



## [Jeremiah 5:30-31](#)

(30) "An astonishing and horrible thing  
Has been committed in the land:  
(31) The prophets prophesy falsely,  
And the priests rule by their *own* power;  
And My people love *to have it* so.  
But what will you do in the end?

*New King James Version*

The entire nation—Jeremiah is reporting here on Judah around the time Nebuchadnezzar invaded in 607 BC—was spiritually and morally sick. "And [the priests](#) rule by their own power" means in more modern language that the priests were functioning on their own authority, that is, they had pushed the law of [God](#) aside.

The people loved it because in so doing, they allowed themselves to be deceived into thinking that the restraints and penalties of [God's law](#) would not affect them. "It will not happen to me." That is what God shows happened in the [Garden of Eden](#). [Satan](#) said, "You shall not surely die," and [Adam and Eve](#) became convinced that the penalty for [sin](#) would not affect them if they disobeyed what God said. They fell for what Satan sold them.

Why does God concentrate on morals in His Book? There are many things He could have written about, but He chose to write a great deal about the morals of the people with whom He had made a covenant.

One reason is that morals are like a weathervane. They show the direction a nation, a church, or an individual is headed in.

A second reason why God concentrates on morals focuses on the [prophets](#) and the preachers. Why? Because He has appointed them to be the conscience of His people.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Jeremiah 5:30-31 (<http://www.theberean.org>)  
Preachers tend to lead the people either into morality or immorality—one or the other. They are like the tip of the spear or the point of an arrow that points the direction of the nation. They are leading indicators. So it says in verse 30, "An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power."

Even if a minister is not doing his job, pointing out the sins of the people for whom he is responsible to God, we still, individually, have the responsibility to obey God regardless.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**  
[The Sin of Self-Deception](#)



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