**The Book of Jeremiah**

**Introduction**

T

he good LORD called Abraham into the Promise Land and eventually delivered his chosen descendants from Egypt into the blessed piece of real estate to worship Jehovah in the city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion in His place of Presence! He set up the sons of Jacob, the Israelites, as His chosen nation Shemites to be a light to the world including the Japhethites and the Hamites (Gentiles). With a multitude of blessings, what could go wrong? The LORD knew the potential of these sons of Adam and issued warnings. Therefore, Jehovah warned this special people that if they did not observe His commandments, He would fulfil His severe judgment on them, saying, *“The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young”* (Dt. 28:49-50). After about nine hundred years of rebellion against Jehovah and his ordained prophets, the LORD fulfilled His threat to the evil and stubborn nation!

**Backdrop**

The LORD gave godly leaders including Moses, Joshua, the Judges, the Kings (including David, Solomon, and Josiah) and the Prophets to guide the chosen nation in righteousness and rebuke her for wickedness. The nation divided into the Northern Kingdom with terrible kings and the Southern Kingdom with some godly kings. Judgment came to the Northern Kingdom (Israel) in 722 BC and now judgment came to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) in 586 BC. Under the last godly king, Josiah, and the righteous prophets such as Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah, the LORD attempted to thwart the rebellion of the Jews. Reluctant Jeremiah arose to the occasion, suffered, and survived the utter destruction.

**The Prophet**

 The prophet Jeremiah (“whom Jehovah has appointed” [147x] Jeremias [1x] Jeremy [2x]), the “weeping prophet” (Jer. 9:1; 13:17), reluctant (Jer. 1:6) and lonely (Jer. 16:2) was the son of the priest Hilkiah, and born in the Benjaminite city of Anathoth. At about twenty years old the LORD called him for service (cf. Ezra 3:8). His time of ministry was at least forty years (627-585 BC) and he helped King Josiah (640-609 BC) with reform and repentance (Jer. 7:3; 26:1). The reform of Josiah was rejected (II Chr. 34:1 ff.) and Judah backslid to judgment (Zeph. 1:8). In the meantime Nineveh fell (613 BC), Josiah died (609 BC), Jehoiakim reigned as an Egyptian vassal (609-598 BC), the battle of Carchemish occurred as Nebuchadnezzar came into power and deported Daniel (605 BC) while capturing Jerusalem, putting Zedekiah in kingship, then deporting Ezekiel (597 BC), and finally sacking and destroying Jerusalem and the Temple (586 BC). Gedaliah was appointed governor and killed, and Jeremiah taken to Egypt (cf. Jer. 44:28). Relevant passages are Jer. 1:1 ff.; Ezk. 1:1 ff.; Dan. 1:1 ff.; II Ki. 21-24; and Lam. 1:1 ff. Jeremiah probably wrote I and II Kings.

Jesus was thought to be the resurrected Jeremias (Mt. 16:14). He is cited twice in the NT (Mt. 2:17; 27:9). Jeremiah suffered heartbreak, betrayal, imprisonment, famine, loss, but served Jehovah faithfully!

**The Chiasmus**

 **A. The Call of Jeremiah (1)**

 **B. Warnings to Judah (2-33)**

 **C. The Pre-Fall of Judah (34-38)**

 **D. The Fall of Judah (39)**

 **C.’ The Post-Fall of Judah (40-45)**

 **B.’ Warnings to Nations (46-51)**

 **A.’ The Fall of Jerusalem (52)**

**I. The Call of Jeremiah (1:1-19**

**Jer. 1:1-3**

\*Jehovah dealt with this son of a priest at the age of twenty (Ezra 3:8) and called and commissioned him and then gave him words of the life, history, and ministry for Jeremiah (647-585 BC = 62 years) to write in a book about himself!

\*His father was Hilkiah (“my portion is Jehovah”) and he was born and raised in the town Anathoth (“answers to prayer”) for priests about three miles from Jerusalem.

\*Privileged to be in a priest’s family, Jeremiah had great responsibility and accountability for his life calling (I Cor. 9:16-19).

\*His call came in the thirteenth year (627 BC) of reforming King Josiah (640-609 BC) the son of evil Amon.

**\***The word also came to him in the days of wicked Jehoiakim (609-597 BC) and to the end of wicked Zedekiah (597-586 BC), including the fall/destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (II Ki. 24:17-25:21).

\*Jeremiah lived some time after the fall and wrote I and II Kings and Lamentations and was taken to Egypt and presumably died there (Jer. 44:28).

\*In his approximately 62 years of life he recounted his life and ministry down to the end in the inspired *Book of Jeremiah*! (can you review your Christian life and ministry thus far?)

**Jer. 1:4-5**

 \*To Jeremiah came the word of the LORD by some means (Amos 1:1; Nah. 1:1).

\*The LORD knew Jeremiah and had a plan for Jeremiah before he was even conceived or *“formed”* (*yatzar* [Gen. 2:7]). Adam and his offspring were all placed in the Book of Life as the elect to fulfill the LORD’s will (II Tim. 2:10)!

\*Every person created including Jeremiah has been sanctified (set apart) to do God’s will. In this dispensation every person needs to be born again, baptized, and an active church member to carry out the great commission (Mt. 28:19-20)!

**Jer. 1:6-7**

\*Every descendent from Adam has the spiritual inclination to say NO! Jeremiah was ready for his old nature to take over (Jer. 17:9). He had a really “good” excuse—he couldn’t speak as a prophet and he was too young! He was a mere “child” at 20 years old! God had heard of excuses before (Ex. 4:10-15)!

\*Jehovah said *“say not”* (strong prohibition: “don’t you even think about your puny excuses!). Don’t

tell the LORD what you are not going to do! He likes the challenge but you may not like His response!

A. The Call of Jeremiah (1) > His **Call** (vv 1-10), His **Confirmation** (vv. 11-16), His **Challenge** (vv. 17-19)

 B. Warnings to Judah (2-33)

 C. The Pre-Fall of Judah (34-38)

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**Jer. 1:8**

\*Jeremiah had two excuses that he couldn’t speak and he was too young. The LORD overrode his excuses, revealing that his authority was in the inspired and preserved words of God and not in human ability or age! (BBC will eventually have a younger and less experienced pastor whose authority will be the Bible—don’t resist or ridicule! The next pastor will not be the same but the Bible will be the same!).

\*Jehovah began to encourage and enable the inexperienced and young preacher about the natural *“fear of man”* syndrome. Deacon Stephen, Timothy, the Apostle Paul, etc., and the Lord Jesus experienced the hateful faces of sinners who boasted and berated the Lord’s choice preachers (cf. Prov. 29:25).

\*Every man of God is tested so that he may find out if he wants to be true to the Lord and His words, and if the Lord’s promise of presence (*“with thee”*) is true! The Lord Jesus is more than sufficient to deliver preachers of truth (cf. Jer. 26:16-19)!

**Jer. 1:9**

\*The Lord enabled this young candidate for priesthood who was trained in the *Tanak* and He touched his mouth. Jehovah gave Jeremiah a mouth to be used and He anointed it (Isa. 6:5-8). Further, the LORD gave the prophet the revelatory truth in words to preach. Jeremiah’s responsibility was to show up and *“diminish not a word”* (Jer. 26:2).

\*Jeremiah had the great privilege to be in the lineage of prophets from Moses to the Lord Jesus Christ as predicted: *“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and* ***will put my words in his mouth****; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him”* (Dt. 18:18) and *“For I have given unto them* ***the words which thou gavest me****; and they have received them…”* (Jn. 17:8).

**Jer. 1:10**

\*Jehovah saw and revealed to Jeremiah the potential vastness and greatness of his ministry with the word of God. The Lord set Jeremiah as a *paqad* (305x) or a governor, overseer, officer or judge over nations and kingdoms. These kingdoms included some Gentilic nations such Egypt, the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Arabia, Elam, and Babylon (Jer. 46-51).

\*The prophet Jeremiah had to get the message to these nations through various means (Jer. 51:60-64).

\*The Lord gave six purposes of the preached word of God using six Hebrew infinitives: *“to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”*

\*He gave the prophet four words of destruction and two words of restoration. Basically, the nations and the people of the nations needed to repent of wickedness (tear down) and to trust in Jehovah (build up) for spiritual and national salvation (see Jon. 3:5-10; Mt. 12:40-41).

\*As Jeremiah preached the Lord took over and accomplished what He predicted through the man of God (Jer. 31:27-31; see also Jer. 18:7-10).

\*If the nations including especially Judah would repent, He would plant and build them up (Jer. 24:6; 42:10; 45:4). The Apostle Paul used the analogy of “pull down” (see II Cor. 10:4-5).

\*The Lord Jesus used the truth of *“to build”* relative to His Baptist assembly which He “built up” from apostate Judaism and then used His apostles *“to plant”* additional assemblies (I Cor. 3:8).

**Jer. 1:11-12**

\*Having received the divine call, Jeremiah next received his divine confirmation. His task was to prophesy to nations and kingdoms about destruction and re-building. Now, the timing of his task was imminent.

\*The LORD asked the prophet about the vision and he revealed that the object was the *“rod of an almond tree.”* The *“almond tree”* (*shaqed* [4x]) blossomed early, while other trees were still in winter sleep. He commended Jeremiah on seeing the object and presumably on his proper understanding.

\*Jehovah punned on the word for the *“almond tree”* with the verbal *“hasten”* (*shaqad* [12x]), revealing the soon and imminent fulfillment demanding urgency!

**Jer. 1:13-14**

\*The prophet received a second vision of revelatory truth featuring a *“seething pot”* facing “the north” (*tzaphon* [24x in Jeremiah]). The vision pictured a boiling pot of hot liquid (water) tipped towards Jerusalem from the north (cf. Jer. 4:6; 46:6). The storm of the seas from the north is called the *“typhoon”* (tz-ph-n > t-ph-n)!

\*The Lord elaborated on the correct interpretation of the vision, revealing that the enemy nation (Babylon) would come from the north into the Promised Land to bring destruction upon Israel. Nebuchadnezzar used divination to decide his initial attack, whether on Jerusalem (on west of Jordan) or Rabbath (on east of Jordan) from the north (cf. Ezk. 21:18-22)!

**Jer. 1:15**

\*The *“call”* of the LORD was an active participle (literally “I am calling”) the families/kingdoms of or from the north to invade, conquer, and control Jerusalem with foreigners in Israel’s Promised Land! The invaders would destroy gates and walls of the capital and other cities as well.

\*No doubt within the prophecy was included the later kingdoms as delineated by Daniel as the Medo-Persians, Grecians, and the Romans (cf. Dan. 8:20-21). The ultimate fulfillment would include the *“times of the Gentiles”* (Lk. 21:24; Rom. 11:25-26; Rev. 11:2).

**Jer. 1:16**

\*The divine message was clear, succinct, and emphatic that judgment would fall especially upon Jerusalem. The LORD declared the same sentence where He uttered, spoke, or gave judgment upon Jerusalem (Jer. [4:12](BwRefEE%28%27Jer%204%3A12%27%29); [39:5](BwRefEE%28%27Jer%2039%3A5%27%29); and [52:9](BwRefEE%28%27Jer%2052%3A9%27%29)).

\*The chosen people abandoned Jehovah and worshiped other gods and the works or idols of their hands. The heart of the people was not in divine worship and service (Isa. 1:4-15). Jeremiah revealed, saying, *“The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger”* (Jer. 7:18; 44:17-25). When the Jews fled the invasion, their idols weighed down their escape (Isa. 46:1-2)!

**Jer. 1:17**

\*The Lord gave three imperatives *“gird up,”* (see I Pet. 1:13) *“arise,”* and *“speak”* and one warning *“be not dismayed”* with severe consequence *“lest I confound thee”* > a pun on *“faces…before them.”*

**Jer. 1:18-19**

\*The protection of the LORD was likened unto *“a defenced city,” “an iron pillar,”* and *“brazen walls”* against the kings, princes, priests, and people (see Jer. 26:1-19)!

**Jer. 2:1**

\*The first assignment for the young prophet came through the revelatory vision from the LORD (Jer. 1:11; Lam. 2:9), which vision he had but false prophets did not have (Jer. 14:14; 23:16). The opposing false prophets received demonic visions and preached lies!

**Jer. 2:2**

 \*The divine assignment was simple and direct! He was to leave Anathoth and go to the capital of Israel, the soon to be destroyed Jerusalem, and preach a message of convicting remembrance.

 \*The LORD began to describe the marital relationship that He chose with the nation Israel and now the center of the remaining nation, Jerusalem in Judah (Dt. 10:15). He referred to the devotion a young bride would have to her husband, using the expression *“kindness”* (*chesed*) of her youth. Obviously this referred to the devout and faithful Jews within the nation inclined towards the golden calf (Ex. 32:1-4) and who were involved with murmuring and complaining (Ex. 15:24).

 \*The Lord represented the relationship that Israel had with Him by their *“love of thine espousals”* (Ex. 19:8; Hos. 2:15) and followed Him in the wilderness (Ex. 13:18), a land not sown (Dt. 32:10).

 \*Contrastively, Ezekiel presented the LORD’s pursuit after His young bride and His love for her (Ezk. 16:1ff.). Ultimately, the chosen bride became a harlot but the Lord pursued and paid a price for her (Hos. 3:1-3). This marital union will eventually culminate in a blessed marriage when the bride is changed in regeneration (cf. Rev. 21:1 ff.)!

**Jer. 2:3**

 \*Jehovah is a good God and He set up Adam and Eve for spiritual prosperity, which goodness extended to His chosen people as well. He desired Israel to be peculiar treasure and a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. 19:1-6). All that the Lord required was for His bride/wife to be in submission to Him (Eph. 5:22-25).

 \*He desired their nature and practice to be *“holiness”* since they were His *“firstfruits”* which were His special people (Amos 3:2). Only the priests could eat the firstfruits of increase (Lev. 23:10) and so the protective Jehovah would deal with severe judgment on any outside nation attempting to “eat” His firstfruits (Amos 1:3-2:16)!

**Jer. 2:4-5**

 \*The LORD spoke to his servant and now He wanted Jeremiah to prophesy to the house of Jacob and the families of Israel.

 \*Rather than making accusations, Jehovah attempted to have Israel affirm her actions, if possible, by charging the Lord with *“iniquity”* (twisted-ness) in the past and present. Their spiritual fathers (kings, priests, prophets) abandoned their Lord and practiced *“vanity”* (*hevel*) and became *“vain”* (*haval*). We are what we practice!

**Jer. 2:6-7**

 \*Again the Lord contrasted the failure of the Jews in seeking the presence and help of the good Jehovah Who was blessed them and loaded them with *“benefits”* (Ps. 68:19). The Lord listed historically what He had done for Israel by delivering them from Egypt (for which they cried) and blessed them in the wilderness with in spite of deserts, pits, drought, the shadow of death, deserted, and inhabitable (Neh. 9:19-21).

 \*He brought them into the Promise Land for prosperity and the Jews defiled it abominably (Lev. 25:23)!

**Jer. 2:8**

 \*The LORD continued His disappointment in the colossal failure of Israel for her lack of gratitude for and wholehearted apostasy from their Great God, Jehovah.

 \*He excoriated the leaders of the land, starting with the priests who were not interested in a personal relationship with or need for the presence of Jehovah (cf. v. 6). Their responsibility was to teach the law (Dt. 24:8; Mic. 3:11)! They were not faithful to their calling of handling the law because they had no relationship with the divine Lawgiver.

 \*Likewise, the pastors, shepherds (i.e., kings) transgressed the Lord, such as Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (II Ki. 23-25). The third group, the prophets, gave prophecies from the occultic messages of Baal (Ezk. 13:9), in spite of the reforms of Josiah (II Ki. 23:5; Jer. 7:9; 23:13, 27). The profitless nature of idols! Do we have any?

**Jer. 2:9**

\*The gracious LORD pursues sinners with His good, as He did with Adam and Eve who were hiding from Him (Gen. 3:9; 50:20; Ps. 23:6)! He repeated His effort to *“plead”* or *“contend”* (*riyv*) twice with the leaders and people.

**Jer. 2:10-11**

\*For a nation to forsake their deity was unheard of, the LORD exclaimed. He challenged the Jews to consider westward toward Chittim (Cyprus) and the surrounding islands, and to consider eastward toward Kedar (Arabia), to see if any pagan nations forsook their heathen deities!

\*The Lord asked if these or other nations changed their *“gods”* (*‘elohiym*), which obviously were not deities (Jer. 5:7; cf. II Ki. 19:18). The Hebrew *‘elohiym* applies both to the singular *“God”* and to the plural *“gods”* depending on context and whether a singular verb or a plural verb is used (e.g., Gen. 1:1).

\*The sinful habit of man is to change the *“glory”* of God for something profitless (see Rom. 1:23).

**Jer. 2:12-13**

\*The Lord called His greatest audience as witnesses, His created heavens and earth (Isa. 1:2; Mic. 6:1), to His courtroom scene of indictment on the chosen people! The Lord’s covenant with His people was universal (Dt. 30:11-15) and all creation should be shocked and expect a forthcoming horrible and desolate judgment (Isa. 24:1-6).

\*Within the universal courtroom, the Judge and Prosecutor issued the two charges against the favored people. Their two evils (*ra`*) were expressed with the analogy of water and its source.

\*First, they forsook Jehovah Who is *“the fountain of living water”* (cf. Isa. 12:3; 44:3; Jn. 4:14; Rev. 21:6; 22:17). Those that reject the Water of Life will thirst forever (Lk. 16:24). Second, the Jews sought after *“cisterns, broken cisterns,”* that is, their deities (II Pet. 2:17; Jude 1:12), which have no water (Eph. 5:26)! The contrast in part deals with the *“living”* or running waters with the holding of waters in cisterns, which water may become stagnant, even if it does not leak out of breaks!

**Jer. 2:14**

\*The Lord asked the rhetorical question about Israel, expecting a negative reply. Israel was not a servant or slave, but the LORD’s bride (cf. vv. 2-3), special possession (Amos 3:2), and redeemed son (*“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn”* [Ex. 4:22]).

\*Was Israel merely a second-rate servant or slave born in a home (see Gen. 15:3)? No! Why was he spoiled or become *“booty”* (Isa. 42:24; Jer. 4:13)?

**Jer. 2:15**

 \*What happens when the LORD’s people are ungrateful, and spiritual leaders do not seek a relationship with the Lord, and do not encourage others in their relationship with Jehovah?

 \*The young ferocious lions come and begin the utter destruction and waste the Lord’s people and possessions. In the case of the NK, Assyria had already destroyed her in 722 BC. The destruction of a nation or a church starts from within and culminates from without (Isa. 9:9)! The puffed-up pride of church members manifested in Job-like criticism begins to demonstrate a haughty-like spirit that self-examination is missing!

**Jer. 2:16-18**

 \*The weak nation of Egypt, not known as having a strong military, began to plague and weaken the SK, as Josiah went to battle Pharaoh Necho and died (II Chr. 35:22-36:1). Judah’s close alliance with Egypt to procure safety with Egypt backfired and they drank *“the waters of Sihor”* (a branch stream of the Nile) and of Assyria, which were broken cisterns (v. 13; cf. II Ki. 23:35).

**Jer. 2:19-20**

\*National catastrophe will cause Judah to realize that Jeremiah and the LORD warned about their folly and were right. As they slide back, the consequences of national and personal evil sins were bitter. It manifested the lack of the fear of the *“LORD thy God”* (God the Son [Gen. 3:8])*…“the Lord GOD”* (God the Father [Isa. 61:1]) of hosts.”

 \*Again, the LORD reminded Israel of her empty profession of fidelity as a young “bride” (v.2; Ex. 19:8; Ezk. 16:1 ff.). He brought her out of Egypt, hearing her mournful sorrow (Ex. 3:7-8). Jehovah instructed them against paganism (Dt. 12:1-3). The Jews vowed to serve the LORD but apostasy arose (Ex. 32:2-4; Josh. 7:1 ff; Jer. 3:6, 13).

**Jer. 2:21**

 \*Using the agricultural analogy, the Lord reminded Israel about her great blessings initially. The people were planted as a noble vine and became a strange vine (the Garden motif: good to bad).

 \*Isaiah utilized the vine analogy, with endearing words, singing “the song of the Vineyard” (Isa. 5:1-7).

 \*Israel had great privileges as a vineyard: 1) fruitful hill; 2) fenced in; 3) removal of stones; 4) planted with choice vines; 5) provided a watch tower; and 6) nearby winepress. The LORD set them up for spiritual success! What could go wrong? She grew wild grapes!

 \*Was the blame on Jehovah? What more could He do? A gardener would and should destroy such an endeavor! The LORD would destroy the vineyard! Punning on the pruning, He said, *“judgment”* (***mishpat***) but *“oppression”* (***mishpach***); *“righteousness”* (***tzedaqah*)** but *“a cry”* (***tza`aqah***)!

**Jer. 2:22-25**

 \*All the washing with the strongest soap would not remove the sin of the hearts of the people. Jeremiah declared that their sin was graven on their hearts with a diamond-headed pen (Jer. 17:1).

 \*Their denial of sin became obvious with their behaviour. They worshipped Baal! Where? In the Valley (of Hinnom) where they worshipped Baal, Molech, and child sacrifice (Jer. 7:31-32; 19:2, 6; 32:35).

 \*The Jews were like a stupid camel running here and there, not having any direction!

 \*Again, the Lord referred to the animal world of the wild female ass in her heat (*“her occasion”*) smelling for a male. When her month of mating occurs, the males will seek and find her.

 \*The proclivity of Israel for wickedness is without hope, since she loved & will find strange gods!

**Jer. 2:26-29**

 \*The sins of Judah were two-fold: rejection of Jehovah and reception of Baal (v. 13)! As a thief caught, he had no excuse, so likewise the inexcusable shame of Judah affected all classes of society, including kings, princes, priests, and people. Their shame was of being caught and the not the shame of their sin!

 \*Jeremiah exposed the wicked vanity of stocks and stones. Under the wooden pole of fertility rites on the high hills (Lev. 20:5-6; Jer. 17:2), fornication would occur with the illegitimate births of children.

\*Quite often the child then was offered to Molech for fiery consumption (II Ki. 23:10). This was the ancient abortion clinic (early Planned Parenthood)! The stone was an image of Baal with Ashtoreth alongside as his consort (I Ki. 11:5). The actual babies were “deities” representing supposed deities of Baal and Ashtoreth in various forms of Gnosticism of the pagan religions (I Cor. 10:19-21). Supposedly, these murdered children would then go onto their next reincarnation!

 \*Facetiously wicked, the Jews would address the wooden pole as *“my father”* and to the stone image of Baal, *“thou hast brought me forth”*!

 \*How will these false deities represented by stocks and stones save Judah in the Babylonian judgment, as the Jews say *“arise, and save us”* (Isa. 46:1-2)? Of course, the folly of sticks and stones helping in time of need is worthless. The SK had deities for every city (cf. Jer. 11:13; II Ki. 17:29-31), Jeremiah exclaimed!

 \*Will Judah attempt to plead with Jehovah, that they shouldn’t receive undeserved judgment (cf. v. 9)? The unsaved will argue with God in the flames of hell, self-justifying that they are right (Lk. 16:28-31). They will say: *“That unwanted pregnancy should have been aborted”* or *“there was nothing wrong with stealing from the wealthy”* or *“they deserved what I did to them,”* or *“I’m not my brother’s keeper.”*

**Jer. 2:30-31**

 \*The LORD continued to increase His correction, but Judah rejected it. For example, King Manasseh caused the Jews to sin (II Ki. 21:11-16) and Jezebel killed her own prophets (I Ki. 18:4 ff.).

 \*In *“the word of the LORD”* God had given promises of blessing and judgment. He provided for them with provisions and light, through the prophets whom they rejected! Was He literally a “land of the ***darkness of Jah***” (see ***“a flame of Jah”*** [Song of Sol. 8:6]).

**Jer. 2:32-34**

 \*With a set of rhetorical questions, Jehovah asked through the prophet questions with obvious answers. Will a young virgin female forget to put on her jewels in public? Will a bride go to her wedding and forget her wedding clothes?

 \*Using the marriage motif for His bride (cf. v. 2), the LORD condemned Judah because she had easily forgotten her God and Bridegroom, Jehovah!

 \*Instead of dressing as a modest virgin or a bride in waiting, Judah *“trimmest”* (or made attractive *“the attire as an harlot”* [Prov. 7:10]). Her *“lips drop as an honeycomb”* (Prov. 5:3) as Judah attempted to entice Egypt & Assyria for help (v. 36). As it were, Judah could even teach harlots her wicked devices.

 \*Her skirts covered with blood manifested the guilt of slaughtering the innocents. Jehovah saw her trips to the valley which proved her guilt (i.e., Molech worship [v. 23).

**Jer. 2:35-37**

 \*The Jews declared innocence in their pride and deception (II Tim. 3:13). *“I have not sinned”* (I Jn. 1:8, 10) was repudiated by the LORD Who will have them cover their shame with hands on head.

**Jer. 3:1**

\*Continuing to focus on the marital relationship between the LORD and His people, Jehovah cited the *proviso* of Dt. 24:1-4 which forbade remarriage to the original husband in the case of divorce and marriage of the wife to another. Although the Bible consistently forbids divorce, Moses gave this instruction because of the hardness of the hearts of Israel (Mt. 19:4-10). Only death breaks the marriage bond (Rom. 7:2-3)! The Lord will judge *“whoremongers and adulterers”* (Mt. 5:31-32; Heb. 13:4).

 \*Nevertheless, the LORD required Hosea to purchase back his harlot wife, violating the manmade *proviso* (Hos. 3:1-3), because God hates divorce (Mal. 2:15-16; Mt. 1:18-19)! **Pastoral note**: For autonomous Christian marriages to work (cf. Gen. 2:24), couples each must submit their individual spiritual gift to the Lord and to each other. Walking in the fullness of the Spirit is the marital solution!

 \*The great abomination of adultery/harlotry would bring pollution to the Land (Lev. 18:20-28). Judah should return to the LORD! Would Judah return to Jehovah?

**Jer. 3:2-5**

 \*The LORD asked the rhetorical question: where has not harlot Israel *“lien”* (lain)? The Jews were like an Arabian waiting to plunder the next caravan. They waited as harlots along the wayside for the next customer (Gen. 38:14; Prov. 7:12).

 \*Divine consequences of their sin followed, such as the withholding of spring showers for the agrarian society, primarily because of their obstinate refusal of being ashamed of prostitution!

 \*Would they not return and call Jehovah their *Father* and *guide* as they had long ago? Jeremiah knew the words of the Jews who wondered if Jehovah would always be angry with them!

\*No, the LORD wanted to show mercy but only when heart repentance would come. But now, their evil was as prevalent and persistent as possible. *“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?* ***he retaineth not his anger for ever****, because he delighteth in mercy”* (Mic. 7:18). Divine mercy is always available to the repentant!

 **Jer. 3:6-8**

 \*During Jeremiah’s time of ministry (627-585 BC) he helped King Josiah (640-609 BC) spiritually for the king’s social reform. Jehovah asked His prophet about the sins of *“backsliding”* ([12x] *“backsliding”* refers only to the unsaved Jews of the OT, and not to Christians) Israel (NK) and her harlotry.

\*The LORD appealed to the NK to turn to Him and she did not. The treacherous SK saw the sin and consequences and feared not and continued to play the harlot! Jehovah gave her a *“bill of divorcement”* and destroyed the NK in 722BC.

**Jer. 3:9-11**

 \*The NK took whoredom with *“lightness”* (frivolity) and was adulterous with stones and stocks!

 \*The SK rejected learning a lesson from sin and consequences of NK. The moral, social, and cultural sins brought destruction because of the lack of spirituality on the part of Judah. They feigned or deceived about their love for the Lord. The Jews under Josiah’s reign should receive reform to learn!

\*Jeremiah received the truth from the LORD that the NK was more self-righteous and self-justified than Judah! This self-righteousness extends from Adam to Job to the Pharisees (Lk. 18:9) to us!

 \*Learn from Pastor: to young unmarried, recently married, and mature married couples > your spiritual gift must be in submission to the Lord and others or the occurrence of your anger hurts loved ones!

The fleshly weakness of gifts: **prophecy** (demanding compliance), **service** (desiring hard work), **teaching** (expecting instruction), **exhortation** (battling discouragement), **ruling** (attempting to control everything), **giving** (requiring frugality), and **mercy** (wanting love and compassion).