

CLINGING TO GOD AND RETURNING IN FAITH

Lessons from Jeremiah's Belt

Jeremiah's 13:1-7

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Introduction

Dearly Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, grace and peace of God be with you. today we delve into the profound lessons found in the story of Jeremiah's belt, as recorded in **Jeremiah 13:1-7**.

This narrative carries deep implications for us as Christians, reminding us of our value when we cling to God and the need to return to Him in faith.

The Symbolic Actions of Jeremiah

God instructed Jeremiah to acquire a linen belt, wear it, and later hide it near the Euphrates River. Upon retrieval, the belt was found ruined, illustrating God's point to Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 13:8-11**).

To cling, means to stick onto or hold something or someone tightly, or to refuse to stop holding it, or him.

LESSON ONE: The Value of Clinging to God

Just as the belt had value while it remained close to Jeremiah, clinging to God holds immeasurable worth.

1. The obedience to God's commands reflects our commitment to Him (**Exodus 19:5**).
2. Just as God chose Israel as His special people (**Deuteronomy 26:18**), we, as Christians, are called to draw near to God (**James 4:8-10**).

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Drawing near to God involves choices:

- a. As advised by David to Solomon. **1 Chronicles 28:9-**
- b. Similar exhortation to Asa. **2 Chronicles 15:2-** *And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him: "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.*

Drawing near requires a conscious decision on our part. *Psalms 73:28-* *But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.*

God is near to all who sincerely call upon Him. ***Psalms 145:18-*** *The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.*

However, drawing near to God necessitates forsaking sin. ***Isaiah 55:6-7;***

LESSON TWO: ISRAEL'S REFUSAL TO LISTEN TO GOD

Though they professed a desire to draw near to God, Israel's actions were mere empty words. ***Isaiah 29:13;***

This warning resonates throughout the scriptures. God desires His people to genuinely listen to Him. ***Psalm 81:8-13;*** *Hear, O My people, and I will admonish you! O Israel, if you will listen to Me! There shall be no foreign god among you; Nor shall you worship any foreign god. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. "But My people would not heed My voice, And Israel would have none of Me. So, I gave them over to [c]their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels. "Oh, that My people would listen to Me, That Israel would walk in My ways!*

Yet, God does not force obedience but allows free will.

God will not prevent us from following deceit and falsehood. ***2 Thessalonians 2:9-12;***

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Jeremiah's act of hiding the belt symbolizes our inclination to go our own way.

LESSON THREE: THE CORRUPTING POWER OF SIN

Some may believe that their sins have no consequence, but sin damages and corrupts us. ***Luke 14:34-35;***

"Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the [g]dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Through Christ, we have died to sin. ***Romans 6:1-2;*** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?*

We must understand that remaining in sin renders us useless to God. Sin begets further sin, leading to a destructive cycle. ***Isaiah 59:3-5;*** *For your hands are defiled with [a]blood, and your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perversity. No one calls for justice, nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They*

conceive [b]evil and bring forth iniquity. They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web; He who eats of their eggs dies, and from that which is crushed a viper breaks out.

LESSON FOUR: RETURNING TO GOD AND RESTORATION

Let us repent and return to God, and He will embrace us once again. **Zechariah 1:3**; *Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Return to Me," says the Lord of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts.*

As posed in **Malachi 3:7**, how can we return to God?

- a. The answer lies in trusting God's care and fulfilling our obligations. **Malachi 3:8-12**; *"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the Lord of hosts; "And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land," says the Lord of hosts.*
- b. God eagerly awaits our return, ready to restore us (Hosea 6:1-2). **Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. 2 After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.**
- c. Drawing near to God is only possible when we have hope in Him (**Hebrews 7:19**).
- d. We are called to approach Him with unwavering faith and full assurance (**Hebrews 10:22**).

CONCLUSION

Jeremiah's belt serves as a poignant reminder of the lessons we must heed. May we recognize our value when we cling to God, forsake sin, and draw near to Him. Let us also embrace the call to return to God with sincere hearts, knowing that He longs to restore us and draw us closer to Himself. May we approach Him with unwavering faith, finding hope in His loving embrace.