

Jeremiah 2:1-8 – The Forgetful Wife

Clarke, Poole, Gray, HebrewLexicon, TSK, Henry, JFB, Geneva, Trapp, Clarke, Armstrong, Calvin, Gill, INT, Barnes, Brothers and Sisters in the Lord: Jeremiah, the one who said he was too young to speak and that people would not listen to him, after he was strengthened and assured by God, then boldly stood up to speak.

Jeremiah's job was to confront God's forgetful bride. And as you will see, it was not like when a bride forgets to buy eggs from the supermarket. That is an easy thing to fix.

This bride **forgot who her husband was, where she lived, and how she should live!** So this was a very big deal. Hear about this today.

Our headings are:

The Bride Loved God

The Bride Left God

Our goals are: **That, receiving God's strengthening, you will then be ready to speak up against sin in the church (individually and collectively) and support those who speak up against sin in the church (individually and collectively).**

The Bride Loved God

1 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "**Go and cry** in the hearing of **Jerusalem**, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I remember you, **The kindness of your youth**, The **love of your betrothal**, When you went **after Me in the wilderness**, In a **land not sown**. 3 Israel was **holiness to the LORD**, **The firstfruits of His increase**. **All that devour him will offend; Disaster will come upon them,**" says the LORD."

1. God commanded Jeremiah to go to Jerusalem and begin sounding his warning to his bride to immediately repent.

a. "Cry out" meant there was a passion and urgency of the call.

b. Jerusalem, which represented the whole nation, had become a den of wickedness.

2. But Jeremiah did not have to start with "hellfire and brimstone," (that was coming) but with a conviction by reflection.

He had to start with the **memory of the good times between the Yahweh and his bride!**

3. What were those good times?

a. Israel was a kind bride in the past when she joined with God in marriage covenant at Mt. Sinai.

She knew the Lord chose her as a bride when she was unclean, abused, disillusioned, and with no hope, and married her.

Ezekiel 16:8 "When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so **I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness.** Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, **and you became Mine,**" says the Lord GOD.

God had made her who was nothing, something!

Deuteronomy 7:7 "The LORD **did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people,** for you were the least of all peoples; 8 "but **because the LORD loves you,** and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

And the bride promised to remember her God...her husband. She didn't do it perfectly, but she tried.

Exodus 24:3 So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "**All the words which the LORD has said we will do.**"

b. The bride then followed the Lord even through the harsh wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan for 40 years, going to a better future, and then she followed him through the **capturing of Canaan for another 40.** She wasn't perfect, but she followed her husband.

c. The bride was living a holy life with the Lord.

And because of this, she increased – to over 2,500,000.

Yes, she set up the tabernacle and loved it.

She had the Altar of Showbread, the Lampstand, and the Altar of Incense.

She had a priest who could go into the Holy of holies on her behalf and personally meet with God.

Deuteronomy 14:2 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God, and **the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples** who are on the face of the earth.

In fact, the bride was like the “firstfruits” to the Lord. **The firstfruits were always completely given to God.**

d. The bride was protected by the Lord. Anyone who threatened God’s bride was promptly dealt with!

4. Lessons:

a. Be passionate about the message of the Lord. Cry out his message so the church can repent and the world can be saved.

b. Because the church has forgotten the wonder of her Savior and her salvation today (as Israel and Judah did) she is treating God with contempt. So let her mind go back to the love and care of God. God rescued his church that was unclean, abused, and disillusioned with no hope, and he married her.

But her passion has waned in North America. She has become lukewarm. She needs a time of serious reflection and remember the kindness of her Savior. Let her remember his love on Calvary, or let her think on hellfire and God’s judgment to come.

c. The closer you are to God, the worse is your sin against him. God must be hurting now as he looks at his church!

d. Could it be that you personally aren’t as close to God as you once was? Maybe your eyes are on fire for flashy things and you have forgotten your first love! This is what causes the church as a whole to forget. Check your own eyes!

The Bride left God

4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel.

1. God then proclaimed through Jeremiah that his bride left him even though she had no ground for forgetting his love from the past or the present; he always loved her.

And notice how God **included Israel** as forgetting! Israel was gone already...but he was **still feeling Israel’s betrayal.**

5 Thus says the LORD: "**What injustice have your fathers found in Me,** That they have gone far from Me, Have followed idols, And have **become idolaters?**

2. God had not done his bride any injustice, yet she ran to another husband, and became an idolater.

So God pleaded, “**What wrong have I done to you that you have betrayed me** and prostituted yourself to other gods?”

Isaiah 5:4 **What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done** in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?

6 Neither did they say, ‘**Where is the LORD**, Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, **Who led us** through the wilderness, Through a **land of deserts and pits**, Through a **land of drought** and the **shadow of death**, Through a land that no one crossed And where no one dwelt?’

3. God then recounted the details of their marriage covenant relationship and what he gave her through the desert journey.

God always was near her to keep her safe, even with the greatest dangers around. She had all the food and clothes she needed. Her clothes never wore out. And she could see the snakes and the scorpions of the desert without fear.

Deuteronomy 2:7 "For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. **These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing.**"

God protected her from the pits – holes in the ground that animals could fall into.

God protected her through droughts and miraculously provided water for her on a number of occasions.

God protected her as she journeyed through caverns and crevices - near-death experiences.

Deuteronomy 8:15 "who led you through that **great and terrible wilderness**, in which were **fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land** where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock;

(Isn't it easier to face terror when someone is with you...especially with someone who loves you?) Look at the description:

Isaiah 63:9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the **Angel of His Presence saved them**; In His love and in His pity **He redeemed them**; And He **bore them and carried them** All the days of old. 11 Then he

remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: "Where is He who brought them up out of the sea **With the shepherd of His flock?** Where is He who **put His Holy Spirit within** them,

7 **I brought you into a bountiful country,** To eat its fruit and its goodness. But when you entered, you defiled My land And **made My heritage an abomination.**

4. God then recounted how he had given her every good thing she needed to eat and enjoy in Canaan.

And what a bountiful land it was! This was Mt. Carmel...a garden land. And she didn't have to struggle to buy a new home, or business, or security! It was all ready for her. **But she started to stray.**

Psalms 78:58 For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, And moved Him to jealousy with their carved images.⁵⁹ When God heard this, He was furious, And greatly abhorred Israel,

She defiled the land. "Defiled" is a sexual term, meaning to "go and be a prostitute." What corruption of the sacred marriage!

8 **The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?'** And **those who handle the law did not know Me;** The **rulers also transgressed against Me;** The **prophets prophesied by Baal,** And walked after things that do not profit.

5. The people of the bride, in all levels of society, failed to live up to the covenant terms they had with God.

a. The priests did not teach the people to seek after Yahweh. The scribes, the writers and historians, did not explain the law and its requirements. Maybe they weren't trained in it themselves. The priests' lips should have had knowledge. (Malachi 2:6)

b. The king and the rulers had become corrupt, focusing on getting rich and powerful.

c. The prophets spoke false things, telling people what they wanted to hear, and following Baal. Baal was the Phoenician false god – the god of the garbage dump or god of the flies.

Hosea 4:6 My people are **destroyed for lack of knowledge.** Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for

Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

While they thought these things would bring them benefit, there was no long-term profit in them. Yes, they made money, but even that would be gone. **And worse, they were not saving up for heaven.**

6. Lessons:

a. The church as a whole and you individually have no excuse to wander from the Lord, considering his faithfulness in the past and at the present! It is to your shame if you stray.

b. Celebrate your adoption, your inheritance, and your privileges in Jesus through his life, death, burial and resurrection, or you will forget is love and wander away!

c. Sometimes God has to replace shepherds, (religious or national) who no longer have the interest of his sheep at heart and who care nothing of the Lord's honor. Pray this might take place. The church badly needs servant shepherds. The church needs to remove bad shepherds. Sifting is a good thing.

Jeremiah 3:15 "And **I will give you shepherds according to My heart,** who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

d. Don't be surprised when God sends judgments on the church. His honor is at stake.

Jonah 2:8 "Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy.

Conclusion:

The bride and the Lord lived in faithfulness with each other but the **bride was deceived by the ordinary things** and **took her eyes off of the Lord** and **ran after other gods**, that were not gods at all! So the bride was reminded of God's faithfulness in the past and at the present and how shameful it was for her to stray from a loving Husband.

Brothers and sisters in the Lord:

1. What a tragedy! The church has strayed far from her Savior today. The tragedy is greater because many don't even recognize the church has strayed. But I hope you recognize it and are ready to fight for her and will challenge her to repent.

Remember, it doesn't matter how far the church has strayed from God, he is always willing to receive her back. *1 Samuel 12:20 "Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not*

fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart.””

2. This tragedy starts with personal sins. Have you strayed after other gods? Are you attached to shiny things of this world? Don't stay there. Those gods will not satisfy you in the long run. Turn to the one who really cares about your mind, body and soul, and repent. Then pull others who are still there!

3. Who would love his church more? The one who rescued her, cleaned her up, married her, gave her a new heart, record, and life, and the one who will preserve her forever! Fight for his honor today!

Finally: God hates imposters in his church. But if you want to make peace with God and be adopted as part of his bride, ask him. He will adopt you if you claim Jesus as your covenant keeper- as the one who died for your sins.