

Be not proud

*Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken.
Jeremiah 13:15*

Pride is often connected with action or speech. The LORD hates “a proud look, a lying tongue” (Proverbs 6:17). “The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things” (Psalm 12:3). “For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak” (Psalm 59:12). “The proud have forged a lie against me” (Psalm 119:69). “Only by pride cometh contention” (Proverbs 13:10). “Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath” (Proverbs 21:24). Many other examples could be cited.

Yet in our text, the connected admonitions indicate inaction as the evidence of pride. It is the proud attitude that causes spiritual deafness. For although Jeremiah, and many other prophets, proclaimed the word of the LORD to His people, he repeated here with the twofold description their need to actually hear, and give ear, to what the LORD had spoken. Further in this chapter he continues to warn them of the coming judgments, and to send warning to even the king and queen to humble themselves to hear and heed. However, as history records, their proud and rebellious attitude as a nation resulted in their captivity. Much later in Israel’s history, Jesus continued such warnings when He used the phrase, “he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Unfortunately, this characteristic of the nation of Israel was not unique to them. It is a common problem of sinful mankind. It is the pride of the child that hears not the warnings of the more experienced parent. The young person ignores the instruction or even helpful advice of the teacher. The proud employee gives no ear to the supervisor. The citizen ignores the laws, rules, and even the sirens of the police car or emergency vehicle. Instructional or warning signs apply to others, but not to the proud. The Christian assumes that the preacher is speaking to someone else in the room. Even the inexperienced who are in trouble will not listen to the loving admonition of the experienced friend or counsellor. This human state is especially a handicap when those bringing the warnings are reflecting the word of the LORD.

Let us recognize the repeated warnings from the LORD in His word and in our experience, and be not proud, but hear with our ears and our hearts.