

/We will now begin the fourth lecture on Jeremiah. /The title of chapter 2 is, "The First Love." /First, Israel forsakes the first love. /Verses 1-3. /Second, the Lord rebukes Israel. /Verses 4-12. /Third, the two sins and the punishments. /Verses 13-19.

/Fourth, a good vine and its wicked fruit. /Verses 20-25. /Fifth, idols cannot save us. /Verses 26-28. /Sixth, reliance on anything other than God brings shame. /Verses 29-37.

/Read verses 1-2. /The word of the LORD came to me: "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: "I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.

/It says that the people of Judah lost the devotion and love of their youth. /The people of Judah and Jerusalem lost the first love, and God reminded them of it.

/Here, "your youth" and "as a bride" refer to the time when the Israelites left Egypt and lived in the wilderness. /God led the Israelites with pillars of cloud and fire when they were in the wilderness. /They walked with God.

/God gave them the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. /God gave them manna to eat. /God gave them water from rock. /In those times, the Israelites lived in God's love. /They relied solely on God and loved God only.

/This was the Israelites' first love. /However, now, the Israelites lost all that love.

/The church of Ephesus lost their first love and was rebuked by God. /Revelation 2:1-7 /God said that he would remove the lampstand from its place if the church did not repent and find again their first love. /To remove the lampstand means that God would take away his spiritual authority and work of life.

/Then only the form and rituals would remain. /We too must find the first love we had when we first believed in Jesus. /When we first received grace, how much did we love God, how much did we pray, and how much did we read the Bible? /2 Timothy 1:6

/The members of the early church served God with the first love. /They served God diligently in the midst of severe persecutions and sufferings. /Acts 2:42-47 /The first love of the early church first transcended materials.

/Second, the first love transcended hardships and troubles. /Colossians 1:24 /Third, the first love transcended life. /1 Thessalonians 2:8 /We too must restore this first love.

/Verse 3. /Israel was holy to the LORD, the firstfruits of his harvest; all who devoured her were held guilty, and disaster overtook them," declares the LORD.

/This was when the Israelites first left Egypt. /This was when they crossed through the wilderness. /They left with the first love. /The Israelites were God's holy people. /They

were the firstfruits.

/The firstfruits in the Old Testament times were offered to God. /Exodus 23:19 /They belonged to God and were God's possessions. /They were most beautiful and most precious. /They had God's special protection. /Exodus 19:5 /Isaiah 43:3

/We believers were called "holy people." /For example, Sundays are called, "the holy day." /Those who work for God are called to be in "holy professions." /The church podium or church items were called "holy utensils."

/In this way, the things that are of God are holy. /However, the people of Israel abandoned their first love, and therefore, abandoned the blessed place.

/When anyone attempted to harm these holy people, God stopped them. /God punished the Amalekites. /Exodus 17:8-16

/Verses 4-6. /Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, all you clans of the house of Israel. This is what the LORD says: "What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. They did not ask, 'Where is the LORD, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness, through a land of deserts and rifts, a land of drought and darkness, a land where no one travels and no one lives?'

/God led the Israelites through Egypt and through the wilderness with miracles and with his special love. /God allowed them to enter the land of Canaan. /God allowed them to eat rich produce.

/Still, the Israelites went against God as if he were unjust. /They defied God's Word, served idols, and abandoned God. /They forgot that God helped them in the past.

/Verse 7. /I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable.

/God allowed the Israelites to eat rich produce. /However, the Israelites made and served idols instead.

/Verse 8. /The priests did not ask, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied by Baal, following worthless idols.

/The priests had the duty to seek the Lord and lead the people to God. /Yet, they became corrupt, did not seek the Lord, and did not lead the people to God.

/Here, "Those who deal with the law" were those who judged by the Law of Moses. /They judged by the Law of Moses. /However, they did not judge with fairness. /They judged according to what benefitted them. /Micah 3:11

/Believers must not act according to their greed or by what it is that benefits them. /They must act with fairness according to God's Word. /Here, "the leaders" can be translated into "shepherds." /They were the Israelites' ruler and leader.

/However, they did not preach God's Word. /Instead, they prophesied by the name of Baal. /Then they followed worthless idols.

/Verse 9. /"Therefore I bring charges against you again," declares the LORD. "And I will bring charges against your children's children.

/When believers walk down the wrong road, God does not let them be. /God quarrels with them and when they do not repent, he punishes them. /Verse 19.

/Verse 10. /Cross over to the coasts of Kittim and look, send to Kedar and observe closely; see if there has ever been anything like this:

/Verses 11-12. /Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols. Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD.

/The coasts of Kittim are the islands in the Mediterranean. /They are known as the islands of Cyprus today. /This also refers to the coastal regions of Asia Minor. /God told them to go observe nations in these far regions. /God asked, "Has a nation ever changed its gods?"

/The people on the islands did not abandon their gods nor did they serve other gods. /However, the Israelites abandoned the living God, whom their forefathers served. /The Israelites also exchanged God of glory for worthless idols.

/This was absurd. /This was something that all of creation would be appalled by. /It says, "Be appalled at this, O heavens." /The stars in the sky would be shocked at this. /Isaiah 1:2

/Here, "Kedar" is a nomadic tribe in the eastern Arabian Desert. /Genesis 25:13 /Ezekiel 27:21

/The foreign nations did not change their gods, even though they served false gods, and they continuously served their gods. /However, the Israelites abandoned the true God, even though they served a true God, and chased after false idols. /This was foolish. /This was appalling.

/Verse 13. /"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

/The Israelites committed two sins. /First, they forsook God, the spring of living water.

/Second, they dug their own cisterns. /First, they forsook God, the spring of living water. /God is the source of living water. /John 4:14 /Isaiah 55:1

/It tells all who are thirsty to come to the Lord. /The Israelites did not completely forsake God, but served God with religious ritualism. /Isaiah 29:13 /They said they served God, but their hearts had left God.

/They did not obey God's Word. /Titus 1:16 /When we forsake God, who is the living water, our spirits become dry. /The works of life will cease. /Our spirits must drink the living water that the Lord gives us. /Jeremiah 17:5-8

/There must be works of life. /Ezekiel 47:1-9 /The living waters flows from the threshold of God's temple. /Ezekiel 47:1-9 /The river of living water flows from the threshold of the temple.

/The living water flows from God, who is the source of living water. /There is the living water and the tree of life in heaven. /Nothing in this world can give us living water. /Jesus alone is our source of living water and He alone can give us the living water.

/Nothing in this world can give us true happiness. /Next, second, it says that they dug their own cisterns. /This means that they made something that would help them find happiness and find their own way of living.

/These are things that they made after forsaking God. /Inheritance, businesses and groups, idols, and powers are all broken cisterns. /Those who wanted to live for money dug their own cisterns. /Those who wanted to rely on the powers of the world dug cisterns of power.

/Haggai 1:4-6. /Therefore, there is no true happiness even if one lives in a good house, unless he builds a temple. /Therefore, it is the same as putting money in a money bag with a hole in it. /This is the broken cisterns. /Therefore, we must rely on God who is the source of living water and true life.

/Verse 14. /Is Israel a servant, a slave by birth? Why then has he become plunder?

/Verses 15-17. /Lions have roared; they have growled at him. They have laid waste his land; his towns are burned and deserted. Also, the men of Memphis and Tahpanhes have shaved the crown of your head. Have you not brought this on yourselves by forsaking the LORD your God when he led you in the way?

/This means that the people of Judah will be taken captive to Babylon as a result of their sins. /The "slave by birth" refer to the descendants of servants. /Israel was originally a free people. /However, they would be taken captive to Babylon.

/The reason was because the people of Israel relied on their broken cisterns. /Here in verse 15, the "Lion" indicate the invading armies. /For example, they indicate the

Assyrian army and the Babylonian army. /“Memphis and Tahpanhes” are cities in Egypt.

/The cities in Egypt would come invade Israel. /The people of Judah sinned, and therefore, God would punish them through foreign nations. /This happened because the people of Judah forsook God.

/Verse 18. /Now why go to Egypt to drink water from the Shihor? And why go to Assyria to drink water from the River?

/The “Shihor” here is the Nile River. /Isaiah 23:3 /This symbolizes Egypt. /Next, “the River” refers to the Euphrates River. /This symbolizes the nation of Assyria. /The people of Israel relied on Egypt and Assyria.

/Today, believers chase after the world because it looks good. /Therefore, God will punish the believers.

/Verse 20. /“Long ago you broke off your yoke and tore off your bonds; you said, 'I will not serve you!' Indeed, on every high hill and under every spreading tree you lay down as a prostitute.

/The people of Israel broke off their yoke long ago. /They also tore off their bonds. /The “yoke” is the God-given commandments and calling. /The Israelites said that they would act however they wanted in the freedom of their flesh.

/In verse 20, it says, “on every high hill and under every spreading tree you lay down as a prostitute.” /This means that the people of Judah served idols on high hills and under green trees.

/Verses 21-22. /I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine? Although you wash yourself with soda and use an abundance of soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign LORD.

/God planted Israel. /He allowed them to enter the land of Canaan. /He also considered them choice vine. /However, they became corrupt vine. /They were bad fruit. /Isaiah 5:2

/God treated the Israelites valuably. /God gave them environments so that they could bear good fruit. /God poured his grace on them. /However, they relied on foreign nations. /They bore bad fruit.

/Next, it says, “Although you wash yourself with soda and use an abundance of soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me.” /This means that the sins of Israel are too great.

/Their sins cannot be washed away with soda or soap. /Their sins became too severe that it could not be washed away. /The sins of Israel became great.

/Verses 23-24. /"How can you say, 'I am not defiled; I have not run after the Baals'? See how you behaved in the valley; consider what you have done. You are a swift she-camel running here and there, a wild donkey accustomed to the desert, sniffing the wind in her craving-- in her heat who can restrain her? Any males that pursue her need not tire themselves; at mating time they will find her.

/The Israelites wandered in the valleys to serve idols. /This was as if a female camel ran around to find a male to mate with. /The Israelites ran around to serve idols.

/Today, believers run around and love things more than God. /Believers chase after the things of the world. /They chase after pleasures and greed. /They love power and themselves, and are selfish.

/Verse 25. /Do not run until your feet are bare and your throat is dry. But you said, 'It's no use! I love foreign gods, and I must go after them.'

/God gave Israel shoes to put on their feet. /God gave them living water to drink. /However, Israel turned away and ran away with love for foreign gods. /We must not forsake God for self-indulgence.

/Verse 26. /"As a thief is disgraced when he is caught, so the house of Israel is disgraced-- they, their kings and their officials, their priests and their prophets.

/The people of Israel forsook God and they would be disgraced.

/Verse 27. /They say to wood, 'You are my father,' and to stone, 'You gave me birth.' They have turned their backs to me and not their faces; yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!'

/The Israelites chased after idols when they were at peace. /However, in times of trouble, they called out to God, "Come and save us!" /However, God would not hear them, but let them be. /Proverbs 1:24-33

/When we do not rely on God and do not fear God, we will not be saved in times of trouble.

/Verse 28. /Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble! For you have as many gods as you have towns, O Judah.

/Foreign gods and idols cannot save us in times of trouble. /Even if the people of Judah served and relied on many idols, the idols could not save Judah. /Ezekiel 7:19

/Therefore, we must not store up silver and gold for ourselves. /The things of the world cannot help us when we are in trouble. /Therefore, we must serve and rely only on the true God.

/Verse 29. /"Why do you bring charges against me? You have all rebelled against me," declares the LORD.

/Verse 30. /"In vain I punished your people; they did not respond to correction. Your sword has devoured your prophets like a ravaging lion.

/Here, it speaks of the sins of Judah. /Their sword devoured their prophets like a ravaging lion. /Then the people of Judah said that they would not return to the Lord. /Proverbs 29:1 /Isaiah 49:20

/We must return to God. /We must carry the yoke that the Lord gives us. /We must obey God's Word of the Law. /We have freedom of spirit when we carry the yoke that God gives us. /There is true life and rest.

/Verse 32. /Does a maiden forget her jewelry, a bride her wedding ornaments? Yet my people have forgotten me, days without number.

/Maidens cannot forget her jewelry. /A bride cannot forget her wedding ornaments. /However, the daughters of God lost God. /The days of when they lost God was so long ago that the days cannot be counted.

/We must repent for losing God. /When we lose God, we lose everything.

/Verse 33. /How skilled you are at pursuing love! Even the worst of women can learn from your ways.

/The people of Judah used humanly ways to gain help and protection from foreign nations. /This signifies believers becoming friends with the world. /James 4:4 /It says, "Even the worst of women can learn from your ways."

/The people of Judah forsook God and acted in humanly ways, and the foreign nations modeled themselves after such ways. /When believers become corrupted, the unbelievers around them will become more evil. /If the church becomes corrupted, the world will become more corrupted.

/Therefore, we must have faith that goes upward. /Believers must carry out their calling as the salt and light of the world.

/Verse 34. /On your clothes men find the lifeblood of the innocent poor, though you did not catch them breaking in. Yet in spite of all this

/People called the poor. /The poor indicate believers who kept their faith. /The corrupted believers killed the true believers. /The clothes of the corrupted believers were stained with the blood of the dead. /This does not mean that the true believers were killed for robbery.

/The true believers and prophets preached God's Word as it was. /They rebuked the sins of the people of Judah. /Therefore, the corrupted believers killed the true prophets. /Therefore, in verse 35, God would judge the corrupted believers.

/The corrupted believers would say that they did nothing wrong. /They would say that they are without sin. /Therefore, God would judge them for the blood that they shed. /1 John 1:8-10 /Romans 3:10

/Verses 36-37. /Why do you go about so much, changing your ways? You will be disappointed by Egypt as you were by Assyria. You will also leave that place with your hands on your head, for the LORD has rejected those you trust; you will not be helped by them.

/The people of Judah did not rely on God, but ran around to rely on Assyria and Egypt. / However, they were abandoned by these nations, and they were humiliated. /Whatever believers rely on besides God becomes their idol.

/The idols will bring same to believers. /God removes the idols that believers rely on. /Isaiah 3:1-3 /Believers must seek God and obey his will.

/We must walk down the right path, and seek God's kingdom and his righteousness. /We must not rely on the powers of the world. /We must not rely on the world. /We must rely on God.

/Therefore, we believers must not rely on the things of the world, rely solely on God who is the source of all blessings, and God must become our life.

/Here we will conclude the fourth lecture on Jeremiah chapter 4. /Thank you.