

**JEREMIAH**

Jeremiah 7:1-15 – Marriage, Not Just a Wedding

2 Kings 21:9 – “Manasseh seduced them to do evil more than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.”

- Jeremiah was born during the last decade of Manasseh's rule.
- Fifty-five years of Manasseh's rule brought faith in the one true and living God almost to oblivion.

- Manasseh's son, Amon, succeeded him, but he only continued his father's ways.
- Amon was murdered, and his eight-year-old son, Josiah, succeeded him.

- In one of his first major acts, Josiah instructs the Temple to be cleaned and repaired.
- A priest named Hilkiah found the book of Deuteronomy in the Temple.

- Josiah hears the Word of God, and decides to obey it.
- It's in this context that Jeremiah began his preaching ministry

Jeremiah 3:2 - “Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see; Where have you not been violated? By the roads you have sat for them Like an Arab in the desert, And you have polluted a land With your harlotry and with your wickedness.”

Jeremiah 4:3 - "Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns."

Jeremiah 4:30 - And you, O desolate one, what will you do? Although you dress in scarlet, Although you decorate yourself with ornaments of gold, Although you enlarge your eyes with paint, In vain you make yourself beautiful. Your lovers despise you; They seek your life.”

Jeremiah 6:16 – “Thus says the LORD, ‘Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you will find rest for your souls.’”

- From the outside looking in, Josiah's reform seems accomplished .
- But getting rid of evil and cleaning up our lives does not make people good, and it didn't take Jeremiah long to realize that the reform had only been skin deep and surface level.

- So, we come to Jeremiah 7 and find Jeremiah standing in the gates of the Jerusalem temple during one of the festivals, preaching what must have seemed a very odd sermon.

- The reforms were necessary and wonderful, but not nearly enough, because life with God is not just a matter of doing the right thing, saying the right thing, or being in the right places, it is a matter of life and love, of grace and obedience, faith and repentance, in Christ through the Spirit.

- Shiloh was one of the most famous holy places in Israel's history, located in the center of the country, but at this point Shiloh was a few piles of rocks and field of weeds, as everyone knew.

- Shiloh was a great beginning, it was the right place, the right words were spoken there
- But when the right place no longer launched a walk with God, and the right words no longer expressed love for God, Shiloh was destroyed
- A life with God in Christ is a marriage, not a wedding.