

August 30

Jeremiah 17: 5: Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6: For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *in* a salt land and not inhabited. 7: Blessed *is* the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. 8: For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

What a great contrast!

First, the cursed man is one who trusts in man, who makes flesh his power, whose heart departs from the LORD. He is like a desert heath. The blessed man is he that trusts in the LORD, whose hope is the LORD. He is as a tree planted by the waters. A heath means destitute, scrubby, fruitless, and useless. The man who trusts in his will, works, power, wisdom is trusting in a curse and is cursed in every way there is to be cursed. But the blessed man who trusts the LORD is one who has been planted by God in Christ. He is planted in Christ by divine election, planted in Christ's death and resurrection, planted in the house of the Lord by his regenerating, calling grace. (Jn 15: 1; Is 60:21; 61:3) By God's grace, his child of grace is a tree of righteousness in Christ the Tree of Righteousness in whom we are engrafted. (Ps 1: 3; Is 61: 3; Rev 22: 1-4) Believers grow in rich soil of his love, with much water of the Holy Spirit and the Word preached. We are evergreen, fragrant in Christ by grace through faith, rooted and grounded in his love. (Eph 3: 17)

Secondly, the cursed "shall not see when good cometh"; the blessed "shall not see when heat cometh but her leaf shall be green." When good comes, like the sound of the gospel, then those looking to the arm of the flesh are not benefited in the least. One of the saddest things in the world is when men have the rare privilege to have the gospel of Christ preached near them yet they regard it with complete indifference. Or when men attend for a time then become contentious and walk away from the gospel. It had been better not to have heard than afterward to turn away. (Heb 10: 26-27) Yet, the blessed man is given a continual supply of the Water of Life from Christ the River of Life so the heat only makes his "leaf green." The Lord sends the heat to the man trusting in his flesh to dry him up. (Mk 4: 16-17) But God sends the heat to the blessed man to make him more fruitful, to make his roots run deeper into Christ the River of Life, to make his branches cling more firmly to Christ the Tree of Righteousness. (Jn 15: 2)

Lastly, the cursed man "shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited"; the blessed man "shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." There is no spiritual fruitfulness from the man who is trusting in his will, his works, or his worth. He inhabits "parched places", "the wilderness", "a salt land" and a land "not inhabited." Yet, when draught comes, the blessed man who is planted and rooted in Christ shall not have to worry because he has plenty of spiritual water from the ever-flowing River of Life. The believer never ceases bearing fruit due to the goodness of Christ. Christ's church is kept and watered every moment by Christ. (Is 27: 2-3; Ps 92:14)

What a striking contrast between those planted in Christ and those trusting in the arm of flesh. Those who trust in Christ are most blessed; those who trust in themselves are most cursed. The Lord Jesus Christ is the unceasing source of eternal life, strength, and fruitfulness. Cast all your care on him and abide in him!