

Jeremiah 2:20-28 – Wild Grapes, Untamed Donkey, Shameless Thief

Gaebelein, Armstrong, Henry, HebrewLexicon, TSK, JFB, Geneva, Poole, Delitzsch, Clarke, Trapp, Calvin, INT, Gill?
Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Young Jeremiah had to **boldly confront the Lord's bride** for running after other gods. In order for the bride to really get the message, **Jeremiah had to use clear language**. To help make that language clear, **he used illustrations**.

Today you will see how Jeremiah called out the Lord's bride (who ran after flashy things) and told her **she was sour as wild grapes**, she was **acting as an untamed donkey**, and she was a **shameless thief**, instead of being the prized, proud, and pure bride of God.

Our headings are:

God's Bride became a wild vine

God's Bride became an untamable female animal

God's Bride became a shameless thief

Our goals are: **That you will work to restore the precious bride of God to him (starting individually) so she can give him glory.**

God's Bride became a wild vine

20 "For of old **I have broken your yoke and burst your bonds**; And you said, '**I will not transgress**,' When on every **high hill** and under every **green tree** You lay down, **playing the harlot**.

1. God's bride was an obedient bride in the past.

Long ago, she was trapped in sin and slavery, but the Lord had burst her bonds and set her free – spiritually and physical!

So she promised to serve her Redeemer and she did so at the beginning. Look at 2 examples:

Exodus 19:8 Then all the people answered together and said, "**All that the LORD has spoken we will do**."

So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.

Joshua 24:16 So the people answered and said: "**Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD** to serve other gods;

Even when she fell into sin and slavery during the time of the judges, God rescued her from bondage.

But now God's bride fell headlong into sin and became a prostitute. God's queen **ignored all she had** and all that was promised and **sold herself to any god** passing by. **Her god was wealth!**

She lusted for wealth, so she **ignored the Sabbath**, she became **cruel to widows, orphans, and foreigners**, and she then **resorted to idols** - idols who would not object to her lifestyle. (At the same time, she satisfied her urge, as all men, to worship!

She worshiped these idols under every green tree and on every high hill. ("Laying down" picturing a prostitute. "Every" shows that her spiritual adultery was pervasive.) **She sinned openly**. She didn't care what people thought!

21 Yet I had planted you a **noble vine**, a **seed of highest quality**. How then have you turned before Me Into the **degenerate plant of an alien vine?**

2. Now the first illustration: God illustrated his bride's fall into sin by comparing her to a wild grape vine.

He had made her into a valuable vine— a noble vine - to produce much fruit. (God usually describe his bride as a good vine!)

Psalms 80:8 You have **brought a vine out of Egypt**; You have cast out the nations, and planted it. 9 You prepared room for it, And **caused it to take deep root, And it filled the land**.

She was of the **highest quality seed**.

She turned into **degenerate plant**...like an alien (degenerate) vine.

Isaiah 5:4 What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, **when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?**

Deuteronomy 32:32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter.

22 For **though you wash yourself** with lye, and use **much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before Me**," says the Lord GOD.

3. God's bride wanted to fake faithfulness by performing outward rituals, but her sins were obvious to God.

Lye and soap only wash the surface. So washing with lye was illustrating outward external rituals. **The corruption was internal!**

4. Lessons:

a. Even the most genuine Christian one can fall into sin – serious sin. Don't be an arrogant individual or church. Take heed how you stand lest you fall! Liberty can easily be turned to licentiousness if liberty is not being nurtured. Guard yourself!

b. Every sin you commit is marked down. Nothing slips by God! Every idolatry, even of the mind, he knows!

c. God expects his bride to stay pure and not interbreed with lesser gods! Doing this would dishonor the True Vine.

God's bride became an untamable female animal

23 "How can you say, '**I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals**'? See your **way in the valley**; Know what you have done: **You are a swift dromedary breaking loose in her ways**,
24 **A wild donkey used to the wilderness**, That **sniffs at the wind in her desire**; In her time of mating, who can turn her away? **All those who seek her will not weary themselves**; In her month they will find her.

1. God's illustrated his bride's fall into sin by comparing her to untamed, wild, lustful animals:

God's bride was a stubborn wild she-donkey or a wild she-camel. Even as she was denying she was polluted by the idols around her, she pursued her lustful passions as at breeding time. She knew how to sniff the air to find any mate. She was uncontained. No one could control her. She searched and found her lustful satisfaction. Her lusts drove her. She was like the adulterous woman of Proverbs 30:20. She lacked discretion, taking any mate she could find.

This she-donkey became so vulgar the male donkey wouldn't have to go looking.

Similarly, God's bride would suffer the consequences for her recklessness – as Israel 100 years before.

Hosea 2:7 She will chase her lovers, but not overtake them; **Yes, she will seek them, but not find them.** Then she will say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better for me than now.'

2. This was quite a graphic picture of God's bride who abandoned him and went wild running to other gods to please herself!

Jeremiah 32:35 'And they built the high places of Baal which are in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause **their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech**, which I did not command them...

Jeremiah 7:31 "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

The bride's children were figuratively and literally given to the gods.

25 Withhold **your foot from being unshod**, and **your throat from thirst**. But you said, '**There is no hope.** No! **For I have loved aliens**, and after them I will go.'

3. God called on his bride not to wear out her shoes running to her lovers (Egypt/Assyria) and not to drink what they had to offer.

Jeremiah 3:13 **Only acknowledge your iniquity**, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God, And have **scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree**, And you have not obeyed My voice,' says the LORD.

But God's bride declined to obey because her love for the strange gods (aliens) was too strong and her love for the true God who loved her had become weak. **Her passion for pollution could not be quenched...at least that was how Judah saw it.**

4. Lessons:

a. Lusts for money (which is a god), can make men do extraordinary things and take unnecessary risks to themselves, their spouses, their children, and the church. They **endanger their children's education** to save money. They work so much, they **ignore their wives**. They are **too busy to serve in the church**. But you must remain under the limits set by God.

b. Another idol of God's people is to seem relevant to the culture – to fit in with the world's view. So she is **changing her views on creation, male leadership, the way to discipline children, and the regulative principle of worship**. She has sold her closeness to God in order to get become "relevant." She continues to sniff the air to see what new things she can adopt and gallops to it. This cannot end well if she doesn't repent.

c. Another idol God's bride is clamoring for is unbridled licentiousness...living loose, immoral lives... There is adultery in the church! Adultery becomes idolatry when men live for it. That is how animals live! That is not for the people of God.

d. Watch denominations that have compromised and see if doing these things helped them!

Absolutely not!

e. There is always hope, no matter how far the church has fallen into sin.

God's bride became a shameless thief.

26 "As the thief is ashamed when he is found out, So is the **house of Israel ashamed**; They and **their kings and their princes, and their priests and their prophets**,

1. God illustrated his bride's fall into sin by calling her a shameless thief.

The nation stole God's worship and brought shame on themselves. The guilt of her prophets, priests, and kings were exposed.

27 Saying to a tree, '**You are my father**,' And to a stone, 'You gave birth to me.' For they have turned their back to Me, and not their face. **But in the time of their trouble** They will say, '**Arise and save us.**' 28 But where are your gods that you have made for yourselves? Let them arise, If they can save you in the time of your trouble; **For according to the number of your cities Are your gods**, O Judah.

2. But God's bride did not feel so ashamed as to stop her theft, rather, she became comfortable doing it; it became the norm.

She was so comfortable stealing God's worship she even took trees and stones to be her mother and father. She called the trees "daddy," and she called the stones "mommy."

This was insulting to God who made her...loved her...and saved her!

This was insulting to themselves, saying they were not better than stones and trees! (A god can't make anything greater than himself!)

3. But when she had real trouble, she would call on Yahweh to save and God would say, "Call on your trees and stones to save you!"

Of course, the stone and trees would not be able to save her.

Judges 10:14 **"Go and cry out to the gods** which you have chosen; **let them deliver you** in your time of distress."

4. Stones and trees weren't her only gods; God's bride had as many gods as the number of her cities!

She multiplied her dung-hill deities. Henry. How lewd! How contemptible of her husband!

5. Lessons:

a. If you and the church stay long in sin, it is harder to leave. You get very comfortable in sin. This is why many churches don't even feel bad about some of their current practices...and may even act as if you are crazy for confronting them about those practices. Try confronting them about female leadership, worship teams, moralistic preaching, or choirs and see their response!

b. Those who worship idols (whether literal or things as money or power) are as dumb as the idols they worship.

Psalms 115:8 **Those who make them are like them;** So is everyone who trusts in them.

c. It is easy to add more idols once you've started with one. Why? **The more men have, the more they want.** Idolatry is intoxicating! For example, lust for pleasure leads to money, and then that lust for money leads to lust for power! One idol will never satisfy you.

d. If God isn't your reward, nothing will satisfy you.

Conclusion:

God's beautiful and holy bride who received all his blessing, became a wild vine, an untamed donkey, and a shameless thief! How that must have hurt God to see his bride in such a place! **But God was not like a desperate husband who turns a blind eye to his bride's sin to keep her!** He called her out so she would repent.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. In the name of God, call out individual Christians, church leaders, congregation, and denominations which have abandoned the safety of Jesus for personal advantage and worldly applause! In the name of the Lord, call out government officials and foreign governments which promote hatred of the true God and disregard to his worship. Call them out in clear tones!

2. Ask God to mold you after his will and make you stay close to him. (Isaiah 64:8) Remember, if you stray, you family will stray. If you family strays, the church will stray. If the church strays, the nation will stray.

3. Why would you do all this? Because you are the treasured bride of the Lord Jesus! Remember what he did for your freedom. He gave his life for you, after giving up the glories of heaven! Don't dare walk away! Stay and be faithful. In his presence there is fulness of joy!

Finally: God has no use for wild grapes, untamed animals, and shameless thieves. If you are one, repent. Ask God to forgive you! If you don't, hell is your hope. If you do, joy is your guarantee.