

Jeremiah3

3 "If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and marries another man, should he return to her again? Would not the land be completely defiled? But you have lived as a prostitute with many lovers— would you now return to me?" declares the Lord.

2 "Look up to the barren heights and see. Is there any place where you have not been ravished? By the roadside you sat waiting for lovers, sat like a nomad in the desert. You have defiled the land with your prostitution and wickedness.

3 Therefore the showers have been withheld, and no spring rains have fallen. Yet you have the brazen look of a prostitute; you refuse to blush with shame.

4 Have you not just called to me: 'My Father, my friend from my youth,

5 will you always be angry? Will your wrath continue forever?' This is how you talk, but you do all the evil you can."

#Unfaithful Israel

6 During the reign of King Josiah, the Lord said to me, "Have you seen what faithless Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every spreading tree and has committed adultery there.

7 I thought that after she had done all this she would return to me but she did not, and her unfaithful sister Judah saw it.

8 I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery.

9 Because Israel's immorality mattered so little to her, she defiled the land and committed adultery with stone and wood.

10 In spite of all this, her unfaithful sister Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense," declares the Lord.

11 The Lord said to me, "Faithless Israel is more righteous than unfaithful Judah.

12 Go, proclaim this message toward the north: "'Return, faithless Israel,' declares the Lord, 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am faithful,' declares the Lord, 'I will not be angry forever.

13 Only acknowledge your guilt— you have rebelled against the Lord your God, you have scattered your favors to foreign gods under every spreading tree, and have not obeyed me,'" declares the Lord.

14 "Return, faithless people," declares the Lord, "for I am your husband. I will choose you—one from a town and two from a clan—and bring you to Zion.

15 Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

16 In those days, when your numbers have increased greatly in the land," declares the Lord, "people will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the Lord.' It will never enter their minds or be remembered; it will not be missed, nor will another one be made.

17 At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts.

18 In those days the people of Judah will join the people of Israel, and together they will come from a northern land to the land I gave your ancestors as an inheritance.

19 "I myself said, "'How gladly would I treat you like my children and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nation.' I thought you would call me 'Father' and not turn away from following me.

20 But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you, Israel, have been unfaithful to me," declares the Lord.

21 A cry is heard on the barren heights, the weeping and pleading of the people of Israel, because they have perverted their ways and have forgotten the Lord their God.

22 "Return, faithless people; I will cure you of backsliding." "Yes, we will come to you, for you are the Lord our God.

23 Surely the idolatrous commotion on the hills and mountains is a deception; surely in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel.

24 From our youth shameful gods have consumed the fruits of our ancestors' labor—their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters.

25 Let us lie down in our shame, and let our disgrace cover us. We have sinned against the Lord our God, both we and our ancestors; from our youth till this day we have not obeyed the Lord our God."