

Life-Study of Jeremiah Review

The Intrinsic Content of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 2:13 says, “*My people have committed two evils: / They have forsaken Me, / The fountain of living waters, / To hew out for themselves cisterns, / Broken cisterns, / Which hold no water.*” God’s intention in His economy is to be the **fountain**, the **source, of living waters** to satisfy His chosen people for their enjoyment. The goal of this enjoyment is to produce the church as God’s increase, God’s enlargement, to be God’s fullness for His expression. This is the heart’s desire, the good pleasure, of God in His economy.

In Jeremiah 2:13 we see not only something positive—the fountain of living waters—but also something negative—the children of Israel’s forsaking this fountain to **hew out for themselves broken cisterns, which hold no water**. This negative thing indicates that Israel, like Adam in Genesis 3, had become fallen. Adam fell by forsaking the tree of life and turning to another tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Israel fell by forsaking God as the fountain of living waters and turning to a source other than God. This source is signified by the cisterns, which Israel labored to hew out for themselves. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 3*)

Jeremiah's Call and Commission

In His commission Jeremiah was given to see two visions. The first vision was of the rod of an almond tree. “*Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, What do you see, Jeremiah? And I said, I see the rod of an almond tree. And Jehovah said to me, You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it*” (vv. 11-12). The Hebrew word for watch is the root of the word for almond. Here the **rod of an almond tree signifies that God was watching over His word (the word of punishment) to perform it**.

The second vision given to Jeremiah to see was of the boiling pot facing away from the north. “*Then the word of Jehovah came to me a second time, saying, What do you see? And I said, I see a boiling pot, and it is facing away from the north. And Jehovah said to me, Out of the north evil will be let loose upon all the inhabitants of the land*” (Jer. 1:13-14). Here the word **north** refers especially to **Babylon**, and the word **evil** refers not to sinful things but to calamities. Thus, the **boiling pot facing away from the north** signifies that **out of the north calamities would be let loose upon all the inhabitants of the land of Israel**. Prior to this time, the calamities had been restricted. But now God will call all the families from the kingdoms of the earth, and they will come and set each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem and against all its walls round about and against all the cities of Judah. In this way Jehovah will **utter His judgment** on Israel concerning all their wickedness—their **forsaking Him, offering sacrifices to other gods, and worshipping the work of their own hands**. Because of all these things, God was coming in to punish Israel. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 5*)

JEHOVAH AS THE POTTER AND ISRAEL AS THE POTTERY

As the **Potter** our God has the **absolute right over us**. Regarding us, He has the right to do whatever He likes. This thought is found not only in Jeremiah 18 through 20 but also in Romans 9. I believe that Paul was considering these chapters of Jeremiah as he was writing Romans 9 concerning God’s sovereignty in His selection. In verse 21 he asks, “*Does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?*” God, the Potter, certainly has such **authority**. His selection is according to His absolute right. He may choose one vessel and reject another. He has the full right to do anything in any way to His pottery. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 18*)

Jehovah Raising Up to David a Righteous Shoot (Christ), Who Will Reign as King and Act Prudently and Will Execute Judgment and Righteousness in the Holy Land

A shoot is a **new, fresh sprout of a tree**, especially a sprout of a tree that has been cut down. Suppose a tree has been cut down to the ground and only a stump remains. After a while a new sprout springs out of this stump. This sprout is a shoot. As the **Shoot of David, Christ** is a new sprout from the stump of David. The royal family of David was like a large tree, but because of the apostasy of Solomon and his descendants, that tree was cut down, mainly by Nebuchadnezzar, leaving only a stump in the earth. When Christ was born, a new, fresh sprout came out of this stump.

At Jeremiah's time there was **no righteousness** among God's people. But Jeremiah prophesied that **Christ would come as a Shoot who is Jehovah Himself to be the righteousness of God's chosen people**. Thus, while God was condemning, punishing, and chastising His people, He intended to be incarnated as a Shoot unto David so that He could be His people's righteousness. Based on Christ's coming as Jehovah to be their righteousness, the evil race of Israel can be restored. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 19*)

Jeremiah's Vision of Two Baskets of Figs

In chapter twenty-four Jeremiah received a vision of two baskets of figs. The fig tree is the national symbol of Israel. In the sight of God, the **people of Israel are a fig tree**. The fig tree cursed by the Lord Jesus was full of leaves but was fruitless, signifying that at that time the nation of Israel was **full of outward show but had nothing that could satisfy God**. Hence, He cursed the fruitless fig tree. "One basket had very good figs, like first ripe figs" (v. 2a). This basket of **good figs** signifies those Israelites whom the God of Israel **had sent from the holy land to the land of the Chaldeans**.

"The other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten because of their rottenness" (Jeremiah 24L2b). This basket of figs signifies Zedekiah, the king of Judah, his princes, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remained in the holy land and those who dwelt in the land of Egypt. Those who were living in Egypt were those who had escaped for security from the holy land to Egypt. Jehovah said that He would make them a **terror to all the kingdoms of the earth for evil, to be a reproach, a proverb, a byword, and a curse in all the places where He would drive them**. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 22*)

The Principle of Being One with God as Revealed in the Book of Jeremiah

The book of Jeremiah was not written according to the historical sequence, but this book surely has a spiritual sequence. First, Jeremiah shows us the **basic sins of God's people**—forsaking God and hewing out their own cisterns. Then the **human heart** is gradually exposed as being **deceitful and incurable**. We are wicked and hopeless, having a fallen nature that cannot change. In order to be one with God, we need Christ as the **Shoot of David** to be our redemption and justification. This ushers the Triune God into us to be our life, our **inner life law**, our **capacity**, and **our everything**. This is the **new covenant**. In the new covenant, we do not do anything. Rather, we are simply one with God to let Him write Himself into us as the law of life. This law of life implies the Triune God with the highest capacity for our function. God lives in us and has the freedom, in matters great and small, to dispense Himself into our being to carry out His economy. This dispensing will bring in the **restoration of all things and will consummate in the New Jerusalem** in the new heaven and new earth. The New Jerusalem is the consummation of the economy of God accomplished by His eternal dispensing. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 32*)

Babylon—the Beginning and the Ending of Human Government

Jeremiah 50-51 speak concerning Jehovah's punishment and judgment upon Babylon. **Babylon** typifies the **world**, both physically and spiritually, that **worships idols**, **exalts men**, and **opposes God to the uttermost**, all of which was or will be **utterly destroyed by God**. Jeremiah 50 declares that Babylon is captured, that Bel (the chief Babylonian idol) is **put to shame**, that Merodach (a Babylonian idol) is **shattered**, that her images are **put to shame**, and that her idols are **dismayed**.

According to the Bible, the human government on earth is, **in the eyes of God, altogether Babylonian from beginning to end**. At the end of the Bible, Babylon is mentioned again in its religious and material aspects. In Revelation Babylon does not refer literally to the place of ancient Babel but to the city of Rome. This indicates that, from God's point of view, Rome is the continuation, consummation, and conclusion of Babylon. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 37*)

The Foundation of the New Covenant, the Covenant of Life, in the Book of Jeremiah

The Bible shows us that the desire of God's heart is to come into man as life and to be one with man. God made eight covenants with man, but He counts only two covenants: the **covenant made with Israel** through Moses and the new covenant, the **covenant of life**, which is considered the second covenant. The **content** of the new covenant is the **Triune God**, who has been processed and consummated to become everything to God's chosen people. Today there are many who have believed in Christ, who have received the blessing of the new covenant, and yet are not aware of the content of the new covenant and what it accomplishes and produces. May we all see the new covenant and be fully occupied with it.

In chapter thirty-one Jeremiah laid the foundation of the new covenant, prophesying that God will put His law **within us**; that He will **write His law into our mind** that we may know God; that God will be our God and we will be His people; that we will not need anyone to teach us, because we will all have a teaching life within us; and that God will forgive our iniquity and remember our sins no longer. In the new covenant **we enjoy the inner law of life**. This law of life brings us God's person and also the divine capacity of the divine life, which can accomplish everything for God to fulfill His economy. By the inner law of life we have the **capacity to know God**, to **live God**, and even to be **constituted with God** in His life and nature so that we may be His corporate expression. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah, chapter 39*)