

God Files for Divorce

Jeff Rogers / Empty Nesters Bible Study
Jeremiah 2

- God is immutable; He never changes. (Num 23:19; James 1:17)
 - **Numbers 23:19a**, *God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. . .*
 - **Malachi 3:6a**, *“For I the Lord do not change; . . .*
 - **Hebrews 13:8**, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*
 - **James 1:17**, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*
- “A god who is all love, all grace, all mercy, no sovereignty, no justice, no holiness, and no wrath is an idol.” — R.C. Sproul
- God is taking his people to court, divorce court. **Jeremiah 2:9**, *“Therefore I still contend {to maintain, assert, defend and argue for a side in a legal proceeding; to contest a lawsuit} with you, declares the Lord, and with your children’s children I will contend.”*

I. The Honeymoon (

- A. The Fond Remembrances (2:1-2)
 - 1. Remembrance of *devotion* – unbroken promises; unshakable loyalty; unceasing devotion; an unfailing kind of love, often used for God’s love. It is more than a legal contract, it is a love commitment of fidelity and adoration.
 - a) The devotion of your youth (2:2)
 - b) The devotion of your love (2:2)
 - c) The devotion of your trust (2:2) *“you followed me”*
 - 2. Devotion is more than obedience; God wants our hearts.
- B. The Joyful Relationship (2:3, 7a)
 - 1. Passion (3a)
 - 2. Protection (3b)
 - 3. Provision (7a)

II. The Grounds for Divorce (Jeremiah 2:4-7, 31)

- A. The Runaway Bride (Jeremiah 2:4-7, 2:31).
 - 1. God (the husband) did not forsake His Bride, the Bride forsook God (Jeremiah 2:5) (**Jeremiah 2:17**, *Have you not brought this upon yourself by forsaking the Lord your God, when he led you in the way?*)
 - a) The departure was a pursuit of *“worthlessness”* – idols. God’s people have been having affairs with *“worthless”* idols. This is the same word used in Ecclesiastes for *“vanity.”* In the end, it is futile, insubstantial, and absurd.
 - b) The departure was unprovoked. (Jeremiah 2:6-7).
- B. The Rebellious Shepherds (2:8)
 - 1. A holy calling does not make a holy man. The priests of Jeremiah’s day were handling the Scriptures, studying the Bible, and teaching God’s Word, but they did not know God himself (cf. John 5:39–40). Their ministry was a dead ritual rather than a living relationship.
 - a) **Jeremiah 2:8**, *The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’ Those who handle the law did not know me; the shepherds transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal and went after things that do not profit.*
 - b) **John 5:39–40**, *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.*

III. The Evidence

- A. Unholy Alliances (**Jeremiah 2:10–12**, *For cross to the coasts of Cyprus and see, or send to Kedar and examine with care; see if there has been such a thing. 11 Has a nation changed its gods, even though*

they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. **12** Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord,)

- B. Forsaken Provision (**Jeremiah 2:13**, *For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.*)
 - 1. Forsaken the spring of Living Water (John 4)
 - 2. Embraced their own works (broken cisterns)
- C. Broken Yoke – (**Jeremiah 2:20a** *“For long ago I broke your yoke and burst your bonds; but you said, ‘I will not serve. . . .’*)
 - 1. God had delivered Israel from the cruel bondage of Egypt and made them servants of his loving Lordship. **Matthew 11:28–30**, *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*”
 - 2. To break God’s yoke is to return to Egypt’s reign; for the believer to reject the Lordship of Christ is to return to the reign of Sin (Romans 6 & 7)
- D. Unfaithful Bride **Jeremiah 2:20**, . . . *Yes, on every high hill and under every green tree you bowed down like a whore.*
 - 1. God’s people were guilty of religious prostitution. **Jeremiah 2:33**, *How well you direct your course to seek love! So that even to wicked women you have taught your ways.*
 - 2. Grounds for divorce. **Matthew 5:32**, *But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*
- E. Corrupt Vine – **Jeremiah 2:21**, *Yet I planted you a choice vine, wholly of pure seed. How then have you turned degenerate and become a wild vine?* (cf. John 15:1-8)
- F. Indelible Stain - **Jeremiah 2:22**, *Though you wash yourself with lye and use much soap, the stain of your guilt is still before me, declares the Lord God.*
- G. Unpredictable Camel (**Jeremiah 2:23**, . . . *Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done— a restless young camel running here and there, (Indecisive, double-minded, uncommitted)*
- H. Donkey in Heat (**Jeremiah 2:24** *A wild donkey used to the wilderness, in her heat sniffing the wind! Who can restrain her lust?* (Unclean, Unsaved, Uncaring)
- I. Forgotten Dress - **Jeremiah 2:32**, *Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.* (Don’t forget we are dressed in His righteousness).

IV. The Defense

- A. Denial (**Jeremiah 2:23**, *How can you say, ‘I am not unclean, I have not gone after the Baals’?*
- B. Strange Loves (**Jeremiah 2:25**, *But you said, ‘It is hopeless, for I have loved foreigners, and after them I will go.’*
- C. False Hope **Jeremiah 2:35**, *You say, ‘I am innocent; surely his anger has turned from me.’ Behold, I will bring you to judgment for saying, ‘I have not sinned.’*

V. The Reconciliation

- A. Did God go through with the divorce? The grounds were established and He had every right.
- B. Yet we read, **Jeremiah 3:14**, *Return, O faithless children, declares the Lord; for I am your master; I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.*
- C. **Ephesians 5:25–27**, *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

D.

- The Word of the Lord in the Old Testament was/is perhaps more than we could ever imagine. The Word of the Lord was meant to be seen with the eyes and heard with the ears, and there are several examples of this in Scripture:
 - Abraham and the word of the Lord (Gen 15:1,17)
 - Samuel and the word of the Lord (1 Samuel 3:1, 4, 21)
 - Jeremiah and the word of the Lord (Jeremiah 1:4-5, 9)
 - **John 1:1–2, 14**, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

E.

- F. What verdict would God give on your life?
1. Do we forget God in our daily life?
 2. Do we establish our own righteousness rather than pursuing Christ's righteousness?
 3. Do we rebel against the Lordship of Christ when given clear instructions & commands?
 4. Do we add any other "gods" in our life (money, positions, fame, stuff)?
 5. Do you love God like a newly married bride?