

**JEREMIAH, PART 1 (RETURN TO ME)**  
**PROGRAM 4 (#912004)**  
**WEEK 1 (912301)**  
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**SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 1 (Return To Me)**

**TITLE: Program 4 – The Saddest Verse In Jeremiah**

**THURSDAY**

**OPEN**

I think that one of the saddest verses in the book of Jeremiah is when God says, “**...My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit.**” (Jeremiah 2:11) In our last program we talked about emptiness and feeling empty. That’s what’s going to take the life out of life is exchanging the glory of God, the true estimate for who He is, for that which does not profit. Oh, how we need the message of Jeremiah!

**PART ONE**

God says it twice in Jeremiah chapter 2. They went after things that did not profit, they did not profit. (See Jeremiah 2:8 & 11) You look at America. Where is America? America is going after things that do not profit. America is in trouble. America is suffering. Our society, our relationships with God, and with man, and with our family, and others is rapidly decaying. It’s all about moi. It’s all about me. We have a society that is so self-centered that

it's about the way I look. It's about the way my body is constructed. It's about my job. It's about my glory. We have exchanged the glory of God, the true estimate of God and who He is, for that which does not profit. And the question has to be why? Where did it start? How did it happen? Well let's go to Jeremiah chapter 2. In Jeremiah chapter 2, and I only covered the first two lines of that verse, but Jeremiah chapter 2, verse 8 says this, "[The people did not say where is the Lord, uh] **the priests did not say, "Where is the LORD...?"**" (Jeremiah 2:8) So they don't even know where God's gone, and they don't even care. They don't even miss Him. They don't miss Him, and yet there's an emptiness in the heart. [They went after emptiness and they found themselves empty.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 2:5) So it says, **"The priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?" ...those who handle the law did not know Me...."** (Jeremiah 2:8) These are the scribes that are making sure that the Bible is translated. That the Torah and that is translated accurately. And they did not know God. It says, **"...The rulers also transgressed against Me...."** (Jeremiah 2:8) Now the rulers are the shepherds. Now just think shepherd. Think shepherd. Think crook. OK, so the shepherd has the crook, so the sheep are going that way. So the shepherd comes along and gets the sheep by the neck, and brings the sheep to where they're supposed to be, and brings the sheep back. But the shepherds don't even care. Now it's translated "rulers," and this is very important especially for the United States of America. The word "rulers" is really the word "shepherd." But they translated it ruler because they want you to understand that when God was talking about shepherds He was talking about rulers, those that watched over the people, those that ruled over the people. And He's saying here that the rulers transgressed against Me. You look at our leadership. I mean, do you realize, when Governor Palin was running for the vice presidency for the United States of America on the McCain ticket, they were trying to keep her away from the religious right because they didn't want to portray her as someone that was, you know, so caring about God, so

in love with God, so uh concerned about the Word of God. And they were always nipping at this. Why? Because they didn't want a ruler that loved God, they didn't want a ruler that was going to stand for the Word of God. And this is what we're saying, don't bring Christianity into politics. Don't bring it into government. Well I want you to know, if you don't, you can expect the same thing that they got in the days of Jeremiah. It says, **"...the prophets prophesied by Baal..." (Jeremiah 2:8)** It wasn't God's Word. It was what Baal, this false god, this idol. Remember we're marking "idols," so put a big "I" over it. And it says, **"...And [they] walked after things which did not profit."** (Jeremiah 2:8) Now listen to me very, very carefully. There are people on Christian television, there are people on Christian radio, there are people that are on secular stations and they're teaching the Word of God, and there can be tens of thousands there. And they can say that they hold to the Word of God, but the Word of God is not being opened. The Word of God is not being explained. The Word of God is an entrée to teach them how to be great citizens, how to be happy, how to know their potential, or how to get money from God, how to be prosperous, how to have the things that they want. And consequently the people are going after things that do not profit. What is Jeremiah going to do? Jeremiah is going to point out to them their sin. Because it is their sin that is keeping them from God, it is their sin that is causing them to follow things that do not profit. It is their sin that is bringing emptiness. God says, **"Therefore I will...contend with you,' declares the LORD, 'and with your sons' sons I will contend."** (Jeremiah 2:9) I'm going to contend with you. I'm going to contend with your children. I'm going to contend with your grandchildren. Those precious grandchildren, if they are precious to you, are going to suffer because of you. He says, **"For cross to the [shores the] coastlands of Kittim and see, and send to Kedar and observe closely...."** Go into these foreign lands that don't know God **"...and see if there has been [any] such...thing as this! Has a nation changed gods**

**when they were not gods?” (Jeremiah 2:10-11)** These people that are worshiping these false gods have they exchanged one false god for another false god? Oh no, they may add them, but they don’t get rid of them! Those are heathens. That’s the way they treat their gods, which are no gods. But what have My people done? Listen to what He says. He says, **“...But My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit.”**

**(Jeremiah 2:11)** There it is again. They’ve changed their glory. Now who is their glory? Well Psalm 106, verse 19 and 20 talks about when they made a golden calf. Aaron made a golden calf when they got tired of waiting for Moses when he was up on the mountain, and God was giving him the statutes and the commandments. And they made a golden calf. And Aaron says this is your god that brought you out of Egypt. Blah, makes you want to vomit! They changed their glory for a cow, an ox! They went from the real living God to this statue of gold that they made out of their earrings, out of their jewelries. (See Psalms 106:19-20) He says, **“Be appalled, O heavens, at this, and....,”** he says, **“...shudder, be very desolate,”** [says] **the LORD.” (Jeremiah 2:12)** You know why? **“For My people have committed two evils....” (Jeremiah 2:12-13)** What are those two evils? One, **“...they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters....”**

**(Jeremiah 2:13)** Here I am. I’m the One that says to you, “Are you thirsty? Are you thirsty? Come to Me! Come to Me and drink.” Jesus said, **“He that [believes in] me...out of his belly...,”** John 7, **“...shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38, KJV)** [And this He spoke concerning the Spirit which was to be given.] (PARAPHRASE, John 7:39) The whole Bible ends in Revelation where He’s saying, [“Ho everyone that thirsts come to Me to the fountain! Come to Me to the waters of salvation! Drink freely! Drink without cost! You can come, I’m not going to hold any of you back!”] (PARAPHRASE, Revelation 22:17) So He says, [“Here I am. I’m the fountain of living waters, living waters.” And He says, “You have forsaken Me. You have turned your back on Me.” That’s what you’ve done. What’s

the other evil? Well, you dug out cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water!”] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 2:13) In other words, here I am. I am free. I am available. I satisfy. And you turn around, and you walk after emptiness. You take out a cistern, the works of your own hands. You expect to drink there. You expect to be satisfied. And you’re not satisfied. Those are the two evils that His people have committed. Now I want to ask you a question. Are you committing the same evil? Is there a thirst within you? Do you remember John chapter 4? Do you remember the Samaritan woman at the well? Do you remember how she went at noon? That’s not when women usually went, but she was a woman that was tainted because she had had all these husbands and now she was living with a man that was not her husband. She goes to the well. There she meets Jesus. And Jesus said, [“You know, if you knew who you were talking to, you would ask and I would give you living water. And you would never thirst again!”] (PARAPHRASE, John 4:10 & 14) I promise you that if you drink of that living water and you stay by that well of water, the life spring of water, you won’t thirst. And you won’t go after emptiness. You won’t feel empty. You won’t be exchanging the glory of an incorruptible God for an image that you made with your own hands. Oh Beloved, Beloved stop! Stop! Think! Evaluate your life! Are you running here, or running there trying to get satisfied, trying to have this, trying to have that. You’re worn out. You’re exhausted. You fall down and you think, “I cannot do it!” You know what? You’re running away from the fountain of living water. Oh Precious One, Precious One, God is saying, “Come back. Come back. I’m the One that satisfies your thirst.” No, life’s not gonna be easy. It wasn’t easy for Jeremiah, but there’s that deep satisfaction that you know that you know that God is God, and you love Him and fear Him above all else. We’ll talk about it more in just a minute. But I want you to hear this announcement because I want you to grow. I want you to drink deeply of that river of living water.

## **PART TWO**

Have you thought about it, Beloved? Dependence on anything else but God will not satisfy. Eventually that broken cistern that you dig with your own hands will go and there won't be anything in there to satisfy you. And not only that, water is essential to life. Beloved, do you realize where America is? Do you realize where America is? I cut this out and put it in my Bible. Now it is an analysis from the year 2003 to the year 2008. *USA Today* published this on December the 30<sup>th</sup> in the year 2008. So I put in front of my Bible because what I wanted us to see is what is happening in America, because it's happening all over. And this is what they did. Compared with five years ago, they asked what percentage of Americans believe in God. And it dropped 10% from 90% to 80%. When they asked what percentage believe in heaven it went from 82% to 73%. That's down nine points. When they ask about the devil it went the same proportion from 68 to 59 %. When they ask about hell it went from 69% to 62%. Now what do you see? You see a decline, a decline in every single area in a short five years. We're going farther and farther away from God. And yet up until God just shook the things that could be shaken and just rattled the economy, I mean we were the nation that everybody wanted to live in. We were the United States of America, on our own continent. But we're falling apart. And we're falling apart because we've left the faith of our forefathers. Not all of them believed in Jesus Christ. Not all of them believed in the Word of God. But I will tell you, in our nation at that time, when this nation was founded, there was a fear of God. There was a respect of God. There was a godly dread of God. But what do you see happening in Jeremiah? You see them turning away from God. And you see the same thing happening in our nation. God says this. **“Is Israel a slave? [Is Israel] a homeborn servant? Why has he become a prey?” (Jeremiah 2:14)** See are we just slaves? Are we just servants? No! We're supposed to be children of God! If we're children of God, then why have we become a prey? You understand, don't you, that

God uses nations to judge other nations. This is what He's going to do with Israel. He's been telling them and telling them and telling them. They have not listened. They've stopped up their ears. [They've preferred false prophets, who prophecy, as we saw, by Baal, who prophecy falsely, who take people after things that do not profit.] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 2:8) We prefer people that tickle our ears. We don't mind Christianity, as long as it doesn't get narrow, as long as God is not a righteous God, as long as He's not going to hold us accountable, as long as He's not going to judge us, as long as He's there to be our little servant, then we're fine. And God says, "Hey, that won't be." And then He's talking about Israel. He says, **"The young lions have roared at him...,"** the other nations, the young nations, **"...they have roared loudly...they have made his land a waste...."** (Jeremiah 2:15) God's land, Israel is God's land. He has given it to Israel; not to the Palestinians. You say, "That's not fair. You're being biased." No I'm not. I'm being biblical. I have a biblical worldview. **"...His cities have been destroyed, [and] without inhabitant."** This is Israel. **"Also the men of Memphis and Tahpanhes have shaved the crown of your head."** That's Egypt. He says, **"Have you not done this to yourself...?"** (Jeremiah 2:15-17) Aren't you the one that just sat there and said, "Okay nation, shave me bald. Bring shame upon me." See this is what's happening in the United States of America. Other nations are shaming us. I mean you have gangs coming into this country. You have all sorts of crime. You have a highway from Mexico to Canada that anybody can travel. I mean, we're in trouble. And so He says, **"Have you not done this to yourself...?"** (Jeremiah 2:17) This is no accident that these things are happening. Why have they happened? He says, **"...By forsaking the LORD your God...."** (Jeremiah 2:17) He says remember, **"...My people have committed two evils...."** You need to memorize verse 13. **"...They have forsaken Me...,"** number one **"...the fountain of living waters...."** (Jeremiah 2:13) And He defines that. And He says you've done this, in verse 17,

**“...by forsaking the LORD your God when He led you in the way.”**  
(Jeremiah 2:17) He said, “This is the way and you forsook Him. You just went the wrong way.” He says, **“But now what are you doing** [what are you doing down] **on the road to Egypt...** [What are you doing going and getting water out] **of the Nile?...What are you doing on the road...,**” He says, **“...to Assyria....”** (Jeremiah 2:18) Assyria’s to the north. Why are you going to the north? He says, [“Why are you drinking waters out of the Euphrates?”] (PARAPHRASE, Jeremiah 2:18) He says: listen, think about it! Think about it! Who is He? He’s the fountain of living waters. If you would stick with God you would be satisfied. But now here you’re trotting down south. And you’re going down south, and you’re going down to Egypt. And you’re getting down to Egypt to do what? To scoop out water out of that filthy Nile, or if you’re not satisfied, then you’re going where? You’re going north to Assyria, and you’re getting water out of the Euphrates. I’m here. I’m here. I satisfy. And so then He goes on to say, **“Your own wickedness will correct you....”** (Jeremiah 2:19) Now remember what He said? He said in chapter 1, in verse 16, **“I will pronounce My judgments on them concerning all their wickedness, whereby they have forsaken Me** [they’ve chosen idols] **and** [they worship] **the works of their...hands.”** (Jeremiah 1:16) So He says, “Your own wickedness will correct you...your apostasies will reprove you....” (Jeremiah 2:19) Now, He says, “You’re just bringing your own judgment. It’s your own wickedness that’s gonna correct you. You’re gonna find yourself with all these problems.” And He talks about the diseases of Egypt. You’re gonna find yourself suffering all these things because you wanted it your way. Look at all the venereal diseases. Look at AIDS. Look at all these things. Where did it start? It started in breaking God’s commandments. And see, we could stop it if we’d go back to purity. But we won’t do it! We want our own way. He says, **“...Know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter for you to forsake the LORD your God.”** (Jeremiah 2:19) Know



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this, it is evil. And not only is it evil, it is bitter for you to forsake your God. And you know what? He says, “**...the dread of Me** [the fear of Me, the respect of Me] **is not in you,’ declares the Lord...of hosts.’” (Jeremiah 2:19)** My question to you, Precious One, is do you really fear God? Do you really have a respect of God, a trust of God that causes you to reign in your emotions, to reign in your desires and to live righteously? Or do you just walk off and forsake Him? If you walk off, you’re going after emptiness.