

OL Summary:

I. Jeremiah, a book full of speaking concerning Israel's sin and God's wrath, chastisement, and punishment, reveals that God's intention in His economy is to be the fountain, the source, of living waters to dispense Himself into His chosen people for their satisfaction and enjoyment with the goal of producing the church, God's counterpart, as God's increase, God's enlargement, to be God's fullness for His expression; the kernel of the divine revelation is that God created us and redeemed us for the purpose of working Himself into us to be our life and our everything: **A.** Christ as the living, spiritual rock was smitten by the authority of God's law so that the water of life in resurrection could flow out of Him and into His redeemed people for them to drink. **B.** Our drinking of the one Spirit in resurrection makes us members of the Body, builds us up as the Body, and prepares us to be the bride of Christ.

II. "My people have committed two evils: / They have forsaken Me, / The fountain of living waters, / To hew out for themselves cisterns, / Broken cisterns, / Which hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13):

A. Israel should have drunk of God as the fountain of living waters that they might become His increase as His expression, but instead they committed two evils: They forsook God as their fountain, their source, and they turned to a source other than God; these two evils govern the entire book of Jeremiah. /The hewing out of cisterns portrays Israel's toil in their human labor to make something (idols) to replace God. /That the cisterns were broken and could hold no water indicates that apart from God Himself dispensed into us as living water, nothing can quench our thirst and make us God's increase for His expression. **B.** In the eyes of God, the wicked one; the evildoer, is the one who does not come to drink of Him; the evil condition of the wicked is that they do not come to the Lord to eat, drink, and enjoy the Lord; they do many things, but they do not come to contact the Lord, to take Him, to receive Him, to taste Him, and to enjoy Him; in the sight of God, nothing is more evil than this.

C. God intended to dispense Himself into man as man's satisfaction so that He might be enlarged, but man became unfaithful and unchaste and forsook God for idols: An idol in our heart is anything within us that we love and treasure more than the Lord and that replaces the Lord in our life: /All who have idols within them yet seek God in an outward way cannot find Him. /By worshipping idols, Israel made themselves vain, nothing; they had so many idols that the number of them was according to the number of their cities; Israel exchanged the reality of their God, their glory, for the vanity of idols. /Apostasy is a matter of leaving the way of God and taking another way to follow things other than God; it is to forsake God and turn to idols. /When Israel was captured by the Babylonians, God's people still would not give up their idols and had to carry them from the good land to Babylon; anything that replaces God or occupies the

position of God is an idol that becomes a burden to the worshipper. /The dumb, voiceless idols make their worshippers dumb and voiceless, but the living God causes His worshippers to speak in His Spirit: /No worshippers of God should be silent; all should use their voices to speak forth "Jesus is Lord!" in the Spirit of God. /This—to speak "Jesus is Lord"—is the main function of all the spiritual gifts; to call on the Lord's name with a proper spirit is the way to participate in, to enjoy, and to experience the Holy Spirit. / "The dead do not praise Jehovah, / Nor do any that go down into silence. / But we will bless Jehovah / From now and to eternity. / Hallelujah". (Psalm 115:17-18) /Whatever we possess and even whatever we are can become an idol; Israel was evil and unfaithful to God in forsaking God for idols; in the matter of such unfaithfulness to God, we are the same as Israel.

III. We need to see God's faithfulness in fulfilling His economy: **A.** Although we are unfaithful, God is faithful (Lam. 3:23b); the chorus of a well-known hymn (Hymns, #19) says,

"Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! / Morning by morning new mercies I see. / All I have needed Thy hand hath provided; / Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!": If we understand God's faithfulness in a natural way, we may think that He is faithful primarily in the matter of material provisions or physical blessings, but God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding; 1 Corinthians 1:9 says that God is faithful in calling us into the fellowship of His Son, but to our natural understanding He may not seem to be faithful in caring for our welfare. / "Consider the sufferings of the apostle Paul. He was called, commissioned, burdened, and sent by God, but wherever he went, he had troubles. For example, as soon as he began to preach Christ, he began to suffer persecution. He even had to escape from Damascus by being lowered down the wall in a basket. Does this mean that God was not faithful to Paul? No, it means that God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding". /We need to realize that in allowing us to have troubles, God is faithful in His purpose to turn us from idols and bring us back to Himself; our peace, safety, health, and possessions may become idols to us, but God is faithful to take these things away so that we may drink of Him as the fountain of living waters. /We need to see that we are not better than Israel; anything can become an idol to us, but God is faithful in fulfilling His economy; in His faithfulness He deals with our idols so that we may drink of Him. **B.** If we realize that we have been unfaithful to God, we may repent and weep, but then we should begin to drink of the living waters, praising God, giving thanks to Him for everything, and enjoying Him; this is what God wants; God is not interested in anything other than our enjoyment of Christ: Jeremiah could even declare that Jehovah was his portion and that he hoped in Him, for He is good to those who wait on Him; there is hope in God because with God there is no disappointment. /Our failure opens the way for Christ to come in to be our righteousness and our redemption and also to dispense Himself into us to be our life and life law with its capacity to know God and to live God; in other words, our failure simply

prepares and opens the way for Christ to come in so that He may be exalted in and through us to be our centrality and universality. /Every believer, whether presently weak or strong, will be a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and everyone there will be mature. /Therefore, we should not be dismayed or discouraged; rather, we should be encouraged and comforted with the God of all comfort and encouragement.

CP1: God's economy is for us to come to God as the source of the living water, to drink the living water and to flow it out.

Exo. 17:6 I will be standing before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it so that the people may drink. And Moses did so...

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. **OL1:** Jeremiah, a book full of speaking concerning Israel's sin and God's wrath, chastisement, and punishment, reveals that God's intention in His economy is to be the fountain, the source, of living waters to dispense Himself into His chosen people for their satisfaction and enjoyment with the goal of producing the church, God's counterpart, as God's increase, God's enlargement, to be God's fullness for His expression.

The entire Bible, including the book of Jeremiah, was written for God's economy. My burden in this life-study of Jeremiah is that you would see what the Lord has shown me from the Word concerning God's economy. If you see this vision, your life will be affected, and the Lord's recovery will be enriched.

In Jeremiah 2:13 we have God's word to Israel, the elect of Jehovah, concerning two evils which they have committed. God's intention in His economy is to be the fountain, the source, of living waters to satisfy His chosen people for their enjoyment.

The Spirit flows through the smitten Christ, through the Christ typified by the cleft rock. This flowing includes Christ's humanity, human living, and death. We cannot taste, experience, or enjoy the Lord's humanity except by the flowing of the living water within us. The more we drink this water, the more we experience and enjoy Christ's humanity, human living, and death. The Spirit as the water of life flows in resurrection with the power of Christ's resurrection, with Christ's ascension, and with Christ's enthronement, comprising glorification, lordship, and headship.

The flowing of the water of life in resurrection is for the formation of the Body of Christ. Because we all drink of the same Spirit, we can be one Body. Drinking of the one Spirit in resurrection makes us members of the Body and builds us up as the Body. The flowing of the living water in resurrection is also for the preparation of the bride of Christ.

Application to new ones, Youth/College students

The entire Bible reveals God's economy in which God is the fountain of the living water, overflowed in His Son as the springs, and His Spirit like the flowing of the river reaches men and enter into believers, flows from the spirit within to

every part of hearts to transform them and build the church to reach the New Jerusalem. When you are young, please see the vision of God's economy. This vision can control and direct your whole life.

Don't think that God's economy is just something that is only for the time of meetings. Rather, please link God's economy with all things in your whole life. Link your education, your career, your family, your future marriage, and everything else to God's economy, not your own plans. Nehemiah had led the rebuilding of the temple and the walls, and because of the fact that he had completed it, he was able to say at the end, **Remember me, O my God, for good. (Nehemiah13:31)** If you live in God's economy, you will always have the flowing of the Spirit as the living water, and you will have joy, satisfaction and peace. But if you forsake God, as the fountain of the living water, and hew out for yourself broken cisterns, you will live under God's wrath, His punishment.

Testimony of an American coworker: "When I was young, I enjoyed my church life in Los Angeles. My school scores were very good, so I planned to take an examinations of UC Berkeley, one of the top universities in the country. Before I applied to the university, I asked Brother Lee which university I should apply to, 'Go to UCLA because there is campus work there.' he recommended me. Though I thought at the beginning, 'Why do I have to go to a lower level university?' I followed Brother Lee's advice and went to UCLA, and then I got involved in the campus work and learned a lot. I was blessed to think and act even in the matter of academic path in connection with God's economy.

Brother's testimony: "When I was working as a director at the largest medical device company in the Kansai region, because my performance was good, I was persistently asked many times to come to the Tokyo headquarters to be promoted. However I declined them for the church life. I also received offers from a number of companies in Tokyo to work on good terms, but I turned them all down. Most of the positions at foreign companies in Kansai were almost below managers, with very few positions for directors and none for vice presidents (VPs) at all. In Kansai, I was not in Executive Position and it was difficult for me to advance my career, so I realized that the way of my church life was a narrow one. At that time, I received an offer from a foreign company headquartered in Osaka. The conditions of the company were almost the same as those from that Tokyo company, but after an interview with me, they raised the Position to VP. I moved to this company under the Lord's leading. My choices were also limited by the vision of God's economy and the vision of practicing church life, and I ended up working at this company. The last three years after my entering, I was able to work in obviously better conditions than I would have in Tokyo."

You should never despise yourself just because you are young. God esteems you. **Jeremiah1:7** But Jehovah said to me, do not say, I am a youth; For everywhere I send you,

you shall go; And everything I command you, you shall speak. If you link yourself with God's economy and continue drinking and flowing out the living water in church life at all stages in your life beginning with your youth, your whole life will be the life of the New Jerusalem.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, I link my education, my career, my family, my future marriage etc. every stage of my whole life with God's economy. I come to God as the fountain of living water, drink and flow out the living water. If I do not drink the living water and forsake God as the fountain of the living water, I will be forced to live under God's wrath, chastisement and punishment. Lord, let me keep drinking and flowing out the living water in God's economy. Protect my whole life. Amen!"

CP2: Two evils of God's people: (1) Forsaking God as the fountain of living waters, (2) Hew out for themselves broken cisterns

John 4:13-14 Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life. Jer. 2:13 For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which hold no water. Eze. 14:3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts...

OL1: In the eyes of God, the wicked one, the evildoer, is the one who does not come to drink of Him; the evil condition of the wicked is that they do not come to the Lord to eat, drink, and enjoy the Lord; they do many things, but they do not come to contact the Lord, to take Him, to receive Him, to taste Him, and to enjoy Him; in the sight of God, nothing is more evil than this. **OL2:** God intended to dispense Himself into man as man's satisfaction so that He might be enlarged, but man became unfaithful and unchaste and forsook God for idols. **OL3:** An idol in our heart is anything within us that we love and treasure more than the Lord and that replaces the Lord in our life. **OL4:** No worshippers of God should be silent; all should use their voices to speak forth "Jesus is Lord!" in the Spirit of God. **OL5:** Israel was evil and unfaithful to God in forsaking God for idols; in the matter of such unfaithfulness to God, we are the same as Israel.

The first evil of Israel was to forsake Jehovah, the fountain of living waters...In the book of Jeremiah, Jehovah God considers Himself a husband to His beloved elect, Israel, and Israel a wife to Him. Jeremiah 2:1-3:5 may thus be regarded as a conversation between a husband and wife. "Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown". There was a bridal day, a wedding day, for Jehovah and Israel, and Jehovah, the Husband, still remembered that day of love.

Israel's second evil was to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which hold no water. The word ... portraying Israel's toil in making something to replace God as the fountain of living waters. To hew out a cistern from rock is very hard labor. Then the cistern may become broken. Once a cistern is broken, the water in it leaks out. This is a picture of human labor and enterprise. We may labor to get something for ourselves, but then our "cistern" develops a crack, and we lose whatever we have gained. Israel chose many idols, which are of no benefit, to replace the unique God, who is their glory.

Rom. 1:23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and reptiles.

Application: Businessperson/ Graduate student

Although you need to work diligently in the Lord, you shouldn't love your business or degree more than the Lord. For example, some saints rely on the Lord and the saints before they get degree or job, but once they get them, they say as if they got them by themselves and give glory to them and do not thank the Lord nor the saints. This is to forsake God and turn to the idols. They don't love the Lord Himself but love the material blessings that God has given to them. They are hewing out the broken cisterns like self-love with pride, degree and job and possessing idols in their heart.

Brother's testimony: When I got engaged to my wife, one sister in her locality told me "you are blessed because her family is rich". I was offended in my heart and said "I don't understand what you are saying. Do you think the child of God like me would choose spouse for money?". After getting married, every time we purchase the meeting hall at Motoyama (2000), Uozaki (2004), Rokko (2008), we got great financial support from her family. If I was trying to marry her for her money, I could not have been able to marry because my heart was not pure. But I had no thought about money so I could get married. And because of the union of the marriage, not only the wife but all the financial riches also followed me. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.(Matt. 5:8)". "But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.(II Cor. 3:18)" I was enjoying the living waters in the church life, so my heart became pure and I was beholding God. I can testify that I could understand clearly that the most important point of marriage is "to love my wife" because I was beholding God,

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, although I work diligently in the Lord, I should not love my degree, job more than the Lord. That is to hew out broken cistern and to worship the idols turning my heart away from the Lord. Lord, purify my heart and let me love You with the love of the days of Your bride. Israel has forsaken God and turn to idols and were evil toward God and not faithful. This was a warning to me. Lord Jesus, I open to You and trust in You. Save me from

every idol”.

CP3: God's mercy is endless, and his faithfulness is great, so never be disappointed by looking at the outside situation.

Lam. 3:22 It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, for His compassions do not fail; **23** they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. **24** Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; therefore I hope in Him. **25** Jehovah is good to those who wait on Him, to the soul that seeks Him. **1 Cor. 1:9** God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **OL1:** We need to see God's faithfulness in fulfilling His economy. **OL2:** If we understand God's faithfulness in a natural way, we may think that He is faithful primarily in the matter of material provisions or physical blessings, but God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding. **OL3:** Consider the sufferings of the apostle Paul. He was called, commissioned, burdened, and sent by God, but wherever he went, he had troubles. For example, as soon as he began to preach Christ, he began to suffer persecution. ...Does this mean that God was not faithful to Paul? No, it means that God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding. **OL4:** Our failure simply prepares and opens the way for Christ to come in so that He may be exalted in and through us to be our centrality and universality. Therefore, we should not be dismayed or discouraged; rather, we should be encouraged and comforted with the God of all comfort and encouragement.

Instead of drinking of God as the fountain of living waters, Israel drank of their idols. Therefore, God used the Babylonians to deal with these idols and also to destroy Jerusalem and even the temple, which had become an idol to them. We need to see that we are not better than Israel. Anything can become an idol to us. But God is faithful in fulfilling His economy. In His faithfulness He deals with our idols that we may drink of Him.

It is profitable to consider Lamentations 3:22-25....These words were written after the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and carried away many into captivity....Surely, the people of Israel must have felt that God had given them up and that they were finished. On the one hand, Jeremiah was weeping; on the other hand, he was writing. In his writing he could say that it was of Jehovah's lovingkindness that they were not consumed. ..Jeremiah could even declare that Jehovah was his portion and that he hoped in Him, for He is good to those who wait on Him. Why is there hope in Him? There is hope in God because with God there is no disappointment.

Application to the serving ones

The Lamentations were written by Jeremiah after the destruction of Jerusalem. With this background in mind, we can see Jeremiah's amazing faith as we pray read Lamentations 3:22-25. In fact, it is the mercy of the Lord that you are now living in the church life. It is the mercy of the Lord that you are saved and able to serve. There were many people who were excellent or better than you and me, but they didn't remain. It's not because you're good,

but because of the mercy of the Lord. **Rom.9:15** For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." **16** So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy... **11:22** Behold then the kindness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but on you, the kindness of God, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.... **33** O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways! **34** For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has become His counselor? **35** Or who has first given to Him, and it will be repaid to him? **36** Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Testimony of a sister: I was saved in September 2013, and this year marks the seventh year of my church life. During the last seven years I have been guided by the Lord and the brothers and sisters in finding employment, getting married, and serving full-time. My natural person was a person with a strong individualism, "It is fine as long as I am fine." However, through the gospel and nourishing from the brothers and sisters, the individualism within me is being dealt with little by little. From last year to this year, I made three big decisions. The first was that I got engaged to a brother last spring and got married in March this year. Second, at the end of last year, I decided to quit the job and start serving. Third, at the beginning of the year, I sold my own condominium in Motoyama and moved to the newly purchased Sannomiya meeting hall to serve. Every time, I trusted in the faithful God, opened to the brothers and sisters, prayed, acted, and was blessed. Before I was saved, I lost my mother for cancer in a single-mother family, couldn't go back to my university, and lived a socially withdrawn life. I didn't have the energy to live every day, I didn't eat anything, and I lived like a shell. I rarely left my house, but somehow while walking near Motoyama station, I met sisters who were preaching the gospel on the street. Thank the Lord. I was baptized and saved at the Motoyama meeting hall that day. However, at that time, I did not really feel saved, but I had nothing else to rely on, so I relied on Christ and the brothers and sisters without knowing it. When I think about it now, I was saved, I was able to get married, and I was able to serve the Lord as a full-timer, all because of the Lord's mercy. I hope that I will continue to rely on the grace and mercy of the Lord and walk the path of overcomer with my husband.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, it is the Lord's mercy that I can be saved, stay in the church life, and serve. Praise the Lord for God is faithful in fulfilling his economy. Faithful God goes far beyond our understanding. I will not be discouraged or disappointed. Thank the Lord that the faithful God is with me and encourages and comforts me. I rely on the mercy of the Lord and walk the path to become an overcomer. Amen!"