



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JEREMIAH 1-33

Week 2

DAY 8

Liar, Liar!

Jeremiah 9

OPENING
up to the Word

Think of someone you know who has a reputation for dishonesty. How has this character flaw affected his or her relationship with others?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Who were the people of Israel to beware of and never trust (vs. 4-5)?
 2. What had the people taught themselves to do (v. 5)? (a) worship idols, (b) burn offerings, (c) lie.
 3. The older women should have begun to teach their daughters to do what, according to Jeremiah (v. 20)? Why do you feel anyone needs to be taught that?
 4. What should men *not* boast of and what does God say they *should* boast of (vs. 23-24)?
 5. Israel was circumcised in the flesh, but not in the _____ (vs. 25-26).
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LIVING
out the Word

1. Do you think lying is something we do naturally, or something we learn from others?
 2. When do you feel most tempted to lie?
 3. If you could have one lie back that you have told, what would it be, and why?
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WINDOW
on the Word

Wailing women (v. 17) were professional mourners employed to arouse relatives and others at funerals to a greater display of grief. Because of the coming invasion and captivity, professional mourners would be in such great demand that they would have to teach their daughters and others how to wail.

*“Oh, that my head were a
spring of water and my eyes a
fountain of tears! I would weep
day and night for the slain of
my people.”*

Jeremiah 9:1



Artwork by Rembrandt van Rijn

Idol Chatter

Jeremiah 10

OPENING
up to the Word

What are some popular sources other than God that people use to gain spiritual guidance and insight?

DIGGING
into the Word

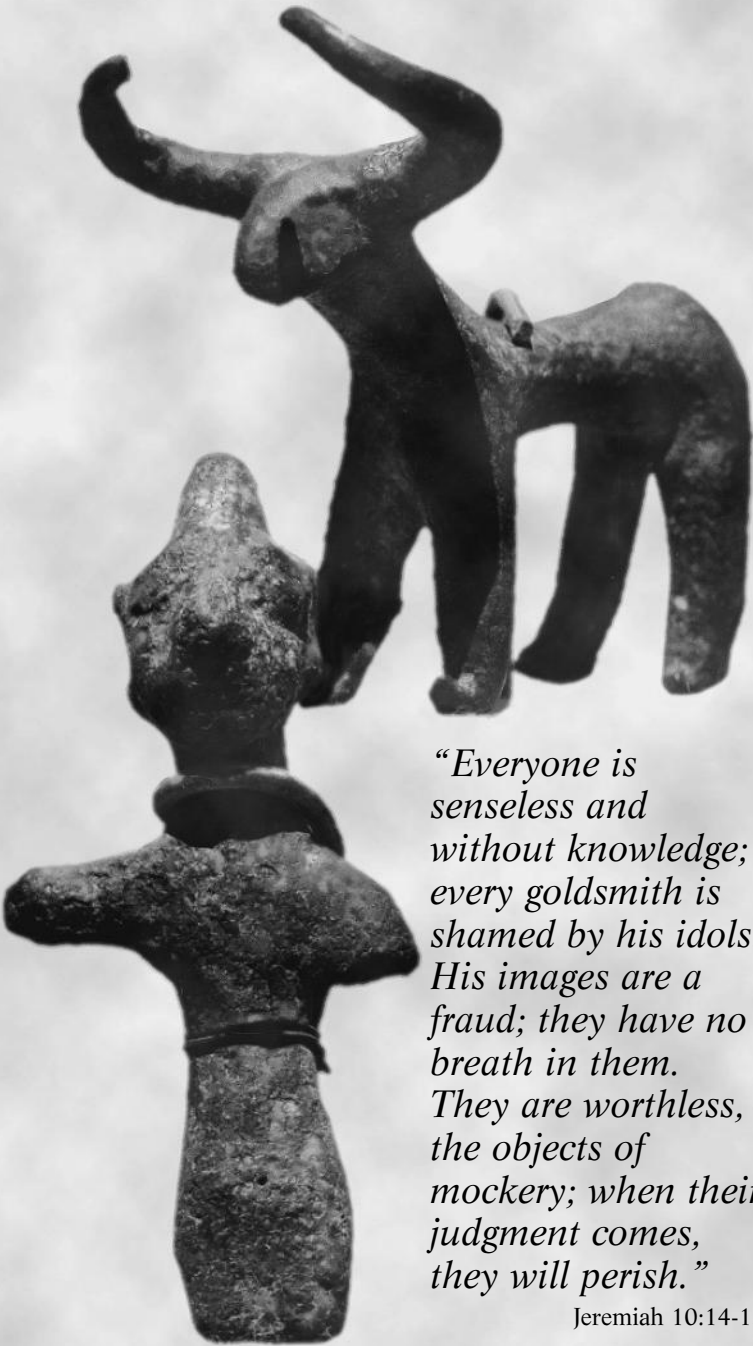
1. The nations, Jeremiah said, (v. 1) were terrified by _____ in the sky.
2. What did Jeremiah accuse the people's idols of not being able to do (v. 5)?
3. What three things did God use to create the world (v. 12)?
4. What or who is the *Portion of Jacob* (v. 16)?
5. What does not belong to a person (v. 23)? What should people therefore stop trying to direct on their own? How does this truth affect your decisions today?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Was there ever a time when you were influenced by things like horoscopes, psychics or palm readers? If so, what made you think they had any better connection to truth than the God of the Bible?
2. What contemporary sources do people look to for health, wealth and success?
3. How is God superior to all these?

WINDOW
on the Word

A **portion** (v. 16), or *share*, of course referred to something set aside for someone (Ge 14:24; Lev 6:17). God was Israel's portion; he had set himself aside in a special way for Israel.



“Everyone is senseless and without knowledge; every goldsmith is shamed by his idols. His images are a fraud; they have no breath in them. They are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish.”

Jeremiah 10:14-15

The Covenant Conspiracy

Jeremiah 11–12

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever entered a legal contract? What were you promising to do?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. When disaster struck, what would Israel instinctively do, and what would be the result (11:11-12)?
2. Who were the leaders of Israel plotting to kill, and who thwarted the plan (vs. 18-23)?
3. What were Jeremiah's two pressing questions to God (12:1)?
4. Who was prepared to betray Jeremiah and who was not to be trusted (v. 6)?
5. What judgment—then hope—did God promise the invaders of his people (vs. 14-17)?

LIVING
out the Word

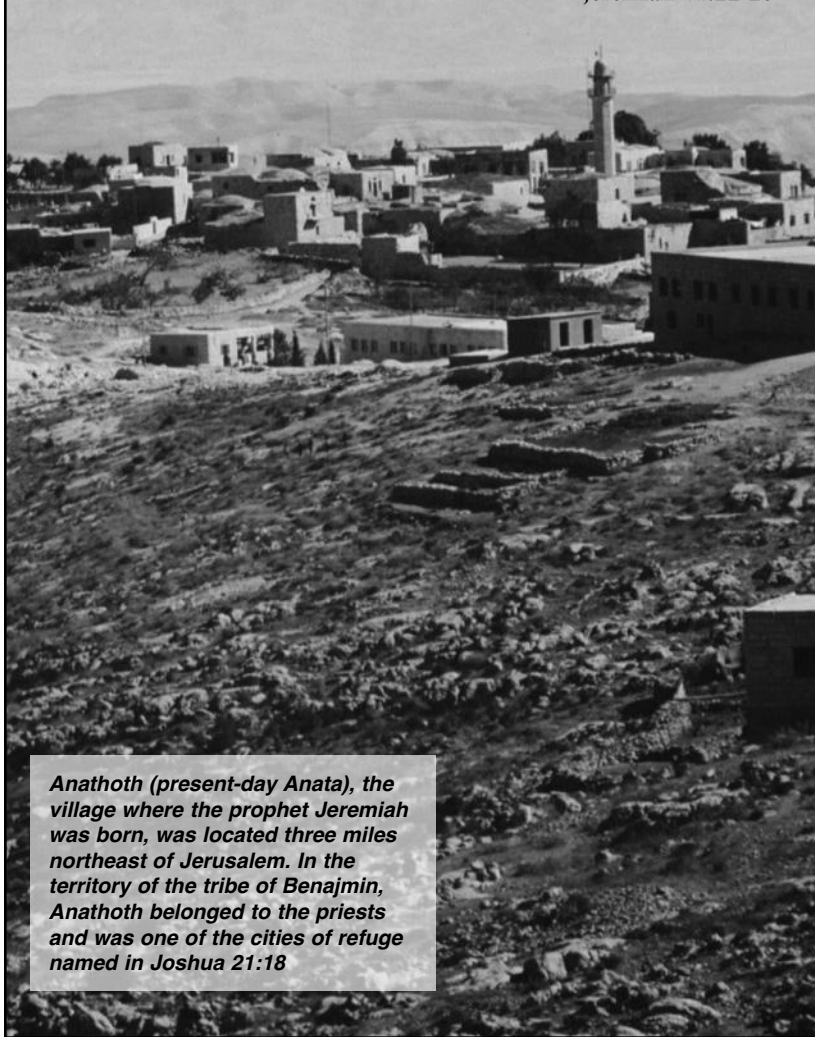
1. What are some promises or covenants you have made that you have found very difficult to keep?
2. List the three biggest and most important promises that you've made to either a person or God.
3. Has anyone ever made a significant promise to you and then not kept it? How did that make you feel? Does it help you empathize with God in this passage?

WINDOW
on the Word

A *speckled bird of prey* (12:9) refers to a bird with unusual markings. Flocks of birds characteristically will not allow unusual or unfamiliar birds among them. In the same way, God's people would be attacked by the neighboring nations because they were different from them.

“Therefore this is what the Lord Almighty says: “I will punish them. Their young men will die by the sword, their sons and daughters by famine. Not even a remnant will be left to them, because I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth in the year of their punishment.””

Jeremiah 11:22-25



Anathoth (present-day Anata), the village where the prophet Jeremiah was born, was located three miles northeast of Jerusalem. In the territory of the tribe of Benjamin, Anathoth belonged to the priests and was one of the cities of refuge named in Joshua 21:18

Changing Your Spots

Jeremiah 13

OPENING
up to the Word

Has there ever been anything in your life that you tried to change, but couldn't?

DIGGING
into the Word

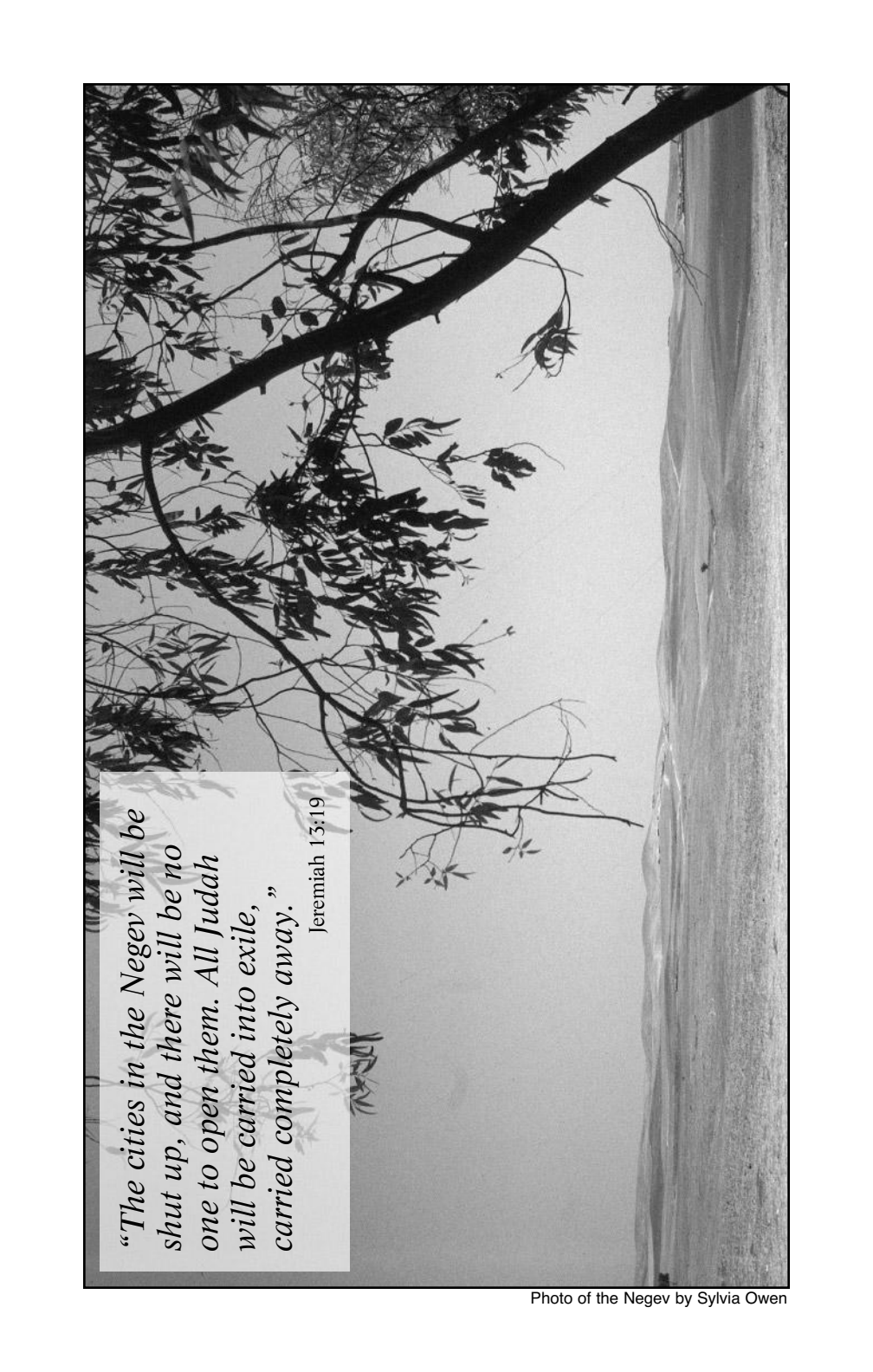
1. What did God ask Jeremiah to buy (v. 1) and what was Jeremiah instructed not to let his purchase touch?
2. What was the Lord going to ruin in Judah and Jerusalem (v. 9)? (a) the gates, (b) wicked people, (c) a belt, (d) their pride.
3. What question were the people of Israel going to be asking (v. 22)?
4. God said there was something that Israel could not do (v. 23). What two other things, which also could not be done, did God use to help Israel understand?

LIVING
out the Word

1. What are the two things that you would most like to change about yourself but find difficult?
2. What area of your life has been successfully changed? Who and/or what helped you most?
3. What area of your life do you think God most wants you to begin to change? What biblical truth gives you the most encouragement to change?

WINDOW
on the Word

***The linen belt** (v. 1) was a highly prized possession, worn close to the person. Linen was a cooler cloth and would be more easily ruined by dampness than would leather. In the same way, God bound Israel to himself closely and valued them highly, but their sin had ruined them. "**King...queen mother**" (v. 18). At this time, the king would have been Jehoiachin, and his mother, Nehushta. They were carried away to Babylon in the second deportation under Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C.*

A black and white photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, a large, dark tree branch with many leaves extends from the top left towards the center. The background shows a vast, open desert with rolling hills and a clear sky. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

“The cities in the Negev will be shut up, and there will be no one to open them. All Judah will be carried into exile, carried completely away.”

Jeremiah 13:19

Mirages!

Jeremiah 14

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever seen a mirage? Were you fooled by it at first or did you understand what you were seeing?

DIGGING
into the Word

- 1.** When Jeremiah confessed the sins of the people, why did he ask God to do something for Israel (v. 7)?
- 2.** How did Jeremiah describe God's actions while Israel's was experiencing a drought? To what did he compare God (v. 8)?
- 3.** Jeremiah was instructed by God not to do something in verse 11. What was he not to do? Why do you think God told Jeremiah this?
- 4.** True or false: The prophets were warning the people of God's impending judgment, but the people wouldn't listen (v. 13).
- 5.** What could the prophets who were prophesying peace look forward to in Israel (vs. 14-16)?

LIVING
out the Word

- 1.** Have you ever been surprised when you expected life to become easier, yet it became more difficult? Did you feel like blaming God?
- 2.** When the plans you had for your life turn out to be only mirages, what is your initial reaction? (a) anger—then depression, (b) disappointment—then acceptance, (c) confusion—then bitterness, (d) sadness—then acceptance—then contentment.
- 3.** Has anyone ever misled you about what they called "God's will" for your life? Was it a person in spiritual authority? Did you blame yourself, the person or God?
- 4.** How can you become susceptible to false prophets? What steps can you take to guard yourself (1Jn 4:1-3; Dt 18:22)?

Persona Non Grata

DAY 13

Jeremiah 15

Have you ever been the recipient of a cold shoulder, or been given the brush-off by friends or family because of an unpopular stand you took?

1. What were the four destroyers God was going to send against Israel (vs. 3-5)?
2. What does the iron refer to in verse 12—a metal or a people?
3. When God sent his word to Jeremiah (v. 16), the prophet loved it so much that he: (a) put it in a secret place, (b) ate it, (c) wrote it down quickly, (d) wrapped it up and buried it.

1. Have you ever become unpopular because you told others a biblical truth that offended them? What did you tell them and why were they offended? Do you think the bible offended them or did the way you informed them cause them the greatest offense?
2. Take some time to read Hebrews 11, the Biblical Hall of Fame. What do you need to keep focused on in order to stay faithful to God in spite of opposition (Heb 11:13-16)?

The **winnowing fork** (v. 7) was a farm implement, similar to a pitchfork, used to toss grain into the air. The grain, being heavier, would fall to the ground while the inedible chaff would blow away. In the same way, God was going to separate the righteous from the unrighteous. **“Iron from the north”** (v. 12) was known for its special hardness. Jeremiah says here that Israel has a better chance of breaking this iron than escaping judgment from God.

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

“And do not enter a house where there is feasting and sit down to eat and drink. For this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Before your eyes and in your days I will bring an end to the sounds of joy and gladness and to the voices of bride and bridegroom in this place.”

Jeremiah 16:8-9

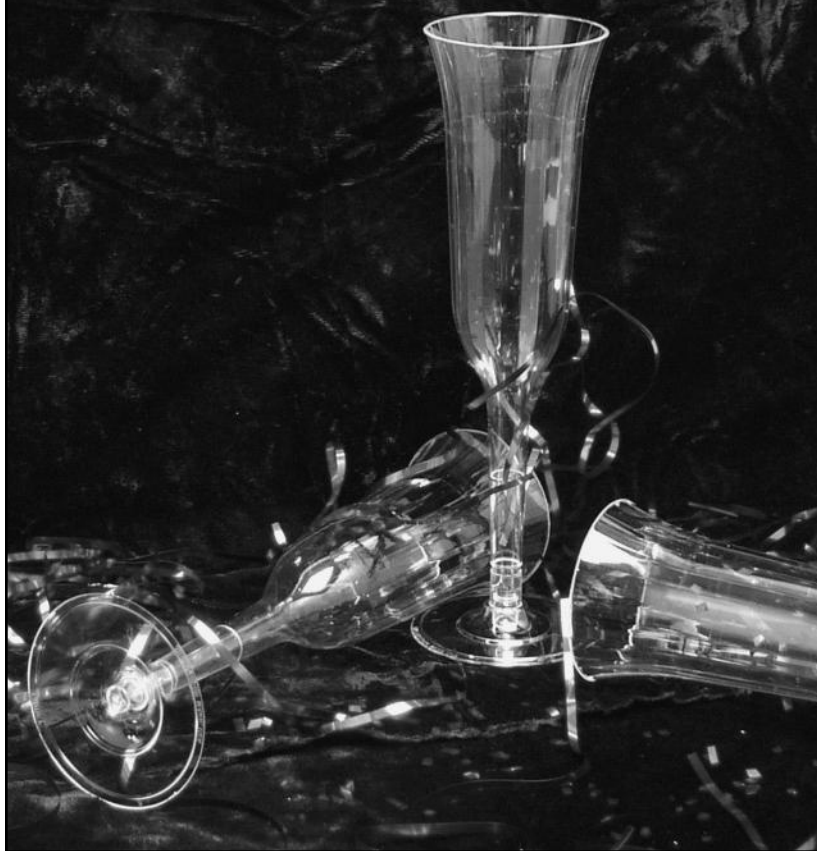


Photo by Omar Cova—PTM

The Party's Over!

DAY 14

Jeremiah 16

Fast living, parties and fun seem to be all some people live for. They seem to go from one long weekend of parties to the next, disregarding morality and truth. But one day, everything catches up with them and the party is over. Have you, or anyone you've known, ever had such a *reality hangover*?

1. What was Jeremiah forbidden by God to do (v. 1)?
2. Within the context of the soon coming day of disaster, when someone died, Jeremiah was under strict orders not to do something (v. 5). What could he not do, and why?
3. Again, at that specific time, given the gravity of the disaster on the horizon, if there were a party with eating and drinking (vs. 8-9), Jeremiah was instructed to: (a) attend, and declare judgment; (b) refuse to attend; (c) eat and drink like everyone else; (d) stand outside and criticize.

1. Were you ever a *party animal*? When did the party life suddenly cease to fulfill you?
2. Going to parties, eating, drinking and having fun isn't wrong in itself (Jesus did all those things). Where do you think the spiritual danger may lie in these activities if you aren't careful?
3. What is it that brings you the most enjoyment now and how has God given you true joy?

OPENING

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