

JEREMIAH

page 2.

The Prophet with a message

[Jeremiah Chapter 2-6](#)

The following records of messages were probably given during the early part of Jeremiah's ministry. The Initial message concerns the backsliding of the Jewish people, but the message of Israel's neglect of God is given by God through Jeremiah in a caring, tender way. The relationship between God and Israel is often likened to a husband and wife by the prophets,

[Isaiah 54:4](#);

[Hosea 2:2-20](#);

[Ezekiel 16:1ff](#).

However, once they had conquered the promised land, their hearts turned away from God to the gods of the other nations.

[Judges 1-3](#).

The people of Israel had often failed in their relationship with God but Jeremiah now praises Israel for following God into the wilderness for an unknown land. They accepted the commandments of God, set themselves apart for Him, sacredly offering their firstfruits to God in worship. But now they had become very proud and vain, verse 5, though, as a result, they had become very ungrateful for all God had supplied. Jeremiah 2: 9-13: Yet God replies *"I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD,"*. Jeremiah points out that nations do not change their gods, verses 10,11. But Israel has turned their back on the true God for idols made by man. Israel turned away from the fresh spring to drink the dirty water from broken containers, what a foolish act. Consider verse 12, 'be amazed at such action'.

Jeremiah 2:14-19: **The slave**. Slaves were of two types, one being purchased, the second was to be born of a slave in the masters house, that baby became a permanent slave, owned by the master.

[Exodus 21:2-4](#).

The Jews had been released from their slavery in Egypt by God, but they had returned to slavery by their idol worship. They had made friends with the evil nations of Assyria and Egypt instead of seeking the guidance and power of the Lord. Judah had been taken back into Egypt as slaves again.

"Noph" and "Tahapanes" were cities of Egypt, the "waters of Sihor" is referring to a branch of the Nile. "To drink the waters of the river" is referring to the 'River Euphrates'

Verse 19: The most terrible judgement God can send is to let the people go their own way. To turn away from God and have their own desires satisfied. However, they then have to suffer the result of their action. The Old Testament records many occasions when Israel turned away from God and therefore suffered the consequences.

Jeremiah 2:20-21: The people are said "to be like an animal which will not wear the yoke or obey the master," even though God had supplied all their needs and luxuries, they still rejected Him.

They were like a useless vine, producing either no fruits or poor fruits. They thought that their power was from a piece of carved wood, or a stone idol. No amount of good works or religious sacrifices would cover their sins, their hearts were wrong. *"O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?"*

[Jeremiah 4:14](#);

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:" [Jeremiah 7:9](#).

Jeremiah 2: 22-37: (nitre is a mineral alkali obtained from soda lakes in Egypt, used for washing clothes) *They said they were good, yet their lives proved otherwise, like a lost camel or a donkey running everywhere looking for a mate. As they searched they wore out their shoes, yet still could not satisfy their thirst. Their life was so bad that they thought they could not be saved, break the habits, "I will just follow my badness."* Jeremiah 2:26: *When a thief is caught he can still deny that he was a thief, even though he was caught in the act. This also applies to the Jews. Any one can see the sins of the people, just as God could see them. The people were enjoying a time of blessing, for God had blessed them but still they rejected Him, lied to Him, claimed to be clean, yet were hurting the poor. They had befriended Assyria and Egypt but were soon to become their prisoners.*

God pleads with them.

[Jeremiah 3:1 to 4:31](#)

Jeremiah 3:3-5: In [Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#)

A man is forbidden to take back his divorced and remarried wife, even if the second husband has died. The people had rejected their first 'husband', the Lord, and they had gone off and 'married' the other gods. Israel was behaving like a prostitute, having many 'lovers'.

(Pagan rites often involve physical, sexual sins.)

Jeremiah 3: 6-11: But God is so full of grace He was still waiting and wanting to restore them back to worshipping Him.

Though Judea still worship God, as instructed by King Josiah, their hearts still remained with their idols and sin, even when they saw the Northern Kingdom being taken into exile by Assyria in 722 BC, they were so full of pride they behaved as if it could not happen to them.

The Patient is ill

[Jeremiah 3:21-25](#)

In Bible times anyone sick is often thought to have sinned and this is the reason for the illness. Here are some examples,

[Psalm 41:4](#);

[Isaiah 1:5-6](#);

[Jeremiah 8:22](#);

[Jeremiah 30:12](#);

[Mark 2:17](#).

Sin is like a virus which enters a persons body and systems, where it attacks and destroys the living tissue, just like sin destroys the relationship with God.

God is offering the Jews a healing from their backsliding, just like a doctor He is telling them the truth and that they must seek spiritual healing. Unfortunately the Jews are still thinking that their idols will save them, especially as they had sacrifice so many animals and even children to these idols.

The Dishonest people.

[Jeremiah 4:1-4](#).

The people were using the right language in their worship, but there was no meaning in their hearts, praying to the true God then worshipping the idols, their hearts were full of weeds and thorns just like a field which had not been looked after. Compare

[Matthew 13:1-9](#); [Matthew 18-23](#).

Jewish boys were circumcised when they were eight days old, they then received their name and became sons of the covenant, [Genesis 17:9-14](#);

[Leviticus 12:1-5](#);

[Luke 1:59](#);

[Luke 2:21,22](#).

No surgery on a persons body will save them but the Jews thought that when they were circumcised the ritual gave them salvation.

[Matthew 3:7-12](#);

[Acts 15:1-11](#).

Also consider the words of [Romans 2:28,29](#); and

[Colossians 2:11](#).

Even today there are many who still feel that the religious rituals, which we are involved in, like Communion and Baptism will give them their salvation, God wants from each of us a repentant heart, then He will give the gift of salvation through the blood of Jesus, we must receive this gift in faith, it is not a reward for being religious.

In [Jeremiah 3:11-13](#)

We can see that God is calling the people to return to him, however Jeremiah appears to be also looking into the future because the future worship does not involve Temple worship, verse 16, *"The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it;"* See also [Jeremiah 7:1-15](#);

[Jeremiah 9:25,26;](#)

[John 4:19-24.](#)

The people had been misled by false prophets, *"we have the temple and the ark of the covenant, we do not deserve punishment."* As a result, the people would not accept the message from Jeremiah,

[Jeremiah 4:1ff;](#)

"Repent in sackcloth, wash," verse 8, verse 14 *"the Babylonians are coming,"* verse 13. Jeremiah also has to express his personal sadness on the coming tragedy,

[Jeremiah 4:19-21,](#)

All he could see was that God's planned involved the Babylonians destroying and ruining the country.

God looks for those who are seeking Him.

[Jeremiah 5:1-31.](#)

In this chapter God instructs Jeremiah to search for anyone in Jerusalem who is godly and seeking Him. If he found just one righteous person, God would then prevent the punishment of the invasion. Compare

[Genesis 18:22-33,](#)

Jeremiah was told to ask *"does this person 'executeth judgment, seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.'"* verse 1.

Jeremiah can find nobody, whether poor, who did not know the laws, or the rich, the educated, who knew the laws, yet failed to obey, verse 5.

Verses 7-19, God asks *"why should I forgive them? They took my free gifts and sinned, became like animals. They are unfaithful, do not believe my word."* Then the people lied in response to the message, *"no harm will come to us, we will never see sword or famine"*

God now had no choice, let the punishment start!!! See warnings in

[Deuteronomy 28:49-52;](#)

[Jeremiah 4:27;](#)

[Jeremiah 5:10,18;](#)

[Jeremiah 30:11;](#)

[Jeremiah 46:28.](#)

But the warnings also promised not to destroy the nation. God is full of mercy. God made a covenant with Abraham and He was keeping it.

Jeremiah continues to give the message and warnings but the people turned away, because they had no fear of God, verses 22-24.

God sends the Judgement.

[Jeremiah 6:1-30.](#)

As Jeremiah ends his message God permits the Babylonian army to enter Judah and destroy the land.

Jeremiah 6:1-5: First, God issues a final warning. We see the three ways the people were normally warned of a coming army:

- The watchmen, would give warnings. verse 17
- From trumpet signals, verse 1
- By the use of signal fires on the hills. verse 1

Jeremiah was a Benjamite, so warns his people and their neighbour's first. *"Get out of Jerusalem,"* verse 1.

God now seems to direct the Babylonian army, *"Attack at noon, the hottest time, verse 4, continue the fighting all night,"* unusual in those days, verses 4,5. *"Cut down the trees to climb over the walls of Jerusalem,"* verse 6. Because Jerusalem is a source of dirt, wickedness and must be punished, verse 7.

Jeremiah 6: 10-15: Jeremiah was so sad, no one was listening, for the anger of God was to punish all ages, rich and poor, rulers and priests.

Jeremiah 6: 16-30: The remainder of the chapter gives the verdict, verses 16-23, and the consequences, verses 24-30, the people were not being purified, they were being rejected, they are not worth anything.