

A Trek Through Jeremiah 6 - 3:12 - 4:4

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For today: Cheap repentance 3:1 - 4:4 (Part 2) Warning against hypocrisy

- A humbling invitation 3:12-18
- No glib response 3:19 - 4:4

A humbling invitation 3:12-18

Call to Israel 3:12-13

Jeremiah 3:12–13 (LSB)

12“Go and call out these words toward the north and say, ‘Return, faithless Israel,’ declares Yahweh; ‘I will not look upon you in anger. For I am One of lovingkindness,’ declares Yahweh; ‘I will not be angry forever.

13‘Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against Yahweh your God And have scattered your ways of harlotry to the strangers under every green tree, And you have not listened to My voice,’ declares Yahweh.

- Go and call out these words toward the north. Towards Israel. To make Judah jealous.
- Return, faithless Israel,’ declares Yahweh...
 - Appeal to return and receive mercy.
 - They are under discipline but not abandoned.
- Only acknowledge your iniquity. Necessary condition to return
- Three types of iniquity
- That you have transgressed against Yahweh your God. Broken the covenant
- And have scattered your ways of harlotry to the strangers under every green tree. Abandoned Yahweh and gone after false gods.
- And you have not listened to My voice. Not heard and obeyed His word.

Glorious future 3:14-18

Jeremiah 3:14–18 (LSB)

14‘Return, O faithless sons,’ declares Yahweh; ‘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.’

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

16“‘It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and fruitful in the land,’” declares Yahweh, “‘they will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of Yahweh.’ And it will not come upon the heart, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss it, nor will it be made again.

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

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.

- Messianic end times
- V14 Return of the remnant
 - Return, O faithless sons. Prophecy of Israel’s return
 - I am a master to you. Heb ba-alti: to marry: Israel’s husband. Word play on Baal.
 - One...two...to Zion. The faithful remnant return to Zion.
- V15 True shepherds.
 - Shepherds after my own heart. Godly leaders
 - Knowledge and understanding. Based on the fear of Yahweh.
- V16a Blessed. Multiplied and fruitful. Fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant.
- V16b God with them
 - they will no longer say, ‘The ark of the covenant of Yahweh
 - Yahweh will dwell with them.
 - Symbolic law and ritual no longer needed.
 - Big shock to current Judeans who looked to the temple for security.
- V17 Gathering of the nations
 - Believers of all nations come to Jerusalem where the Yahweh (Messiah) rules
 - Regenerated with new hearts
- V18 Israel unified
 - the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel. Israel and Judah together
 - Returning from the land of the north. From exile. Implies Judah going into exile.

A genuine response 3:19 - 4:4

Treachery 3:19-20

Jeremiah 3:19–20 (LSB)

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.’

20“Surely, as a woman treacherously departs from her lover, So you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,” declares Yahweh.

- V19 What Yahweh intended for Israel (covenant)
 - How I would set you among My sons. Chosen as His favored sons
 - And give you a pleasant land, The most beautiful inheritance of the nations!
 - Given the best inheritance
 - You shall call Me, “My Father,” And not turn away from following Me.
 - Commanded to be faithful
- V20 What Israel did
 - Treacherous. Breaking the covenant
 - Departs from her lover. Departed from the One she was joined to. Gen 2:24
...and they shall become one flesh.

Pattern for true repentance 3:21-25

Jeremiah 3:21–25 (LSB)

21A 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 Yahweh their God.

22“Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness.” “Behold, we come to You, For You are Yahweh our God.

23“Surely, the hills are a lie, A tumult on the mountains. Surely in Yahweh our God Is the salvation of Israel.

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

25“Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us; for we have sinned against Yahweh our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day. And we have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God.”

- Here Jeremiah describes what Judah need to do
- V21 Profession of repentance
 - Bare heights. Sites of idol worship. Idols removed by during Josiah’s reforms.
 - Weeping and supplication. During the reforms. Expressing repentance. Good but not enough.
- V22-25 Real repentance
 - Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness. Offer of restoration.
 - “Behold, we come to You. Responding to the offer.
 - For You are Yahweh our God. Recognizing Yahweh as their only God.
 - Surely, the hills are a lie, A tumult on the mountains. Rejecting Baal worship. Nothing but noise.
 - Surely in Yahweh our God Is the salvation of Israel. Where true security is found.
 - But the shameful thing has devoured the labor of our fathers since our youth
 - Shameful thing. Baal worship
 - Has devoured the labor. Outcome of idolatry
 - Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us.
 - Owning what they have done.
 - Confessing their helplessness
 - Two confessions
 - we have sinned against Yahweh our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day.
 - And we have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God.”

Call to return 4:1-4

Jeremiah 4:1-4 (LSB)

1 "If you will return, O Israel," declares Yahweh, "Then you should return to Me. And if you will put away your detested things from My presence And will not waver

2 And you will swear, 'As Yahweh lives,' In truth, in justice, and in righteousness; Then the nations will be blessed in Him, And in Him they will boast."

3 For thus says Yahweh to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem, "Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns.

4 "Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My wrath go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it Because of the evil of your deeds."

- V1-2 What is required
 - If you will return, O Israel. If they truly want to return.
 - Four requirements
 - Return to Me. As your only God.
 - Put away your detested things from My presence. Get rid of the false gods.
 - Not waver. Be faithful.
 - Swear, 'As Yahweh lives,' In truth, in justice, and in righteousness
 - In oaths truly acknowledge Yahweh as their God.
 - Walk in truth, justice, righteousness (keep the covenant)
- V3-4 Individual renewal
 - For thus says Yahweh to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem. Speaking to each man individually.
 - Two illustrations
 - Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns.
 - Illustration from farming. Fallow ground. Lit "new ground never plowed". Plowed fields produced thorns year after year because the thorn seeds remained in the ground. Completely new fields were needed.
 - To achieve real repentance, Judah needed to discard all her old ways for new ways. Mt 9:17 New wineskins.
 - Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh And remove the foreskins of your heart
 - Illustration from circumcision. Physical circumcision removed the foreskin from the male organ. It had been commanded as a sign of the covenant (Gen 17:11). It was intended to symbolize the inner circumcision of the heart: removing the hard outer covering so that the heart was completely devoted to Yahweh.
 - Cannot be done ourselves. Requires the new covenant. Jer 31:33 "But this is the covenant which I will cut with the house of Israel after those days," declares Yahweh: "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Application: A pattern for repentance

1 Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- We confess
- He forgives and cleanses

Jer 3:22-25 Real repentance

- We come to You. Don't hide.
- The hills are a lie. Worthless
- We have been devoured. By our sin.
- We lie down in our shame. Own our sin and our helplessness.

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