

## Diagnosing Discontentment

### *Cultivating Contentment*

#### **Jeremiah 2:1-13**

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## I. Introduction

Cultivating contentment is difficult. It's hard work to settle your heart, to be grateful and content in the Lord continually, through every season, and at all times. John Calvin spoke of the human heart as an 'idol \_\_\_\_\_'. Mankind has always been quite good at making idols. As Paul describes it, echoing this passage from Jeremiah, we are constantly tempted to exchange the glory of the immortal God for created things (Rom. 1:23; cf. Jer. 2:11). Why is this? We quickly become idolaters because we become \_\_\_\_\_, and so we begin setting our hope on something or someone apart from God.

## II. Jeremiah 2:1-13

*“ . . . [v. 13] For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.”*

## III. Overview of the Text

**The Context:** Jeremiah is prophesying in a time of \_\_\_\_\_. The northern kingdom, Israel, has already been taken captive by Assyria, and the southern kingdom, Judah, remains. As Jeremiah begins to preach, the Assyrian empire is already in decay, and upon its collapse, other nations begin to swoop in in order to take over the spoils. Judah was in a grievous and wicked state, and it, too, was ripe for disaster. It was at this time that the Lord commissions Jeremiah to preach against all of these abominations and to warn His people about the impending doom that will certainly fall upon them—that is, unless they repent.

**Section I - Israel's Past Faithfulness (vv. 1-3):** The Lord's first words to this troubled kingdom are sweet. The Lord does not hate His people. He loves them. He remembers how faithful were at the beginning.

**Section II - Israel's Present Apostasy (vv. 4-9):** Despite their beginning, Israel soon \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord. They no longer thought about Him, or concerned themselves with Him. They did not call to mind God's past \_\_\_\_\_. Instead, they defiled the land and themselves.

**Section III - The Lord's Charges Against Israel (vv. 9-13):** What Israel has done is grievous—even by pagan standards. Though bound by covenant to the true and living God, the fountain of living waters, Israel not only forsook Him, but then they tried to hew out for themselves cisterns—cisterns that were broken and couldn't even hold water.

What led them to “change their Glory for what does not profit” (v. 11)? They became \_\_\_\_\_. They forgot the goodness of their God, and they fed into the false \_\_\_\_\_ of idols.

## IV. Mankind's Problem with Idolatry

This charge leveled against Judah in this moment in history is a charge against all of us, against all of mankind. Why? Because mankind has this problem. This is our issue. We are idolaters—indeed, ever since our first parents.

**The Garden of Eden:** The substance of this passage applies equally to our first parents. Adam and Eve were holiness unto the Lord. They were picked out of all creation to be especially bound to Him by covenant. At first, they were kind and loving and obedient. But then something happened. They became discontent. Their hearts strayed, and they transgressed against the covenant. They forsook the Lord, the fountain of living water, and went after what is not a god.

**America's Story:** At our nation's founding, many of our fathers had a vision for this nation which was glorious. We were going to be a light to Old World which had already begun forsaking the Lord. We had a rich Christian heritage, and God richly blessed us. But then we, too, strayed from this. We have forgotten our God, forsaken Him and His ways. We became discontent and filled with all kinds of covetousness. In fact, we have become a \_\_\_\_\_ of discontentment and idolatry.

## V. How to Combat Discontentment

**1. Remembrance & Gratitude.** We combat discontentment by doing what the Israelites failed to do. In our passage, while the Lord remembered *Israel's* faithfulness, notice that the Israelites \_\_\_\_\_ to remember the *Lord's* faithfulness, how He led them as a loving Husband, how He provided for them, and bore them up even in the middle of nowhere. God remembered them, but *they forgot Him*.

- Eph. 5:3-4

**2. Prayer.** If we have needs, we are called to make our requests known to God. This also acts as a \_\_\_\_\_. You are to lay before the Lord your desires; but you can't ask the Lord for just anything. If you have fed into the lies of the world, and have started to desire its illicit wares, you cannot ask of these from the Lord. But you can—and you must—ask to be forgiven and cleansed of these things.

- Jam. 4:2-4

**3. "Feed on His faithfulness."** God's character and His Word are often spoken of by the Holy Spirit as our \_\_\_\_\_. His Word is like bread; He Himself is a fountain of life. We are made for Him, and when we forsake Him we get hungry and thirsty. This was the first evil these Israelites committed: they forsook God and they stopped drawing life from Him. It was because of this that they then turned aside after stupid idols, or 'broken cisterns'. We are to learn from this, and apply ourselves diligently to the nourishment He has provided us, especially as it is mediated to us through Holy Scripture.

## VI. Conclusion