

Jeremiah 03 - Rules on Remarriage; Basis for the 2nd Coming; No More Ark; Israel No Longer Divided

II. Thirteen prophecies of judgment upon Judah (Jer 2:1–25:38)

(1) Nine general prophecies of judgment that include offers of repentance (Jer 2:1–19:15)

(A) First message: Judah's unfaithfulness (Jer 2:1–3:5)

(b) Present covenant infidelity (Jer 2:4–3:5)

(iv) Harlotry (3:1-5)

(B) Second message: coming judgment and the necessity for repentance (Jer 3:6–6:30)

(a) Judah's failure to learn from Israel's example (3:6-11)

(b) Israel's call to repent (Jer 3:12–4:2)

(i) Eschatological blessings associated with repentance (3:12-22a)

(ii) Definition of repentance (3:22b–4:2)

Jeremiah 3

(iv) Harlotry (3:1-5)

1 God says, "If a husband divorces his wife And she leaves him And becomes another man's wife, Will he return to her again? Would that land not be completely defiled? But you are a prostitute *with* many lovers; Yet you turn to Me," declares the LORD.

1 God says, "If a husband divorces his wife And she goes from him And belongs to another man, Will he still return to her? Will not that land be completely polluted? But you are a harlot *with* many lovers; Yet you turn to Me," declares the LORD.

1 "When a man divorces his wife, she leaves him and becomes another man's wife, will the first husband return to her again? The land would be deeply polluted, would it not? Since you have committed fornication with many lovers, would you now return to me?" declares the LORD.

1 They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

- He himself is, in effect, overriding that rule, because in other passages, He not only treats Israel as a divorced wife, He uses the expression "I give you a bill of divorce."

— That is what Hosea deals with. And yet He is saying if they will come back to Him He will receive them, which is contrary to the concept of the Mosaic Law.

— "Return again to me, saith the Lord. Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lain with." That is a challenge. "Find a spot that you haven't polluted," in effect.

2 "Raise your eyes to the bare heights and see; Where have you not been violated? You have sat for them by the roads Like an Arab in the desert, And you have defiled a land With your prostitution and your wickedness.

2 "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see; Where have you not been violated? By the roads you have sat for them Like an Arab in the desert, And you have polluted a land With your harlotry and with your wickedness.

2 "Look up to the barren heights and see. Is there any place where you have not been ravished? You have sat beside the road, waiting for them like a nomad in the desert. And you have polluted the land with your fornication and your wickedness.

2 Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lain with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

3 "Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain. Yet you had a prostitute's forehead; You refused to be ashamed.

3 "Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain. Yet you had a harlot's forehead; You refused to be ashamed.

3 This is why the rain has been withheld and there are no spring showers. Yet you have a harlot's look and you refuse to be ashamed.

3 Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.

- He expressly points out that He has withheld the rain

4 "Have you not just now called to Me, 'My Father, You are the friend of my youth?

4 "Have you not just now called to Me, 'My Father, You are the friend of my youth?

4 Have you not just called out to me, 'My father, you are the friend of my youth—

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou *art* the guide of my youth?

- The word *ab* means father, though it is translated father. It is also the kind of word that a young wife might use of her husband. In contrast to *allup* which is a husband or companion, but can really be translated friend.

5 'Will He be angry forever, Or keep *His anger* to the end?' Behold, you have spoken And have done evil things, And you have had your own way."

5 'Will He be angry forever? Will He be indignant to the end?' Behold, you have spoken And have done evil things, And you have had your way."

5 will he hold on to his anger forever, will he persist in his wrath to the end?' Look, you have spoken and done evil things, and you have succeeded in it."

5 Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

(B) Second message: coming judgment and the necessity for repentance (Jer 3:6 –6:30)

(a) Judah's failure to learn from Israel's example (3:6-11)

6 Then the LORD said to me in the **days of King Josiah**, "Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every leafy tree, and she prostituted herself there.

6 Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, "Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there.

6 In the time of King Josiah the LORD told me, "Have you seen what unfaithful Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she committed fornication there.

6 The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

- "...days of King Josiah" - a time reference, but one of the problems with interpreting Jeremiah is to exactly where do the pieces fit? They are not all in an agreed-upon order. There is a lot of controversy upon the order of these fragments.

- God is treating Israel to the north and Judah to the south as if they're two sisters. The northern group has "gone upon every high mountain and under every green tree," connotation of the idolatry, "and there hath played the harlot" (Cf. Ezek 23).

Example of Northern Kingdom

7 Yet I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will return to Me'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

7 I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will return to Me'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

7 I thought, 'After she has done all these things, she will return to me.' But she didn't return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw this.

7 And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw *it*.

8 And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a certificate of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and prostituted herself also.

8 And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.

8 I saw that even though I had sent unfaithful Israel away for all her adulteries and had given her a divorce decree, her treacherous sister Judah didn't fear, and she, too, committed adultery.

8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

- He is going to make the case that Judah is in worse shape than Israel, because Judah had the benefit of observing the destiny of Israel.

9 And because of the thoughtlessness of her prostitution, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.

9 Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.

9 She took her fornication so lightly that she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.

9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

10 Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the LORD.

10 Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the LORD.

10 Yet in all this her treacherous sister Judah didn't return to me with her whole heart, but rather deceptively," declares the LORD.

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.

- Some pretense of faith, but also analogous to Revelation 3, the letter to Laodicia. He says... "I would that you were cold or hot. So then thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

— And that is exactly what is wrong with Judah. They are not even honest in their backsliding. They are not even honest in terms with their idolatry, they go through the motions as if they were okay, but it is phony... "and not turned unto me with their whole heart, but feignedly".

11 And the LORD said to me, "Faithless Israel has proved herself to be more righteous than treacherous Judah.

11 And the LORD said to me, "Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.

11 Then the LORD told me, "Unfaithful Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.

11 And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

- As Jeremiah is preaching this to Judah, it should scare them, because they know that Israel fell into judgment because of idolatry, and here is Judah being compared and made worse. Backsliding Israel is justified more than treacherous Judah.

- Northern King was to be an example to Judah (Ezek 23:11). Only one king (2 Kings 13:45).

(b) Israel's call to repent (Jer 3:12—4:2)

(i) Eschatological blessings associated with repentance (3:12-22a)

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, 'Return, faithless Israel,' declares the LORD; 'I will not look at you in anger. For I am gracious,' declares the LORD; 'I will not be angry forever.

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, 'Return, faithless Israel,' declares the LORD; 'I will not look upon you in anger. For I am gracious,' declares the LORD; 'I will not be angry forever.

12 Go, proclaim these words to the north, and say, 'Return, unfaithful Israel,' declares the LORD. 'I won't look on you in anger, for I am gracious,' declares the LORD. 'I won't remain angry forever.

12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and* I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, *and* I will not keep anger for ever.

The Blessings for Israel in the Messianic Kingdom

Basis for the Second Coming

The Messianic Kingdom will be a time of great blessing and restoration of the Jewish people. However, these blessings are conditioned by v13 where they must first acknowledge or confess one specific iniquity that they committed against Jehovah their God (Cf. Lev 26:40-42; Zech 12:10; Hosea 5:15; Matt 23:37-39).

13 'Only acknowledge your wrongdoing, That you have revolted against the LORD your God, And have scattered your favors to the strangers under every leafy tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,' declares the LORD.

13 'Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God And have scattered your favors to the strangers under every green tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,' declares the LORD.

13 'Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have rebelled against the LORD your God, and have scattered your favors to strangers under every green tree. But you haven't obeyed me,' declares the LORD.

13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

- See note: **The Basis for the Second Coming** in Lev 26:40-42

14 'Return, you faithless sons,' declares the LORD; 'For I am a master to you, And I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, And bring you to Zion.'

14 'Return, O faithless sons,' declares the LORD; 'For I am a master to you, And I will take you one from a city and two from a family, And I will bring you to Zion.'

14 "Return, unfaithful people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I'll take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I'll bring you to Zion."

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

15 "Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you knowledge and understanding.

15 "Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.

15 I'll give you shepherds after my own heart, and they'll shepherd you with knowledge and good sense."

15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

16 And it shall be in those days when you become numerous and are fruitful in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor miss *it*, nor will it be made again.

16 It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss *it*, nor will it be made again.

16 "And in those days when you increase in numbers and multiply in the land," declares the LORD, "people will no longer say, 'The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD,' and it won't come to mind, and they won't remember it or miss it, nor will it be made again.

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit *it*; neither shall *that* be done any more.

- Interesting verse when you really want to get into discussions about the Search for the Ark. One of the problems is according to Jeremiah; there will be no more Ark. The Ark of the Covenant is gone.

- There are some books between the Old Testament and the NT, they are apocryphal books which means they are not part of the Hebrew Canon, and most of them are not worth a lot (spiritual background maybe).

— The First and Second book of Maccabees which is not part of the Hebrew Canon but does include a lot of historical background that many scholars feel is very valuable

-- In 2 Macc 2:48 it makes reference to a story that other scholars put no credence on, that the Ark of the Covenant was hidden by Jeremiah in some cave. So people are tearing up half of Jordan looking for this cave.

-- There is one school of thought, and it is a very comfortable school of thought from a Scriptural point of view, that says it isn't going to show up any more (The Mercy Seat may be a different story...see [Ark of the Covenant: A Relic with a Future?](#)).

Preview of Jer 31:31-34. In Jer 3:16 we have a declaration, which proves that the old economy is going to be dissolved, it will not be in the Millennium. The whole concept of Judaism, of the *Torah*, the Ten Commandments, the whole Levitical system is going to be dissolved because that whole thing was built on the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant, and how God dwelt between the cherubims. That is where the high priest spread the blood on the Day of Atonement (*YomKippur*), and only once a year could he go into the Holy of Holies.

He is saying very simply that the religious system at that day will not need visual aids. It won't need something like the Ark to be indicative as a model or a concept, or symbol. Why? Because the Lord is going to dwell among them. He is speaking of the Millennium. In Ezekiel's Temple, even with all that detail of the Temple, it is a very strange description because the Ark of the Covenant is not mentioned. That bothers a lot of scholars.

The first time the Ark of the Covenant is mentioned is in Ex 25. The Ark of the Covenant is a prominent fixture in the Tabernacle, and then when Solomon builds the Temple, the Ark is in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8:6). The last time it is mentioned in the Scripture is 2 Chr 35:3. Most scholars believe that when the Babylonians conquer Jerusalem in the first siege

of Nebuchadnezzar, the Ark of the Covenant was stolen along with all the other Temple vessels mentioned. The problem with that is in Chapter 52:17 it lists the things that Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple; the Ark is not mentioned. That bothers a lot of people because it was of solid gold, you think it would be mentioned. From this, many scholars feel that the Ark was hidden in a secret passage, and that gives rise to some of these rumors that it was hidden away in some cave later on.

17 At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will assemble at it, at Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; and they will no longer follow the stubbornness of their evil heart.

17 At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart.

17 At that time people will call Jerusalem, "The Throne of the LORD," and all the nations will be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. They'll no longer stubbornly follow their own evil desires.

17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

- God's throne was to be between the cherubim, the Mercy Seat. We have the Ark of the Covenant which is sort of a coffin shape, made out of wood covered with gold; in the inside are the Ten Commandments, the pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and so on. The lid that has the two cherubim on it, isn't called a lid in the Scriptures...it is called the Mercy Seat. The concept for it is that that is where God sits, and as He looks down on the broken Law, He is assuaged from His anger by the shed blood that is poured on the Mercy Seat on Yom Kippur; that is the idiom that is used in the Levitical symbolism there. God is said to dwell between the cherubim, and in fact He did, there is a Shekinah glory that was above the Ark in the Holy of Holies.

Ezekiel describes that it leaves when God finally does leave Solomon's Temple. Ezekiel describes how the Shekinah left and then sort of hovered over in one corner and then went, almost leaving reluctantly. The point is the Ark of the Covenant was going to be no more remembered because Jerusalem would be called the throne of the Lord.

18 In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

18 In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

18 In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and together they'll come to the land that I gave your ancestors as an inheritance."

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

- Evidences of this in Ezek 37; two houses of Israel are united during the Kingdom.

19 "Then I said, 'How I would set you among My sons And give you a pleasant land, The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!' And I said, 'You shall call Me, My Father, And not turn away from following Me.'

19 "Then I said, 'How I would set you among My sons And give you a pleasant land, The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!' And I said, 'You shall call Me, My Father, And not turn away from following Me.'

19 "I said, 'How I wanted to treat you like children, and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful inheritance of the nations.' I said, 'You will call me, my father, and won't turn back from following me.'

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.

20 "However, as a woman treacherously leaves her lover, So you have dealt treacherously with Me, House of Israel," declares the LORD.

20 "Surely, as a woman treacherously departs from her lover, So you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel," declares the LORD.

20 Instead, like an unfaithful wife leaves her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, house of Israel," declares the LORD.

20 Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

21 A voice is heard on the bare heights, The weeping, the pleading of the sons of Israel. Because they have perverted their way, They have forgotten the LORD their God.

21 A voice is heard on the bare heights, The weeping *and* the supplications of the sons of Israel; Because they have perverted their way, They have forgotten the LORD their God.

21 "A voice is heard on the barren heights, the weeping and pleading of the children of Israel because they have perverted their way. They have forgotten the LORD their God."

21 A voice was heard upon the high places, weeping *and* supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, *and* they have forgotten the LORD their God.

(ii) Definition of repentance (3:22b—4:2)

22 "Return, you faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness."

Israel Replies "Behold, we come to You; For You are the LORD our God.

22 "Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your faithlessness." "Behold, we come to You; For You are the LORD our God.

22 "Turn back, unfaithful people, and I'll heal your unfaithfulness." "Look, we're coming to you because you are the LORD our God.

22 Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God.

23 "Certainly the hills are a deception, Commotion *on* the mountains. Certainly in the LORD our God Is the salvation of Israel.

23 "Surely, the hills are a deception, A tumult *on* the mountains. Surely in the LORD our God Is the salvation of Israel.

23 Truly the hills are a deception, and the mountains are confusion. Truly, in the LORD our God is Israel's salvation."

23 Truly in vain *is salvation hoped for* from the hills, *and from* the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel.

- In spite of all the insults and despite all their backsliding, God is opening the door for them to come back. He is still offering them salvation.

24 "But the shame has consumed the product of our fathers' labor since our youth—their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

24 "But the shameful thing has consumed the labor of our fathers since our youth, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

24 Since our youth the false gods have consumed the products of our ancestors' hard work, their sheep and their cattle, their sons and their daughters.

24 For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters.

25 Let us lie down in our shame, and let our humiliation cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day. And we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God."

25 Let us lie down in our shame, and let our humiliation cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day. And we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God."

25 "Let us lie down in our shame, and let our humiliation cover us, because both we and our ancestors have sinned against the LORD our God from our youth until this present time. We haven't obeyed the LORD our God."

25 We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.