

# Navigating Uncertainty

Lesson 3

Jeremiah 3:6-8:22

September 27, 2020

## Stop Lying and Start Acknowledging

### Introduction

There is a plant called the Apple of Sodom that has fruit that looks luscious and healthy. When the fruit is opened, inside is a hollow, dry pit filled with webs and dust. Many Christians are similar to this tree and its fruit. We look great on the outside. We make declarations of obedience and submission to God and His laws. Yet, our hearts are hollow and unable to be used for God's kingdom.

Following our agricultural example, there is a term called fallow ground. This ground has not been worked for quite some time. It can provide no useful crops until the soil is cultivated and worked. This process may take hard work to rid the land of its weeds and thorns.

This is our spiritual heart that has gone astray. We must put in the hard work of eradicating our wayward thoughts and actions. It can be done, but it is going to take some effort. The first step is acknowledging that we have a sin problem, something Israel was unwilling to do. God is willing to put in the effort to create hearts that produce good fruit, but we must have a willingness to do whatever it takes to make good, productive soil in our lives and hearts.

***Memory verse: "They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace."—Jeremiah 8:11***

Pray and read Jeremiah 7. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

## **What does the passage say?**

1. If Israel reforms their ways and their actions, what is it God will allow them to do? (Jeremiah 7:7)
2. What would Israel say in the house of God after they had committed all kinds of sins? (Jeremiah 7:10)
3. What was the reply when God called to them in times past? (Jeremiah 7:13)
4. Who is being harmed in the sacrifice to other gods? (Jeremiah 7:19)
5. What was the command given when God brought Israel out of Egypt? (Jeremiah 7:23)
6. What was Israel's response to God's command? (Jeremiah 7:24)
7. What will be the response to Jeremiah when he shares God's words? (Jeremiah 7:27)

## What does the passage mean?

1. People may be able to fool each other with their actions, but the Lord examines the heart and the motivation behind the facade. In what ways is it a blessing that God sees beyond our attitudes and external motivations? (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 34:18, 139:1-6; Romans 5:5)
2. Charles Spurgeon notes that when God asks for backsliding Israel to return to Him, He is not saying, "Heal your wounds or perfect your imperfections first, and only then can you return to me." Rather, God is saying, "Come to me as you are, and I will heal your wounds." What does this say about God's character? (Ezekiel 36:26; Matthew 11:28-30)
3. Why are correction and discipline necessary? (Proverbs 29:15; Hebrews 12:5-11)
4. What attitude are we to have concerning our sin when we come to God? (Psalm 51:1-6, 119:104; Acts 3:19, 17:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

5. Can we hold onto our sin and idolatry and return to God? Why or why not? (Jonah 2:8; Romans 6:1-7; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 John 1:5-10)

### **Applying the passage**

1. In what ways have you acted the part of a good Christian, when in reality, your heart was far from God? What were your reasons for this pretense, and what actions can you take to make your inward motivations reflect your outward actions?

