

## “The merchants of the earth” by Jeremiah

Today, I would like to give a message about “The merchants of the earth”.

You can find the phrase in Revelation as below.

**Revelation 18:3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.**

This scripture describes “The merchants of the earth” along with Babylon, so let’s think about what this implies.

<Revelation talks about people on “earth”>

There are unique terms and keywords used in Revelation, and I would like us to focus on the word “earth” which appears many times in this book.

Here are some examples.

People who dwell on the earth:

**Revelation 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?**

Kings of the earth:

**Revelation 17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.**

As you can see here, there are many parts which use phrases like merchants of the earth, people dwelling on the earth, and kings of the earth. Let’s think about the reason for it.

<Lord explained about parables>

Before we try to understand the phrase, we need to know that Revelation has many parables and mysteries. The Bible tells us that what Lord spoke were parables as described below.

**Mark 4:33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand.**

**4:34 He did not say anything to them without using a **parable**. But when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything.**

In this way, the Bible describes that the Lord “**did not say anything to them without using a **parable****”. Therefore, we shall focus on understanding the true meaning of His word.

<Meaning of the merchants of the earth>

Now, let's think about the significance of the merchants of the earth. To understand this, it is fair to say that getting our head around the scripture below is effective.

**Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims **on the earth**.**

This part describes that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who are the ancestors of faith for the people of the Old Testament are strangers on the earth.

Since we are Israel of the New Testament, we should follow the faith Abraham displayed by living as strangers on the earth.

What does it mean to live as strangers on the earth?

As far as I can understand, this is about our attitude towards the earth. Whether you like it or not, Christians are also living on the earth, going to school, and work. We have no choice but to be involved in the world. Still, it is important how we interact with the world.

In this regard, Abraham is our role model as shown below.

**Hebrews 11:9** By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in a tent which means that they practiced the idea that they don't live here on earth permanently and they are here temporarily. This is what it means to be strangers.

Then, what is the significant meaning of living as strangers on the earth? It really determines our eternal destination. Living on the earth as strangers is the very condition to enter the kingdom of heaven. It is written as below.

**Hebrews 11:15** And indeed, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

**11:16** But now they desire **a better country, that is, a heavenly:** wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

It describes that God prepared a country of heaven for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who lived as strangers on the earth.

On the other hand, what would happen to those who lived in opposite way, being completely immersed into the worldly lifestyle? It looks like they are unlikely entitled to go into the kingdom of heaven.

The merchants of the earth, dwellers and kings of the earth from Revelation point out of those kinds of people who live by the standard this world offers.

Revelation doesn't seem to provide any positive news for the people living by the world standard. Rather, there are many parts which imply their destruction and judgment as below.

**Revelation 6:10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell **on the earth?**

<Minding earthly things only>

Philippians describes those who only think about earthly things as below.

**Philippians 3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.**

Now, let's start from verse 18.

**3:18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:**

Paul talks that many people walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ. What does that mean?

First of all, the reason why Lord was crucified was so that our sinful flesh would die and we get to be free from flesh and sin.

Therefore, people who walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ will treasure the sinful flesh and refuse to let it crucified on the cross.

**3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.**



Earthly pastor celebrates gay marriage.

It describes “their end is destruction” here. This means that any worldly Christian who wouldn’t crucify their flesh and walk against the cross will not arrive in heaven or

obtain the kingdom of heaven, but rather destruction and hell are waiting for them, according to Paul. This is horrible. We should not hold on to the doctrine which tells us that Christian will never go to hell, and listen to what Paul says.

**“whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame.”**

For people who treasure their own flesh, the important thing which also means their god is their belly. These people follow their desire, fame, and own glory.

**"who mind earthly things."**

This is a desire which is all about worldly reputation, status, economy. People who are filled with these kinds of thought are what the Bible calls “Dwellers of the earth”.

**3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**

Here, it describes that our nationality is in heaven which shows contrast against dwellers of the earth. In other words, if we live as dwellers of the earth, it will be very difficult to get the nationality of the kingdom of God.

<There is no water on the earth>

Let's take a look at what the Bible says about “earth” a bit more. Genesis describes the earth as below.

**Genesis 1:10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas: and God saw that it was good.**

As this scripture says, the earth is where there is no water and dry. On the other hand, water represents Holy Spirit as described below.

**John 7:38 He that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of **living water**.**

Therefore, there is no Holy Spirit on the earth and dwellers, kings, and merchants of

the earth are all parables of Christians who don't have Holy Spirit.

<Babylon and merchants of the earth>

Returning to the beginning, Revelation tells us that merchants of the earth are related to Babylon.

**Revelation 18:3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.**

Let's think about this. As we saw before, Babylon is understood to be a parable about Christian churches in the U.S. The merchants of the earth are worldly pastors and teachers.

They don't have Spirit. Merchants buy and sell products and buying is related to redemption. Therefore, they are the parable of pastors and priests. The Bible talks that these worldly pastors who don't have Spirit will be attracted to Babylon and help it to grow.

This also means that these strange pastors who don't doubt the dodgy revivals and doctrines which are seen in the U.S are like the merchants of the earth. That is why they can't detect how dangerous the U.S is. We should, therefore, see the churches in the U.S from God's and biblical point of view rather than human's point of view.

The churches in the U.S may appear ideal in general, but God may see them as worldly existence. Pastors and teachers who would accept such spirit will become the merchant of earth in God's eye and are seen as worldly as well.

It is true that the church in Babylon (the U.S) are worldly, not exaggeration. Therefore popular Left Behind and Pre-Tribulation theory are selfish worldly doctrines which were created not based on the word of God, but out of the desire to avoid tribulations.

Plus, American Christian musicians cover worldly songs, and some of them may have tattoos. More and more churches in the U.S are starting to accept homosexuality and

tattoos. They are becoming worldly. This is a big issue in the eye of God, but worldly pastors and teachers don't want to see the problem. They are rather pushing this movement blindly.

So, it is obvious that the churches in the U.S are trying to match people's needs and trends, but we need to know that these worldly churches could be destroyed in one day. It is described as below.

**Revelation 18:8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.**

We should be fearful of Lord. –end-



Some American Christian musicians have tattoos.

## “Knowing the era” by H.F

Psychology and clinical psychology are influencing people a lot in this era. Many people seek solutions on psychology and its specialists.

So, what exactly is psychology?

It has become one of the most popular subjects in university, and there are many books available. I bet many of you have tried psychology tests before at least once.

People want to know about themselves and try to solve problems they face daily by psychology. Many visit counselors for receiving advice.

Many churches provide counseling, and many American churches have non-Christian counselors to provide help to people.

People have been thinking about human emotions since long time ago. It started as philosophy in Greek era, before turning into psychology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Three doctors particularly influenced on this subject, namely Freud, Jung, and Adler.

Both Jung and Adler were largely influenced by Freud who tried to understand people's mind by analyzing dreams. He believed that our actions have unconscious psychological unconscious reasons.

Freud was atheist and didn't believe in God. He saw religion as fantasy and was against Christianity. Jung was son of a pastor but chose not to believe in God. A cult influenced him. Those people who influenced psychology didn't believe in Christ. So, I wonder if it is wise to seek help for psychologists whose understanding is based on non-biblical knowledge.

**Mark 7:20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.**

**20:21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,**

**20:22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:**

**20:23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.**

As you can see, the Bible talks that we humans can't change our sinful nature. That is why the Bible tells us to turn to Jesus for forgiveness then become free.

However, psychology defines that the cause of problems is based on outside issues, such as parents and friends. It then tries to find solutions without Jesus in self-love, self-esteem, and self-value. There is no consciousness of sin, and you are not required to turn to God or become free from sin. Psychology distances people from repentance.

When you try to heal inwardly by using human wisdom, you could end up blaming on



others and turning a blind eye on your own sin.

There is a possibility of relying on self-esteem without God's perspective to gain salvation. Christianity and worldly psychology wouldn't go together well. We shouldn't mix worldly stuff into Christianity as Romans 12:2 says.

There is Christian Counseling Association in the U.S who mix psychology with the word of the Bible.

Psychology could be misused for understanding the Bible wrongfully, and the Bible could also be misused for justifying the concept of psychology. As a result, people could be tricked to believe the gospel of self-esteem which doesn't involve repentance of sin.

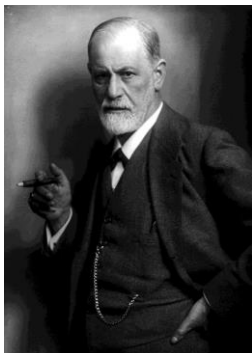
Believers need to be aware of this. We need to have wisdom in order to determine what the truth is.

We all commit sin, and no one is naturally righteous. The Bible tells us that the only way to be saved from sin is to reconcile with God through Jesus Christ.

**John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**

As you can see here, we have a true counselor; Holy Spirit.

I wonder if we can give more effective counseling by receiving the wisdom from Holy Spirit, instead of worldly wisdom from psychology.



Freud