

# Jeremiah 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?

## Analysis

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This verse pronounces judgment on the self-proclaimed wise: 'The wise men are ashamed' (boshu chakamim, בָּשׁוּ חֲכָמִים). The Hebrew bosh (בוֹשׁ) denotes public humiliation, disappointed expectation, and covenant curse. 'They are dismayed and taken' adds chatat (חָתַת, shattered, terrified) and lakad (לָכַד, captured, snared)—the wise are caught in their own trap. 'Lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD' uses ma'as (מָאַס, to despise, reject with contempt) with debar-YHWH (דִּבַּר-יְהוָה). This rejection isn't ignorance but deliberate contempt. 'And what wisdom is in them?' The rhetorical question exposes false wisdom: rejecting divine revelation leaves only human folly disguised as sophistication. True wisdom begins with fearing God (Proverbs 1:7); rejecting His word destroys wisdom's foundation.

## Historical Context

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This indictment targeted Judah's intellectual and religious elite—scribes, priests, prophets, and counselors who should have guided the nation in covenant faithfulness. Instead, they rejected Jeremiah's warnings and embraced false prophets promising peace (Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11). Their 'wisdom' led directly to national catastrophe in 586 BC. Archaeological discoveries of seals from Jeremiah's era confirm the existence of these official scribal classes.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does rejecting God's word expose the folly of all human wisdom, however sophisticated?
2. What modern forms of 'wise' rejection of Scripture do we encounter today?

## Interlinear Text

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הַבְּיָשׁוּ H954	חֲכָמִים יִם The wise H2450	הֵם יָתוּ they are dismayed H2865	וְלִי דָו and taken H3920	הַיָּה H2009	בְּדִבְרֵי the word H1697
יְהוָה of the LORD H3068	נִמְצָא סוֹ lo they have rejected H3988	וְחֲכָמֵי ת and what wisdom H2451	מָה הֵ H4100	לָהֶם: H0	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Job 5:12** (Parallel theme): He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.

**Jeremiah 6:15** (References Lord): Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

**Isaiah 19:11** (Parallel theme): Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

**Psalms 19:7** (Word): The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

**Jeremiah 6:19** (Word): Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

**Deuteronomy 4:6** (Parallel theme): Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

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