insurance. All of those things can disappear in a hurry. Only if you trust in Christ – that he lived and died for you – will you have hope – eternal hope.