

A Trek Through Jeremiah 5 - 3:1-11

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For today: Cheap repentance 3:1 - 4:4 (part 1) Warning against hypocrisy

- A chilling question 3:1-5
- A startling comparison 3:6-11

A chilling question 3:1-5

Measured against the law 3:1

Jeremiah 3:1 (LSB)

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 Yahweh.

- If a husband divorces his wife...
 - Prohibition against remarrying a wife that the husband previously divorced and that had married another. Would be an abomination (Dt 24:1-4).
- But you are a harlot with many lovers
 - Israel had gone away from Yahweh and gone after many false gods
- Yet you turn to Me," declares Yahweh.
 - More of an abomination unless Yahweh acts to take Israel back.

Acting the harlot 3:2-3

Jeremiah 3:2–3 (LSB)

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

3“Therefore the showers have been withheld, And the late rain has not come. Yet you had a harlot’s forehead; You refused to feel dishonor.

- Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see
 - Where Israel had worshipped false gods.
 - Bare because idols were destroyed in the reform
- Two illustrations of apostasy
- Where have you not been ravished? Harlotry
- By the roads you have sat for them Like an Arab in the wilderness. Highway robber
- And you have polluted a land With your harlotry and with your evil. Defiled their inheritance.
- Therefore the showers have been withheld, And the late rain has not come.
 - Showers in Oct/Nov, late rain in Mar/Apr. Essential for crops.
 - Discipline
- Yet you had a harlot’s forehead; You refused to feel dishonor.
 - Pr 30:20 This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, “I have done no wrong.”
 - No shame. Did not learn.

Blatant hypocrisy 3:4-5

Jeremiah 3:4–5 (LSB)

4“Have you not just now called to Me, ‘My Father, You are the close companion of my youth?

5‘Will He be angry forever? Will He keep it to the end?’ Behold, you have spoken And have done evil things, And you have had your way.”

- V4-5a Israel’s appeal
 - Have you not just now called to Me. At the time of Josiah’s reforms
 - My Father, You are the close companion of my youth
 - Appeal to their relationship.
 - My Father...close companion. Used by a young bride of her husband
 - Of my youth. Ex 19:5 ...you shall be My treasured possession among all the peoples
 - Will He be angry forever? Will He keep it to the end? Expecting mercy
- V5b Yahweh’s reply
 - Behold, you have spoken And have done evil things, And you have had your way.”
 - What they professed: faithfulness
 - What they did: evil deeds and rebellion.

A startling comparison 3:6-11

Jeremiah 3:6–11 (LSB)

6Then Yahweh 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.

7“I said, ‘After she has done all these things, she will return to Me’; but she did not return, 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 was a harlot also.

9“So it was, because of the lightness of her harlotry, that she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.

10“Yet in spite of all this, her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in lying,” declares Yahweh.

11And Yahweh said to me, “Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.

- Judah under a righteous king with religious reforms underway. But Yahweh sees their hearts.
- Illustration of two sisters
- Israel
 - faithless Israel. Lit “Apostasy Israel”. Apostasy personified
 - Was a harlot. Abandoned Yahweh, went after false gods.
 - He was patient but she did not repent
 - He sent her away and gave her a certificate of divorce. Conquered by Assyria and exiled
- Judah
 - Saw what Israel did and what happened to her.
 - Adopted her practices.
 - Did not fear. Did not see idolatry as serious.
 - Repented but not in their hearts.
- Yahweh’s evaluation: Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.
 - Both went away from Yahweh and walked after false gods.
 - Judah
 - Had israel’s example but did not learn from it.
 - Had greater privilege: davidic king, temple worship
 - Repented but not sincerely

References

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