

Spiritual Accountability and the State of the Nation

Jeremiah 5:26-31

- Corruption Among the People
- The Leaders' Betrayal of Trust
- Ignoring God's Warning
- Consequences of Rejection

[Jeremiah 5:26-31](#), reveals God's deep sorrow and anger, over the widespread corruption and deceit among His people. This passage challenges each of us, to examine our own lives, calling us to righteousness and accountability.

God's desire, is for His people to reflect His holiness and justice, in their actions and attitudes, rejecting the falsehoods, that can lead a **Nation** astray.

Throughout Scripture, God warns against spiritual complacency, and the lure of deception.

- [Prov.14:34](#) says, "Righteousness exalteth a **Nation**: but sin is a reproach to any **People**,"

...Which underlines the importance of, collective integrity.

Similarly, [Isa.1:17](#) calls out to the people to,

- "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

This reflects God's expectation, that His people uphold justice, and care for the vulnerable, standing as a witness to His character.

The thoughts from [Jer.5:26-31](#), invites us to consider how the sins of Jeremiah's time, apply to our own **Lives, Leaders**, and our **Nation**.

As we delve into a lesson entitled, "*Spiritual Accountability and the State of the Nation*" may we be inspired to uphold truth, pursue justice, and live lives accountable to God's standards.

The first point of the lesson is,

I. Corruption Among the People

In [Jer.5:26-27](#), Jeremiah identifies deceitful men, from within God's people, warning against those who prey upon others, through hidden traps and deceit.

- "For among my people are found **WICKED** men: they **Lay WAIT**, as he that setteth snares; they **Set a TRAP**, they **CATCH** men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of DECEIT: therefore, they are become great, and waxen rich."

God is aware of deceit within His people, and condemns such actions, that lead to harm.

In [Isa.1:4](#), Isaiah highlights the betrayal of a sinful nation, that has abandoned God's ways.

- "Ah **SINFUL Nation**, a people laden with INIQUITY, a seed of EVILDOERS, children that are CORRUPTERS: they have **FORSAKEN** the Lord, they have **PROVOKED** the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are **Gone Away BACKWARD**."

The UNfaithfulness described by Isaiah, mirrors Jeremiah's warning of deceit from within.

In [Micah 2:1-2](#), Micah condemns those, who plot harm against others, aligning with Jeremiah's focus on deceit.

- "**WOE** to them that **Devise INIQUITY**, and **Work EVIL** upon their beds! when the morning is light, they **PRACTISE** it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they **COVET** fields, and **TAKE** them by violence; and (TAKE) houses, and **TAKE** them away: so they **OPPRESS** a man and his House, even (OPPRESS) a man and his Heritage."

Micah's message underscores the moral decay, that results from unchecked deceit.

Corruption starts with individuals, but often spreads, impacting all levels of society.

As we move to examine the failure of leaders, we see how personal deceit, can escalate throughout a nation.

- Truly, “**sin is a reproach to any people.**” ([Prov.14:34b](#))

Corruption among the people, includes...

A. Hidden Traps of the Wicked

The psalmist describes the wicked, lying in wait to exploit the innocent.

[Psa.10:8-9](#) reads,

- “He **Sitteth** in the **LURKING** places of the villages: (he Sitteth) in the **SECRET** places, doth he **MURDER** the innocent: his eyes are **PRIVILY Set AGAINST** the poor. He **lieth in wait SECRETLY**, as a lion in his den: he **lieth in wait**, to **CATCH** the poor: he doth **CATCH** the poor, when he **DRAWETH** him into his net.”

This passage reveals the malicious intent, of those who plot harm, for personal gain.

Sadly, corruption among the people, includes...

B. The Betrayal of Trust

Proverbs warns of hypocritical speech, that hides malicious intent,

[Prov.26:24-26](#) reads,

- “He that **Hateth**, **DISSEMBLETH** with his lips, and **Layeth up DECEIT** within him; When he **Speaketh FAIR**, **believe him NOT**: for there are seven **ABOMINATIONS** in his heart. Whose **HATRED** is covered by **DECEIT**, his **WICKEDNESS** shall be Shewed before the whole congregation.”

Corruption among the people, includes...

C. False Prophets in the Land

From [Jer.23:16-17](#), Jeremiah rebukes false prophets, who lead people astray.

- He said, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, **Hearken NOT** unto the **words of the prophets**, that prophesy unto you: they **make you VAIN**: they speak a vision of their **OWN HEART**, and **NOT** out of the mouth of the Lord. **THEY SAY** (falsely) still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and **THEY SAY** (falsely) unto every one, that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.”

False guidance is destructive, and breeds distrust among God’s people.

From the context of [Jer.5:26-31](#),

we are considering a lesson entitled, “*Spiritual Accountability and the State of the Nation*”.

Now let’s discuss...

II. The Leaders’ Betrayal of Trust

[Jer.5:28-29](#), condemns leaders who neglect justice, for personal gain,

- Saying, “They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they **OVERPASS** the deeds of the wicked: they **Judge NOT** the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the **right of the needy**, do they **NOT Judge**. Shall I not **VISIT** for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be **AVENGED**, on such a **NATION** as this?”

These leaders ignore the needs of the fatherless and the needy, prioritizing their prosperity over justice, bringing harm to society, and earning God’s displeasure.

Ezekiel and Isaiah, echo Jeremiah's message, calling out leaders, who have forsaken their duty, focusing instead on self-interest.

- Ezekiel said, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, unto the shepherds; **WOE** be to the shepherds of Israel, that **Do feed THEMSELVES!** Should not the shepherds, feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye **Feed NOT the flock.**

The **DISEASED**, have ye **NOT strengthened**,
NEITHER have ye **healed**, that which was **SICK**,
NEITHER have ye **bound up**, that which was **BROKEN**,
NEITHER have ye **brought again**, that which was **Driven AWAY**,
NEITHER have ye **sought**, that which was **LOST**;
but with **FORCE** and with **CRUELTY**, have ye **RULED** them." (reads [Ezek.34:2-4](#))

Leaders bear a serious responsibility, and failing it, invites God's judgment.

Isaiah describes leaders as "blind" and "greedy," abandoning their responsibilities.

- He said, "His **WATCHMEN** are **BLIND**: they are all **IGNORANT**, they are all **DUMB** dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are **GREEDY** dogs, which can NEVER Have ENOUGH, and they are shepherds, that **canNOT Understand**: they all **LOOK to their own way**, every one (**LOOK**) for his GAIN, from his quarter." ([Isa.56:10-11](#))

This passage emphasizes the destructive impact, of selfish leadership.

Betrayal of Trust from leaders, includes...

A. Accountability Before God

Peter calls on spiritual leaders to shepherd God's flock (the church), with humility and responsibility, not for personal gain.

- He said, "**FEED** the flock of God which is among you, taking the OVERSIGHT thereof, **NOT by constraint**, but **Willingly**; **NOT for filthy lucre**, but of a **READY Mind**;
NEITHER as being lords over God's heritage, but being **EXAMPLES to the flock**." ([1Pet.5:2-3](#))

Godly leadership is characterized by service and example, rather than self-interest, reminding leaders, that they are accountable to God, for how they treat others.

Betrayal of Trust from leaders, includes...

B. Consequences

Micah speaks directly to leaders, warning that their corrupt practices, will lead to separation from God.

- He said, "Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel;
Is it not for you to **KNOW Judgment?** Who **HATE the good**, and **LOVE the evil**;
who pluck off their skin, from off them, and their flesh, from off their bones...
Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but He will **NOT Hear** them:
He will even **HIDE His Face**, from them at that time,
as they have **BEHAVED themselves ILL**, in their **DOINGS**." ([Micah 3:1-4](#))

Micah warns that corrupt leadership, creates a barrier between leaders and God, leading to unanswered prayers, and divine judgment.

Betrayal of Trust from leaders, should result in,

C. The Call to Justice and Fairness

Isaiah condemns leaders, who take bribes, and fail to defend the needy, promising that God will restore justice.

- He said, “Thy princes are **REBELLIOUS**, and companions of THIEVES: every one loveth GIFTS, and followeth after REWARDS: they **Judge NOT** the fatherless, **NEITHER** doth the cause of the widow **COME** unto them.

Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel,
Ah, I will **EASE** Me of Mine adversaries, and **AVENGE** Me of Mine enemies:
And I will **TURN** My hand upon thee, and purely **PURGE AWAY** thy dross, and **TAKE AWAY** all thy tin:
And I will **RESTORE** thy judges, as at the first,
and (RESTORE) thy counsellors, as at the beginning...” (reads [Isa.1:23-26](#))

This passage shows that God values leaders, who pursue justice, and warns that He will remove those, who do not act with integrity, ultimately restoring fairness in leadership.

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Now's let's discuss...

III. Ignoring God's Warnings

[Jer.5:30-31](#), reveals a nation that has embraced lies and rejected correction, pushing itself further from God; Notice the passage:

- “A wonderful and horrible thing, is committed in the **LAND** (or nation); The prophets prophesy FALSELY, and the priests bear rule By THEIR Means; and my people, **LOVE to Have it So**: and what will ye do, in the **END** thereof?”

God laments the **REJECTION of Truth**, as people **CHOOSE** comforting LIES, over difficult TRUTH.

Amos warned of a famine of God’s word, due to persistent disobedience.

- He said, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a **FAMINE** in the **LAND** (or nation), **NOT** a famine of bread, **NOR** a thirst for water, but (a FAMINE) of **HEARING** the words of the Lord: And they shall **WANDER** from sea to sea, and (WANDER) from the north, even (WANDER) to the east, they shall **RUN** to and fro, to **SEEK** the Word of the Lord, and shall **NOT Find it.**” ([Amos 8:11-12](#))

May we ever learn, that a spiritual drought, is a result of turning away from God’s Truth!

Jesus expresses sorrow, over Jerusalem’s rejection of God’s messengers.

- He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that **KILLEST** the prophets, and **STONEST** them, which are sent unto thee, how often, would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye **Would NOT!**” ([Matt.23:37](#))

Rejection of Truth, has long-term consequences, for individuals and nations.

As Amos and Jesus warn, rejecting God’s word, leads to a spiritual famine, leaving people lost, and searching for meaning, where none can be found.

Ignoring God's Warning, includes...

A. Dismissing God's Prophets

From [2Chron.36:15-16](#), we learn of Israel's repeated rejection of prophets, sent by God.

- "the Lord God of their fathers, sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: But they **MOCKED** the messengers of God, and **DESPISED** His Words, and **MISUSED** His prophets, until the **WRATH** of the Lord, **Arose AGAINST** His people, till there was **NO Remedy**."

When will nations learn, that Rejection of God's word, leads to inevitable judgment.

Ignoring God's Warning, sadly results in,

B. Seeking False Comfort

Paul warned, that people will seek teachings, that suit their own desires.

- "For the time will come, when they will **NOT Endure** sound doctrine; but **AFTER** their own lusts, shall they **HEAP to Themselves** teachers, having **Itching EARS**; And they shall **TURN AWAY** their ears from the Truth, and shall be **TURNED** unto fables." ([2Tim.4:3-4](#))

Choosing lies over Truth, ALWAYS leads to spiritual stagnation and moral decline.

Ignoring God's Warning, results in,

C. Hardening of Hearts

The author of Hebrews, urges against hardening hearts, to God's message.

- The Bible says, "**EXHORT** one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be **HARDENED** through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, **IF** we **HOLD** the beginning of our confidence, **STEDFAST** unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will **HEAR His voice**, **Harden NOT** your hearts, as in the provocation (or rebellion)." ([Heb.3:13-15](#))

This passage highlights the importance, of remaining open to God's Word.

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Now's let's discuss...

IV. Consequences of Rejection

Rejecting God's guidance, leads to inevitable calamity, often when repentance is no longer possible.

Proverbs warns,

- "Because I have **CALLED**, and ye Refused; I have **STRETCHED Out My hand**, and No man Regarded; But ye have **SET at NOUGHT** (or ignored) all My counsel, and would (have) **NONE** of My reproof: I also will **LAUGH** at your calamity; I will **MOCK** when your fear cometh; When your **Fear COMETH** as desolation, and your **Destruction COMETH** as a whirlwind; when **Distress** and **Anguish COMETH** upon you.

Then shall they call upon Me, but **I will NOT Answer**; they shall seek Me early, but they shall **NOT Find Me**:

For that they **HATED** knowledge, and **Did NOT Choose** the fear of the Lord:

They would (have) **NONE** of My counsel: they **DESPISED** all My reproof.

Therefore shall they, eat of the fruit of their OWN WAY,

and be filled with their OWN DEVICES." ([Prov.1:24-31](#))

Ignoring divine correction, carries real, and often, irreversible consequences.

God through the prophet Hosea, warns that rejection of knowledge, leads to destruction.

- He said, “My people are **DESTROYED** for lack of knowledge: because thou hast **REJECTED** knowledge, I will also **REJECT** thee, that thou shalt **Be NO priest to Me**: seeing thou hast **FORGOTTEN** the law of thy God, I will also **FORGET** thy children.” ([Hos.4:6](#))

Without knowledge of God, people are vulnerable to ruin.

Paul describes how those who ignore God’s ways, become ensnared in harmful behaviors.

- He said, “And even as they **Did NOT like to RETAIN God in their knowledge**, **God gave them over**, to a **REPROBATE Mind**, to **DO those things** which are **NOT convenient** (or NOT fitting);

Being FILLED with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable (or unforgiving), unmerciful: Who **knowing the Judgment of God**, that they which **Commit such things**, are **Worthy of DEATH**, not only **Do the SAME**, but **Have PLEASURE** (or give their hearty approval) in them that **Do** them.” ([Rom.1:28-32](#))

Turning away from God, results in a downward spiral of moral decay.

Notice,

A. The Impact of Willful Disobedience

Deuteronomy outlines the curses, that follow willful disobedience to God.

- “it shall come to pass, **IF** thou **wilt NOT hearken** unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to **OBSERVE to Do** all His commandments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day; that **all these curses shall COME** upon thee, and **OVERTAKE** thee:

Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and **Cursed** shalt thou be in the field.
Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.
Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land,
the increase of thy kine (or cattle), and the flocks of thy sheep.
Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and **Cursed** shalt thou be when thou goest out.

The Lord shall **SEND** upon thee **CURSING, VEXATION**, and **REBUKE**, in **ALL** that thou settest thine hand unto, for to do, until thou be DESTROYED, and until thou PERISH quickly; because of the WICKEDNESS of thy doings, whereby thou **Hast FORSAKEN Me**.” (reads [Deut.28:15-20](#))

Disobedience, brings suffering and hardships, as a natural outcome of ignoring God’s law.

Truly, “the way of transgressors is HARD” ([Prov.13:5b](#))

There are consequences for rejecting God, and so,

B. The Call to Repentance

Notice, that Isaiah calls people to seek the Lord, and turn from their sinful ways.

- He said, “**SEEK** ye the Lord, while He may be found, **CALL** ye upon Him, while He is near: Let the wicked **FORSAKE** his way, and the unrighteous man, (**FORSAKE**) his thoughts: and let him **RETURN** unto the Lord, and He will have **MERCY** upon him; and (**RETURN**) to our God, for He will **Abundantly PARDON**.” ([Isa.55:6-7](#))

Isaiah’s words remind us that, while repentance is always offered, the time to act may be limited. Turning back to God, requires **URGENCY** and **SINCERITY**.

There will be a,

C. Final Judgment

[Rev.20:11-15](#) depicts the final judgment for those who reject God.

- John said, “I saw a great white **THRONE**, and Him that sat on it, from Whose Face, the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

And I saw the **Dead**, small and great, stand BEFORE God;
and the books were opened: and another **Book was OPENED**, which is the **Book of LIFE**:
and the **Dead** were **JUDGED** out of those things, which were written in the books, **According** to their works.

And the **SEA**, gave up the dead, which were in it;
and **Death and Hell**, delivered up the dead, which were in them:
and they were **JUDGED** every man, **According** to their works.
And **Death and Hell**, were **CAST into the Lake of FIRE**. This is the second DEATH.
And whosoever was **NOT Found WRITTEN** in the book of life, was **CAST into the Lake of FIRE.**”

This passage underscores the ultimate consequences, of a life lived apart from God.

V. IN-CLOSING

[Jeremiah 5:26-31](#), warns us of the consequences of deceit, injustice, and rejecting God’s Truth. Both individuals and leaders, are called to Seek INTEGRITY, Embrace TRUTH, and Remain FAITHFUL, lest we fall into the same pitfalls of ignoring Divine correction.

- We all should, Seek personal integrity, ensuring our actions reflect God’s Truth.
- Leaders must act, with justice, serving rather than exploiting others.
- Ignoring God’s message, brings long-term consequences for us, and our nation.
- Repentance is always available, but a delayed response, will risk missed opportunities.

The Bible says to “honour the King” ([1Pet.2:17](#)),

- but this doesn’t mean we cannot speak the Truth ([2Tim.4:2](#); [Eph.4:15](#)).
- John the Baptist, confronted King Herod Antipas.
He said, “**It is not lawful, for you to have your brother’s wife.**” ([Mk.6:18](#); [Matt.19:9](#); [Rom.7:3](#) ESV)

Paul appealed to his citizenship of the Roman Empire ([Acts 22:25-29](#)).

- We too, can use our citizenship, and exercise our right and obligation, to vote like a christian.
- That is, vote for the party, that at least, acknowledges there is a God, unlike the other party.

For those that don’t like the straightforwardness of the former President, Donald J Trump,

- Consider, “**Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.**” ([Prov.27:6](#))

Similarly, the Jews didn’t like the straightforward teaching of Stephen, when after rejecting Truth, he said,

- “**You stiff-necked (or stubborn) people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always RESIST the Holy Spirit.**” ([Acts 7:51-53](#)), and it got him killed ([Acts 7:54-60](#)).

With the moral decay of our nation, society, and communities around us, this lesson should hit home. May we heed these lessons from God’s Word, and pursue a life that Honors and Defends His gospel ([Phil.1:16](#)).