

Jeremiah 2:1–37 — “Broken Cisterns and the God of Living Water”

1) The Lord Remembers First Love (Jeremiah 2:1–3)

“Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘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.
Israel was holiness to the Lord,
The firstfruits of His increase.”” — Jeremiah 2:1–3*

God recalls the early days when Israel followed Him with a bridal devotion. The relationship was intimate, distinct, and protected. Love, not mere duty, marked their steps.

Application: Remember and rekindle your “first love” for Jesus—set aside time to thank, sing, and obey from the heart, not just from habit.

2) “What Did I Do?” — The Divine Question (Jeremiah 2:4–8)

“Thus says the Lord: ‘What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me...? They did not say, “Where is the Lord who brought us up out of the land of Egypt...?” I brought you into a bountiful country... But when you entered, you defiled My land... 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...”” — Jeremiah 2:4–8

God asks a piercing question: What fault did you find in Me? Leaders failed—priests did not seek the Lord, teachers did not truly know Him, rulers rebelled, and prophets spoke by false gods. When leaders drift, people often follow.

Application: Never let religious activity replace a living relationship. Test all teaching by Scripture and look for genuine devotion to Christ, not just polished words.

3) Two Evils and the Tragedy of Trade-Offs (Jeremiah 2:9–13)

*“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters,
And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.” — Jeremiah 2:13*

God’s charge is double: abandoning Him (the spring) and building substitutes (leaky reservoirs). Cisterns can store runoff at best; they cannot give life. Any god-substitute—success, pleasure, spirituality without repentance—leaves the soul thirsty.

Application: Identify your cisterns. What do you run to for comfort, identity, or control? Bring them to Jesus and drink again from the Fountain of living waters.

4) Reaping What Was Sown (Jeremiah 2:14–19)

“Is Israel a servant? Is he a homeborn slave? Why is he plundered?... Also the people of Noph and Tahpanhes have broken the crown of your head. Have you not brought this on yourself, in that you have forsaken the Lord your God...? Your own wickedness will correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you.” — Jeremiah 2:14–19

Political schemes (Assyria, Egypt) could not save a people who had abandoned the Lord. Consequences arrive as teachers: *“Your own wickedness will correct you.”*

Application: When God allows consequences, receive them as an alarm clock, not a dead end. Turn quickly; do not double down on the same choices.

5) From Noble Vine to Degenerate Plant (Jeremiah 2:20–22)

“For of old I have broken your yoke and burst your bonds; and you said, ‘I will not transgress,’ when on every high hill and under every green tree you lay down, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant of an alien vine? For though you wash yourself with lye, and use much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before Me,” says the Lord God.” — Jeremiah 2:20–22

Israel’s calling was noble, but idolatry made the vine wild. External scrubbing (religious cosmetics) cannot cleanse internal rebellion.

Application: Let God deal with roots, not just leaves. Invite the Spirit to expose patterns beneath behaviors and to create truth in the inward parts.

6) Restless Desire and Stubborn Denial (Jeremiah 2:23–28)

“How can you say, ‘I am not polluted...’? See your way in the valley... A wild donkey used to the wilderness, that sniffs at the wind in her desire... Withhold your foot from being unshod, and your throat from thirst; but you said, ‘There is no hope. No! For I have loved aliens, and after them I will go.’... Saying to a tree, ‘You are my father,’ and to a stone, ‘You gave birth to me.’... But in the time of their trouble they will say, ‘Arise and save us.’ But where are your gods that you have made for yourselves?” — Jeremiah 2:23–28

Jeremiah pictures a people driven by impulse, then insisting, *“I’m fine.”* Idols are eager lovers but cruel masters; they cannot save in crisis. God asks, *“Where are your gods now?”*

Application: Don’t call on God only in emergencies. Return now, while your heart can still be softened and your habits reshaped by grace.

7) Forgotten God, Forgotten Guilt (Jeremiah 2:29–35)

“Why will you plead with Me? You all have transgressed against Me... Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number... Also on your skirts is found the blood of the lives of the poor innocents... Yet you say, ‘Because I am

innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me?... 'I will plead My case against you, because you say, "I have not sinned."'" — Jeremiah 2:29–35

Forgetting God leads to moral blindness. Even obvious sins are denied. The Lord confronts not to crush, but to call back to truth.

Application: Confession opens the door that denial keeps shut. Pray, “Search me, O God,” and agree with what He shows.

8) Misplaced Alliances and Shattered Confidence (Jeremiah 2:36–37)

“Why do you gad about so much to change your way? Also you shall be ashamed of Egypt as you were ashamed of Assyria. Indeed you will go forth from him with your hands on your head; for the Lord has rejected your trusted allies, and you will not prosper by them.” — Jeremiah 2:36–37

Strategic pivots cannot fix spiritual problems. When confidence is in anything but the Lord, shame follows.

Application: Anchor your hope in God’s character and promises, not in rescue plans that ignore repentance.

Practical Application

1. Return to the Fountain: Schedule daily unhurried time with Jesus—Scripture, prayer, and honest worship (Jeremiah 2:13).
2. Name Your Cisterns: Write down the substitutes you run to; renounce them and ask the Spirit to break their hold.
3. Practice Confession: Trade “I have not sinned” (Jeremiah 2:35) for “Search me, O God” (Psalm 139:23–24).
4. Lead by Example: If you teach, parent, or pastor, make seeking the Lord visible in your life (Jeremiah 2:8).
5. Accept God’s Wake-Up Calls: Let consequences drive you to repentance, not to harder running (Jeremiah 2:19).

A Challenge to Believers

- From nostalgia to nearness: Do not merely remember first love—return to it.
- From denial to truth: Stop arguing your innocence; agree with God and be healed.
- From idols to intimacy: Smash the cisterns; drink deeply of Christ until lesser loves lose their pull.
- From crisis-only prayers to daily communion: Seek the Lord in ordinary days so you will know Him in troubled ones.

Commit to seven days of “Fountain first”: begin every day by reading one psalm, confessing one sin, and thanking God for one grace.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

God’s heart toward you is not scorn but invitation. He says, “*I am the fountain of living waters*” (Jeremiah 2:13). Sin leaves us thirsty and far from God, but Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again so we could be forgiven, reconciled to God, and filled with His Spirit.

“Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” — Romans 10:13

If you are ready to turn from sin and trust Jesus, pray from your heart:

*“Lord Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God.
You died for my sins and rose again.
I have chased broken cisterns; I return to You, the living water.
Please forgive me, cleanse me, and make me new.
I receive You as my Savior and my Lord.
Teach me to walk with You each day.
In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

If you prayed sincerely, tell a mature believer, be baptized in water, and join a Bible-teaching ekklesia and study group. The Fountain is open—come and live.