

Handout: Jeremiah Lesson 3

At the beginning of Jeremiah’s covenant lawsuit in Chapters 2:1-3:13, he used three of the four symbolic images of the prophets to describe the covenant people’s failure in their relationship with Yahweh (see handout from Lesson 1). Jesus, Yahweh’s supreme prophet, used these same prophetic images during His ministry:

Symbolic Image	Jeremiah’s Oracles in 2:1-3:13	Examples of the Same Symbolic Images used by Jesus in the Gospels
Covenant Marriage	Israel/Judah has behaved like an adulterous wife (Jer 2:3, 32-33; 3:1-4, 6-11, 12-13).	Jesus is the bridegroom (Mt 9:15; Mk 2:19-21; Lk 5:34-35), and the communities of the Church are His virgin brides (see the parable of the virgins in Mt 25:1-13; Lk 12:35-38).
Animals	Israel/Judah is like rebellious animals that refuse their Master’s yoke and have become wild (Jer 2:20, 24-25).	The covenant people are like sheep without a shepherd (Mt 9:36, Mk 6:34). Jesus’ yoke is easy (Mt 11:28-30). Jesus is the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:1-18).
Fruitful vine or fruitful fig tree	Israel/Judah, the vine God planted in the Promised Land, is a failed vine that produces bad fruit (Jer 2:3, 21).	Jesus said that any plant the Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots (Mt 15:13). Jesus curses the barren fig tree that represents Israel and her failure to produce the fruit of good works (Mt 21:18-21; Mk 11:12-14, 20-24; Lk 13:6-9). The parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Mt 20:1-16). The parable of the vineyard and the wicked tenants (Mt 21:33-43; Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19).

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Part IV of the Symbolic Images of the Prophets chart lists Jesus’ New Covenant fulfillment of the images.

Mary is the Ark of the New Covenant who carried the God the Son in her womb. The original Ark, the dwelling place of God, held three objects (Heb 9:1-4):

1. It held the tablets of the covenant treaty document of the Ten Commandments, the Word of God (Ex 25:21; 40:20) → Jesus is the Word of God.
 2. It held Aaron’s staff, a dead branch that came back to life as a sign from God to verify the authority of the first High Priest (Num 17:17-26) → Jesus died and came to life.
 3. It held a pot of the manna, the bread from Heaven that fed the Israelites on the wilderness journey to the Promised Land (Ex 16:33-34) → Jesus is the Living Bread.
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MESSIANIC PROPHECIES IN JEREMIAH		
Prophecy	Jeremiah reference	New Testament Fulfillment
The Church in the Messianic Age	Jer 3:14-17	Mt 16:18-19; Acts 2:1-12
The death of Christ, the lamb of sacrifice, and the Eucharist	Jer 11:19	Jn 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pt 1:19; Rev 5:6, 12-13
Davidic "Branch" and "Yahweh-is-our-Saving-Justice"/ "Lord of Righteousness"	Jer 23:5, 6	Jn 2:19-21; Rom 1:3-4; Eph 2:20-21; 1 Pt 2:5
Will be born a king and descendant of David	Jer 30:9	Lk 1:32-33; Jn 18:37; Rev 1:5
The massacre of infants	Jer 31:15	Mt 2:17-18
The Incarnation: "something new on earth"	Jer 31:22b	Mt 1:20; Lk 1:35
A New Covenant	Jer 31:31-33	Mt 26:27-29; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:15-20; 1Cor 11:25; Heb 8:8-12; 10:15-17; 12:24; 13:20
The Gospel of salvation and the forgiveness of sins	Jer 31:34	Mt 26:26-28; Heb 10:16-18; 1 Jn 2:27
The coming of the Davidic Messiah	Jer 33:15-16	Mt 1:1-17; 16:18; Mk 1:1; Lk 1:31-33; Jn 1:32-33, 41
Everlasting Covenant	Jer 32:40; 50:5	Heb 13:20
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In Jeremiah 3:14-18 there are Messianic prophecies that only the universal Church of Jesus Christ fulfills.

1. He will take the faithful remnant that repents their sins and will return them to the spiritually renewed Zion of His Holy Church (Jer 3:14).
2. He will give them righteous shepherds (those in authority) to guide them (Jer 3:15).
3. There will be a new focus of worship in the new age of the Church (Jer 3:16).
4. The Church of the new age will be sealed by God's righteousness and will have authority over all nations (Jer 3:17).
5. The sign of the beginning of the fulfillment of these promises will be when the covenant people return from their exile in the northern lands (Jer 3:18).

In Jeremiah 4:3-4, the outward symbol of circumcision of the flesh is meaningless without spiritual devotion to Yahweh. When the people refuse to listen to Yahweh, they have uncircumcised ears (Jer 6:10), and when they refuse to repent, they have uncircumcised hearts (Jer 9:24-25). Pagan Gentiles are uncircumcised in both flesh and heart (Ez 44:7). God's temporal judgments are always meant to be redemptive!

The destruction caused by the invasion from the north is described in terms of a de-creation event, using the same Hebrew words in Jeremiah 4:23 as Genesis 1:2, *Now the earth was a formless void [tohu wabohu]...* Creation, de-creation, and a renewed creation in the flow of salvation history: Creation → de-creation in the flood judgment → renewed Creation after the flood judgment → de-creation of Israel → spiritually recreated people returned to the land → de-creation in the Final Judgment → a new Heaven and earth (2 Pt 3:2-13; Rev 21:1-4).

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