

A Trek Through Jeremiah 18 - 10:1-16

Bruce Pike

January 11, 2026

Today: Rebukes, appeals, reflections, warnings, and prayers 7:16 - 10:25

- ...
- Against idolatry 10:1-16
 - Warning 10:1-5
 - Remedy 10:6-16

From last week: 9:24 ...but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me.
From what we learned about seeking to understand and know our Lord, what did you do differently last week?

Against idolatry 10:1-16

Warning 10:1-5

Jeremiah 10:1–5 (LSB)

1 Hear the word which Yahweh speaks to you, O house of Israel.

2 Thus says Yahweh, “Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them;

3 For the statutes of the peoples are vanity Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool.

4 “They make it beautiful with silver and with gold; They strengthen it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter.

5 “Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak; They must be carried Because they cannot take a step! Do not fear them, For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good.”

- V1 Call

- Hear the word which Yahweh speaks to you,
 - A God who speaks. Contrast v5 they cannot speak
- O house of Israel
 - Yahweh’s chosen people. His treasured possession.

- V2 Command

- Do not learn the way of the nations And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens
 - Before Israel entered Canaan, Moses commanded them to learn God’s laws (Dt 5:1) and to not learn to imitate the nations (Dt 18:9). But instead they learned the ways of the nations (Ps 106:35).
 - Learn. Gain knowledge of, become skilled at, adopt.
 - Way of the nations: To be terrified by the signs of the heavens.
 - Terrified. Dismayed, Fearing. In awe of.
 - Signs of the heavens. Astral deities, astrology (foretelling future events, messages from the gods), unexpected events (comets, eclipses) which were seen as portending evil.
 - Their entire lives were shaped by fear of false gods.
- Although the nations are terrified by them
 - Temptation to imitate the nations.
 - They were more advanced in culture and technology.
 - Their idols were impressive

- V3-5 Reality of idolatry
 - For the statutes of the peoples are vanity. Meaningless and purposeless. As Ecc 1:2 Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.
 - Five characteristics of idols
 - Because it is wood cut from the forest. Made from a created thing.
 - The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. Fashioned by man.
 - They make it beautiful with silver and with gold. Made attractive with expensive materials.
 - They strengthen it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter.
 - Made secure by the efforts of men. No strength or stability of its own.
 - Acts 19:27 Demetrius the silversmith: "And not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be considered as worthless and that she, whom all of Asia and the world worship, is even about to be brought down from her majesty."
 - Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they. Appears frightening but is harmless.
 - And they cannot speak.
 - No clear "word of idols"; only unclear signs in the heavens.
 - Cannot declare the things to come Is 41:23-24 Declare the things that are to come afterward, That we may know that you are gods; Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together. Behold, you are nothing
 - They must be carried Because they cannot take a step!
 - Carried. Heb 2x for emphasis.
 - Is 46:1-2 Bel has bowed down, Nebo stoops over; Their images are on the beasts and the cattle. The things that you carry are burdensome, A load for the weary beast. They stooped over, they have bowed down together; They could not rescue the load, But have themselves gone into captivity.
 - Must be carried by their worshippers.
 - Can be captured and carried off.
 - Do not fear them
 - Fear. Awe and reverence. Used of fearing God. Ex 14:31 after the Red Sea deliverance: Then Israel saw the great hand which Yahweh had used against the Egyptians; and the people feared Yahweh
 - Idols are not to be feared. Inclusio v2 & v5.
 - For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good. Can do nothing. Is 41:23-24 Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together. Behold, you are nothing, And your work is non-existent...

Remedy 10:6-16

- Jeremiah's response to Yahweh's warning v1-5.
- Psalm alternately exalting Yahweh and showing the foolishness of idols
- Remedy for idolatry: to meditate on Yahweh's greatness.

Yahweh's majesty 10:6-7

Jeremiah 10:6–7 (LSB)

6There is none like You, O Yahweh; You are great, and great is Your name in might.

7Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, There is none like You.

- There is none like You, O Yahweh. Unique.
- You are great, and great is Your name in might.
 - Great. Exceeding, above.
 - Focus on Yahweh's omnipotence.
- Who would not fear You, O King of the nations?
 - To be feared. Unlike the idols. Same word as v5.
 - Sovereign over all nations and their gods.
 - Not restricted to a particular region or nation.
 - Contrast 1 Ki 20:23 about Israel's God: Now the servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their gods are gods of the mountains, therefore they were stronger than we; but rather let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they."
 - The king of Aram agreed, came to fight against Israel, vastly outnumbered them, was defeated by Yahweh.
- Indeed it is Your due!
 - Ps 90:11 by Moses who had seen Yahweh on Mt Sinai: Who knows the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You?
 - Fear is due to Yahweh.
 - Men do not comprehend the power of His anger.
- For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, There is none like You.
 - The nations appear advanced and sophisticated. But their wise men and rulers have no comprehension of the true God.

Idolators' foolishness 10:8-9

Jeremiah 10:8–9 (LSB)

8But they are altogether senseless and foolish; They are in a discipline of vanities—it is mere wood!

9Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz, The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith; Blue and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of wise craftsmen.

- V8 Foolishness of the wise
 - they are altogether senseless and foolish. As a beast having no understanding.
 - They are in a discipline of vanities. Trained in a futile way of life based on being terrified of nothings.
 - it is mere wood! Exclamation at the folly of the supposedly wise and and powerful.
- V9 Reality of idols
 - Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz. Beautiful and expensive.
 - The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith...They are all the work of wise craftsmen. Made by man.
 - Blue and purple are their clothing. Dressed as royalty.

Yahweh the true God 10:10

Jeremiah 10:10 (LSB)

10But Yahweh is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.

- But Yahweh is the true God.
 - Lit “Yahweh truth God”. Real God. God of truth.
- He is the living God. Not like idols who can do nothing (v5)
- and the everlasting King.
 - Everlasting. Not like idols who will perish (v11).
 - Sovereign. Ps 95:3 ...a great King above all gods.
- At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.
 - Ps 42:4-6 the kings beholding Yahweh in His city: For, behold, the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together. They saw it, then they were astonished; They were dismayed, they fled in alarm. Panic seized them there, Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth.

Message to the nations 10:11

Jeremiah 10:11 (LSB)

11Thus you shall say to them, "The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

- For Judah to say to the nations. In Aramaic so understood by all.
 - 1 Pet 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and fear,
- Your gods did not create. They are created things and will pass away.

Yahweh's greatness 10:12-13

Jeremiah 10:12–13 (LSB)

12It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.

13When He gives forth His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, And He causes the clouds to ascend from the end of the earth; He makes lightning for the rain, And brings out the wind from His storehouses.

- V12 Yahweh's greatness shown in creation
 - Earth, world, heavens
 - By power, wisdom, understanding
- V13 Yahweh's greatness shown in nature
 - Storm: thunder, rain, clouds, lightning, wind.

Idolators' foolishness 10:14-15

Jeremiah 10:14–15 (LSB)

14Every man is senseless, devoid of knowledge; Every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven images; For his molten images are a lie, And there is no breath in them.

15They are vanity, a work of mockery; In the time of their punishment they will perish.

- Every man is senseless, devoid of knowledge. Repeating v8.
- Every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven images. Much work for nothing.
- Five reasons for his shame
- For his molten images are a lie. Not-gods promoting untruths.
- And there is no breath in them. No life.
- They are vanity. No worth or purpose..
- a work of mockery. To be made fun of.
- In the time of their punishment they will perish. Will disappear on the day of Yahweh.
 - Is 2:17-18 ...Yahweh alone will be exalted in that day, But the idols will completely vanish.

Israel's God 10:16

Jeremiah 10:16 (LSB)

16The portion of Jacob is not like these; For the Maker of all is He, And Israel is the tribe of His inheritance; Yahweh of hosts is His name.

- Portion of Jacob. Israel's possession under the covenant: Yahweh Himself.
 - Ps 16:5-6 by David: Yahweh is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my inheritance is beautiful to me.
- For the Maker of all is He.
 - As a potter. One who conceives and plans then forms and fashions.
- And Israel is the tribe of His inheritance.
 - Yahweh's portion
 - Dt 7:6 "For you are a holy people to Yahweh your God; Yahweh your God has chosen you to be a people for His own treasured possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
- Yahweh of hosts is His name
 - God of the covenant
 - Sovereign over all.

Application: Thus you shall say to the nations

Jer 10:11 Thus you shall say to them, "The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens."

- What Israel was commanded to say to the pagan nations.
- In Aramaic, a universal language that all would understand.

Acts 17:29-31 Paul's speech at the Aeropagus: "Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to suppose that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the craft and thought of man. "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now commanding men that everyone everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He determined, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead."

- All people are God's offspring
- Your view of God is wrong: God is not like your idols which were formed by men.
- God now calls you to repent.
- A day is coming in which God will judge the world in righteousness.
- This judgment will be through a Man selected by Him.
- This is proved to all by God raising Him from the dead.

Today, what can we say to the "nations" around us? The gospel.

References

- Baker, Warren (Editor), *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, AMG, 1994
- Baker, Warren (Editor), *The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament*, AMG, 2003
- Feinberg, Charles L., *Jeremiah* in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan, 1986
- Harrison, R. K., *Jeremiah and Lamentations* in Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Tyndale Press, 1973
- Kidner, Derek, *Jeremiah*, InterVarsity Press, 1987
- Thompson, J. A., *The Book of Jeremiah* in Eerdmans's Classic Biblical Commentaries, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980