

## Jeremiah 3

9-18-97

### 1. Intro:

- 1.1. Story explaining Judah - A little boy was overheard talking to himself as he strutted through the backyard, baseball cap in place, toting ball and bat. He was heard to say, "**I'm the greatest hitter in the world.**" Then he tossed the ball into the air, swung at it and missed. "**Strike one!**" Undaunted he picked up the ball, threw it into the air and said to himself, "I'm the greatest baseball hitter ever," and he swung at the ball again. And again he missed. "**Strike two!**" He paused a moment to examine his bat and ball carefully. Then a third time he threw the ball into the air. "I'm the greatest hitter who ever lived," he said. He swung the bat hard again, missed a third time. He cried out, "**Wow! Strike three! What a pitcher! I'm the greatest pitcher in the world!**"
  - 1.1.1. They just didn't get it!
- 1.2. Sometimes God has to **shake** people out of their complacency!  
Sometimes He has to **take** them out...just with His great Grace!
  - 1.2.1. We'll see which was He does.

### 2. THE QUESTION! (1-5)

- 2.1. God uses the analogy of the **Marriage** again, but now introduces the subject of **Divorce** & administers the use of a stun gun from the **Law Book!**... Deut.24:1-4.
  - 2.1.1. Maybe this is from the scroll that Hilkiyah the high priest had just found. (2 Kings22)
  - 2.1.2. Dismissing a wife & then taking her back when the next man had finished w/her would degrade her, the marriage institution, & ultimately society!
  - 2.1.3. "**But you**"(1b) have gone way beyond that!
- 2.2. I've seen marriages healed where **adultery** was involved.  
I've seen healing when it happened **a few times**.  
It's rare, but I've even seen forgiveness for **multiple** affairs.

- 2.2.1. The guilty spouse loses all rights to the marriage as they have broken their covenant & contract. They can not say, “you must take me back!”
- 2.3. Here is an instance where the spouse not only had affairs, but played the whore w/**many** lovers.
  - 2.3.1. They were worse than the Harlots because the Harlots at least **waited for** their lovers to come to them! - Not Israel, they **went after** them.
  - 2.3.2. We have no claim on such a God, we can only **accept** His renewing **Grace!**
    - 2.3.2.1. God doesn't reject them but patiently awaits their return!
    - 2.3.2.2. He even calls for a drought (3) to get them to call for help.

### 3. THE COMPARISON! (6-11)

- 3.1. Here comes God's **2<sup>nd</sup> Sting** for Judah (1<sup>st</sup> was in ch.2).
- 3.2. This is the story of **2 sisters**, both of which were unfaithful.
  - 3.2.1. One had the opportunity to learn from the other sisters mistakes...but chose to follow her same path.
  - 3.2.2. I know I didn't learn from my older brothers mistakes, but followed in their footsteps in foolish things.
  - 3.2.3. **Israel** had turned her back on God & paid the price. **Judah** Saw it & followed suit..."*Judah sinned w/her eyes opened!*"
- 3.3. **vs.6** - "**Backsliding**" - **Read** 101 Hymns (pg.52) Robert Robinson.
  - 3.3.1. When we hear of believers "**suddenly**" falling into open sin, in most cases a **gradual slide** preceded the sudden fall!
  - 3.3.2. **Story** - A man would always end his prayers, "**And, Lord, take the cobwebs out of my heart!**" Finally one night another member stood & prayed, "And Lord, while your at it...**KILL THE SPIDER!**"
- 3.4. **vs.10** - "**Pretense**" - Their talk (w/no action)added hypocrisy to infidelity!

- 3.4.1. Remember, the people cooperated w/king Josiah's reform outwardly putting away their Idols, but it was only in **Pretense!**
- 3.4.2. To make matters worse Judah put on a sanctimonious show of repentance & reform.
- 3.4.3. "There's nothing harder than preaching repentance to a group who think they have!"
  - 3.4.3.1. "There is nothing like a good dose of "Religion" to **inoculate** people against the radical claims of God. (Barclay)
  - 3.4.3.2. **Q:** Is it hard or easy to be **called** a Christian today in Amer.? (very easy)
  - 3.4.3.3. **Q:** Is it hard or easy to **Be** a Christian today in Amer.?
  - 3.4.3.4. "True Christian faith has never been popular, & the road that leads to life is still narrow & lonely."
  - 3.4.3.5. **Q:** Do you tell your kids the truth about this, or try to protect them from it?
- 3.5. **vs.11** - This says that a worse judgment is on playing make believe, than on out right defection!
  - 3.5.1. So, Judah's verdict..."More Guilty!"
  - 3.5.2. Don't play games with God...Hot or Cold; Black/white; Yes/no.
  - 3.5.3. "**Follow** Him, **Flee** from Him, but don't try to **Fool** Him!"

#### 4. THE INVITATION! (12-18)

- 4.1. God now presses the point by a change of tone (judgment to Grace).
- 4.2. **vs.12** - Here God offers a welcome home for converts from "Israel".  
Note: Judah isn't mentioned until vs.18 where they are included in the promise to return inferring their coming from captivity.
- 4.3. **vs.15-17** - "**Ark**" - **Q:** what did the "Ark of the Cov." Represent?  
{God's presence w/ His people}
  - 4.3.1. The people must have been **shocked** when Jeremiah said there'd come a day when the ark of the Covenant Would be gone, forgotten, & never missed!

- 4.3.2. A day would come when the Temple would not be needed!  
**Jn.4:21** “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.”  
 4.3.2.1. There would be a NEW Cov. That would change Hearts!
- 4.3.3. **Meaning?** When God’s people are ideally governed(15) then his earthly throne will be no longer a mere **ark** but an **entire city**(17) Jerusalem!
- 4.3.4. **Interesting:** If this was important to share w/Israel 600 years B.C., it must be doubly relevant to us who have reached its foothill!  
 (Derek Kidner)
- 4.3.5. Jeremiah saw beyond external religion & saw that God was seeking devotion of the heart!
- 4.3.6. **Remember:** “We shall travel all the better for keeping the journey’s end in view!”

## 5. THE RESPONSE! (19-25)

- 5.1. **vs.22** - Key verse!
- 5.2. **2 lessons to learned:** [1] God is not to be shared!  
 [2] His laws are not rubber laws that are made to bend!
- 5.3. **vs.22** - “*Heal*” - “Like an infection entering the bloodstream, **Sin** secretly gets into the system of the “inner man” & goes to work weakening & destroying.” (www)  
 5.3.1. It gradually effect the **whole** system!
- 5.4. **vs.24** - Often people would complain about what they must Sacrifice to the Lord. - Yet, they would have to sacrifice their **produce**, their **flocks**, their **herds**, & even their **Children** to these Idols!