

Jeremiah 3

Read Jeremiah 3:1-5: It is interesting to hear people share their testimony. They will often say “I came to the LORD at this event.” It is more accurate to say, that we finally agreed to open the door that God has been knocking on for a while. God has been serving his offer on several platters and life circumstances.



The sad thing is that we are so forgetful and fickle that we will walk away from a good thing to chase down some dead-end ideas. In the last chapter, we saw that God is like a faithful husband whose wife left him. Israel was impressed with the Egyptian and Assyrian massive armies and national wealth. They just thought that if they could schmooze these big-time players that all of the pesky neighbors would leave them alone. God set up the scenarios to evidence his deliverances and the power of prayer.



We think that we trust God when we pray; but what about when we really have skin in the game? It is one thing to pray about our brother getting a good job...but what about when you are diagnosed with cancer? It is one thing to pray for martyrs in China; but what about when

your city is being overrun with foreign troops? Do we really trust God; or do we revert to things that we can see and manipulate?

Israel and Judah were living outside of God's playbook; and they were being told to take a U-turn or go down hard. God was sending the Assyrians and the Philistines and Babylonians to learn how to follow directions and trust God's deliverance. Instead of reaching for God's hand, Israel took the devil's hand.

Marriage is supposed to be for better or worse, and for richer or poorer. The children of Israel only stayed connected to God when it suited them. They would try out some idols, since they are licenses to conduct socially unacceptable behavior. This experimentation went way south, and rapidly ruined God's land of abundance.

So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. (2 Chronicles 33:9)

Israel and Judah's alliances were bouncing around like a pinball from nation to nation. God compares it to a prostitute wondering from man to man...like a drunken sailor weaving down the street. It was embarrassing to have half-hearted temple activities, knowing that was just a national feel-good session. Columbine and 9/11 caused us to pause to hear a few pastors; but then we were back to relying on our 401 (k), our technology, and national lifestyle.

Some people do not honor the covenant of marriage. They live together, without getting married...or they divorce out of convenience...and perhaps re-unite during slow times or in times of dependency. Israel was very impressed with the military machines and powerful foreign kings. The people were very impressed with the massive and powerful military machines, like an admiring young woman watching the impressive soldiers pass by. She would get abused by the young man; and then turn to the next army and go with the other team. It is like God is saying that his wife will sleep with anybody, but she will not stay with me. Very sad and damaging.

She lusted for the neighboring Assyrians, Captains and rulers, clothed most gorgeously, Horsemen riding on horses, All of them desirable young men. Then I saw that she was defiled; Both took the same way. But she increased her harlotry; She looked at men portrayed on the wall, Images of Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion, girded with belts around their waists, Flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like captains, In the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, The land of their nativity. As soon as her eyes saw them, she lusted for them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. (Ezekiel 23:12-16).

Israel is compared to an Arabian in the wilderness. Most prostitutes would hang around in big cities, seaports and at highway intersections. Israel was like a nomad woman with binoculars, scouting the whole territory for a new mate. Even the idol worshipping nations joked about this behavior. When God's people sin; then tend to outdo the unbelievers. It is a binge thing that the dark forces are orchestrating. Today, the one marriage thing is on the rise in our nation. We are re-defining what a couple consists of.

Let's compare the results of our behavior, as we remove God from our laws, national policies, school system and media. Israel and Judah had some severe droughts as the blessings from heaven stopped flowing to them.

And it came to pass after many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth." So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab; and there was a severe famine in Samaria.....Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals. (excerpts from 1 Kings 18)

Read Jeremiah 3:6-14: God is making it real simple. All the children of Israel had to do was to repent. That begins with acknowledgement of the truth. We have to get up and tell God the truth about ourselves in the morning. It all has to begin with honesty.

Israel was said to be committing adultery on every high mountain under every green tree. Baal was the supreme god in ancient Canaan and Phoenicia. As the storm god, he was usually depicted holding a raised lightning bolt. His consort, Asherah, was the chief female deity and was represented by a carved pole or limbless tree trunk planted in the ground. Baal and Asherah are often mentioned together in Scripture. Sometimes Baal is mentioned with the goddess Ashtoreth who, in Canaanite mythology, was closely related to Asherah and may have been for a time considered the same goddess. All of them were fertility gods, and their worship rites involved sexual perversion. There are several reasons why the worship of Baal and Asherah was such a problem for Israel. First, the worship of Baal and Asherah held the allure of illicit sex, since the religion involved ritual prostitution.

And, most basically, Israel worshiped Baal and Asherah because of Satan's temptations coupled with mankind's sinfulness. The enemy of our souls tempted Israel to worship idols; the sacrifices made to Baal and Asherah were really sacrifices to demons ([1 Corinthians 10:20](#)). The stubborn willfulness of humanity works in tandem with Satan's seductions, and the result is rebellion against God. Israel repeatedly forsook their covenant with God, lost God's blessings, and chased after the Baals and Asherahs to their own destruction.

Read Jeremiah 3:17-25: We are going forward again to the millennial kingdom; when God will be in control of all things. The whole world will flow there to pay homage and learn from Jesus. There will be a holy highway that connects Egypt and Iraq; with Jerusalem at the destination, from both ends. Only sincere followers will follow this road to the holy holidays.

A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; It

shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35: 8-10)

In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.” (Isaiah 19:23-25)