

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing Part V: God's Instructive Illustrations Of Judah's Waywardness (Jeremiah 2:20-25)

I. Introduction

- A. The apostasy in Judah that God punished by sending the nation into Babylonian Captivity was not a simple collection of sins that sprung up overnight, but a series of wrongs that grew over time into shocking evil.
- B. God described Judah's apostasy in four vivid illustrations in Jeremiah 2:20-25, and we view them for our instruction and warning that we might intercept developing evil in us through God's grace (as follows):

II. God's Instructive Illustrations Of Judah's Waywardness, Jeremiah 2:20-25.

- A. Judah had first broken off her yoke like an animal would break its yoke, acting independent of God, Jer. 2:20:
 - 1. When an animal breaks its bonds or yoke, it no longer serves its master, but goes its own independent way.
 - 2. Judah had similarly long before Jeremiah's time decided to function independent of God's Word, to break her yoke in direct opposition to the warnings of Moses in Deuteronomy 5:28-33 that she heed God's Word.
- B. Judah had also been planted of God like a choice vine of good stock to produce quality deeds of righteousness only to see her produce corrupt, wild produce of artificial righteousness and outright sins, Jeremiah 2:21:
 - 1. Following the decision to act independently of the Lord's leading in His written Scriptures, the people of Judah had produced works that were unrighteous like a vine that produces wild, bitter grapes, Jer. 2:21.
 - 2. God had given Judah every opportunity to produce true righteousness, desirable fruit like a choice vine of good stock, but the initial decision to function independently of Scripture had led to spiritual darkness like Isaiah 8:20 later describes, and spiritual darkness led Judah to produce sins almost unknowingly.
- C. Judah's sin had eventually left an indelible stain that could not be removed, Jeremiah 2:22:
 - 1. The resulting sin that Judah had produced could not be washed off, it could not be removed from God's viewpoint even by the use of lye, a strong mineral alkali or soap, a strong vegetable alkali, Jeremiah 2:22; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1133.
 - 2. Thus, sin that is produced by one who has functioned independently of God's Word to where he walks in darkness is so noticeable by God and intolerant to Him that nothing man can do can alleviate the tension it produces in the view of a holy God, leading to inescapable divine punishment!
- D. Judah's sin had led to expressions of uncontrolled, sensual lust like that of a wild animal in heat, Jer. 2:23-25:
 - 1. Much like a swift female camel in heat that would run to and fro looking for a mate or a wild donkey in the wilderness that sniffed about in the wind while in heat, sexually craving a mate so that any male donkey that pursued her need not tire itself to find her at her mating time (Jer. 2:23-24), the people of Judah had eagerly given themselves to fulfilling their lusts in following after false, foreign gods, Jer. 2:25.
 - 2. Pagan Baal worship in particular involved gross indulgence in sexual lusts (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., v. One, p. 431-433; Merrill F. Unger, Archaeology and the Old Testament, 1973, p. 172-173), and this lust coupled with a lust for false gods took control of the people of Judah because all the other restraints had long before been removed, turning the idolatry Judah had adopted into a form of sadistic addiction!

Lesson: *Judah's apostasy developed over time in stages: (1) the people first broke off their yoke of allegiance to God's Word like an animal that breaks its yoke, deciding to function independently of the Lord without His guidelines and corrective benefits. (2) That led Judah's people to walk in darkness (Isaiah 8:20) to where they produced unrighteous deeds, (3) works that were so wicked that the stain of the sin involved was indelibly fixed so that no man could appease the Lord's wrath. (4) Finally, Judah's wickedness led her to become addicted to the most lewd forms of idolatry, and the people of Judah eagerly gave themselves to idolatry as addicts much like a wild animal in heat gives itself completely to fulfilling its sexual desires.*

Application: *To avoid the sin of apostasy in departing from the Lord, may we watch that (1) we NOT begin to go down that road by simply functioning independently of the direction that God in His written Word provides us, for unless we are attending to that spiritual compass, we walk in total darkness, Isaiah 8:20. (2) If we have functioned independently of the Word and produced acts that we realize are sinful acts upon checking the Word, may we immediately confess them to the Lord as we are headed down the road of apostasy! (3) If our sin reaches the level of indelible stain where God must judge it, may we repent lest the sin get control of us further and (4) make us addicted to sinning in unbridled lust, what can only lead to a sadistic, tragic end!*