What Were God’s People of Jeremiah Thinking?

Sorry for the extension of the chapters of BIBLE REPORTS deep into Isaiah and Jeremiah; but when you consider the difference between the message and messages of the Gospel of John which church members have received for many years, which they quickly will purport to believe and as very fundamental to them as “old stuff” as they have been believing in the Bible Reports about Jesus in the Gospel of John for years; however when you contrast that professed belief with what is manifest in the many churches across the land of the Americas, there is an obvious gap, and that gap can be filled with the message of the Prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah that God’s people of today seldom hear or have known. It can be lamented of God’s people in the churches today like God Himself lamented in Jeremiah 1-6, that even the keepers of the law, or the Bible, have not “known Me”. The prophets are in trouble, the priests are in trouble, the princes of the government are in trouble, and the people in the land are in trouble. And there is little difference between the leaders and the people, from the least to the greatest, they are covetous and deal falsely. And the reason church members fail to recognize or acknowledge this, like God’s people of Jeremiah, is because they are right in the middle. So well and so thoroughly and for many years have church members and leaders developed so many excuses, like God’s people in Jeremiah, to rationalize and “beautify” their “ways and doings”, that those many excuses, or “lying words” in the word of God and Jeremiah, seem like the real thing. While formality has replaced spirituality, God’s people also like in Isaiah and Jeremiah have become satisfied with that formality as a substitute for spir-
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Of course, as you see so much depth and meat from the Prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, please remember that they are the two sources of “Den of Thieves" and "Who has believed our Report" that both Jesus and Paul quoted to bring home the truths of the Gospels of John and of Romans.

23-1: From "Continuing Faith" of John to the Prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah.

1. BIBLE REPORTS.

   (1). From Jesus in John 12:38.

   (2). From Paul in Romans 10:16.

2. "Den of Thieves".

   (1). From the Prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 56:7, "house of prayer."

   (2). From the Prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 7:11, "Den of Thieves".


3. Formality in Worship over Spirituality.

   (1). Isaiah sounds like the Temple Message in Isaiah 1:10-17.

   (2). From Jeremiah in Jeremiah 7:21-23, not sacrifices and burnt offerings.

   (3). From Jesus in John chapter 4 with details of true worship.

   (4). From Paul in II Timothy 3:1-8 centered around the words “having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof”; and after a complete listing of the bad habits that churches would make to grow a HIDEOUT FOR BAD HABITS, bottom line concluding that church members should find them and “not associate with them”.

This 23rd chapter is a contrast between what God thought and what God’s people of Jeremiah thought. How could they be so wrong right up until the final calamity that took God’s own people into Captivity? What were they thinking,
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and what were they doing in spite of all the warnings from the Prophet Jeremiah who stood daily at the gates of the Temple to warn the people of eminent and ultimate destruction unless they changed their “ways and doings”. Did they realize that all these “abominations” of the people, in the temple and in the streets of Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah, were so completely unacceptable to God that God instructed his prophet Jeremiah to no longer even pray for these people. God refused to any longer hear the prayers of His own people, in the house of God or elsewhere; and likewise He refused to hear any intercessory prayers on the behalf of these people.

Surely we can not with confidence say that all in the book of Jeremiah and all before it in the book of Isaiah is “LIKE TODAY”; because while much is like in Jeremiah among God’s own people, and with the seeds of history for it in the book of Isaiah, still not exactly the same. For example, in the frequent religious practices of the heathen religions around them, which Jerusalem and Judah adopted, there was the frequently sacrifice of their own children to appease other gods. A practice, of course, which does not happen in the United States unless you include the sacrifice of young men and women to the war in Iraqi, a war without justification apart from lies.

Many books of American Studies and American History and Literature have been written on what Americans think or have thought through the periods of American history like: Colonial Period, Period of the Enlightenment, Romantic Era, and so on. In this message/chapter we are striving to figure out from the history of God’s people in Isaiah and Jeremiah, culminating in the Temple Message of Jeremiah, what the people were thinking in order to get so far on the wrong side of God. How could a people of God, of any generation, country, or time, think they had all the answers, when according to the message as given to Jeremiah from God, they were so far gone as no longer to be prayed for? The prophets were all in trouble, all except the one lonely prophet, Jeremiah, that no one would listen to except a few princes on rare occasions; the priests were “all covetous” and “dealt falsely”; the princes of the government and the kings by and large tried to kill Jeremiah after they tried to discourage the delivery of his message; and the people were in trouble. What were they thinking?

23-2: Thoughts of Isaiah 55 as Background for the Thinking of God’s People.

Isaiah 55 also as an Introduction to the Temple Message of Jeremiah.

Thoughts of God versus Thoughts of God’s People. As we come to the Temple Message of Jeremiah in chapters 7 and 23, we will focus on what in the world
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God's people of that time were thinking to allow them to ignore the message of God through Jeremiah. What is very obvious to us is the contrast even in America today between the thought patterns of God, and emphasis; and the thought patterns of God's people of any age, and to the extent that they are influenced by the dominant thought patterns of their generation.

1. Like today, God Himself decides the acceptable times that He will hear prayers from His own people, and the times when He will no longer receive intercessory prayers on the behalf of His own people. Although we concentrate now on the book of Jeremiah for the contrast between the thoughts of God and the thoughts of God's people, it is to Isaiah that we turn for the introduction which will momentarily become clear, partially because it is Isaiah that so pungently announces "the acceptable time" and times of the LORD God, when He will hear and when He will not hear prayers. Other reasons you will find as we introduce Jeremiah with Isaiah 55:6-11: it mentions the contrast often between the "thoughts and ways" of God as compared to even the thoughts and ways of God's own people; it introduces the similarities between the seen and unseen worlds with an introduction to "rain, snow, and the Word of God"; in doing so it also alludes to the differences between the unseen world of God and the seen world where we see such objects as rain, snow, money, stock, profits, gain, success, and other things; and it provides a natural contrast with our own accomplishments, profits, and prosperity as compared to what God chooses to accomplish in the world and our lives, with what God wants to prosper from the word and words He sends through the Bible, what returns God gets on His own investments of His Word and Words, etc.

Isaiah 55:6

"Seek the LORD while He may be found."  (Isaiah 55:6a)

Today, we may think at first that this is not talking about God's people; because they have already in the past sought God when they knew that He was available to them, but that is exactly the kind of contrasting thoughts to those of God that God's people of Jeremiah had: like today, they were saying in effect--and in a few moments we will look at the exact words and thoughts...were saying in effect, that God has blessed us, our house of God, our city and nation in the past, and He will continue to do that in spite of anything we do. In fact beyond that they were saying, "we are (actually delivered to do all these things"), alias, God is blessing us exactly because we are doing these things.
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“Call upon Him while He is near.” (Isaiah 55:6b)

Well in Jeremiah, God was no longer near as He instructed Jeremiah, the only prophet and priest in the country that was even listening to God...told Jeremiah that He was no longer near in that He would not heed, answer, or even listen to prayer. And so many churches today, in spite of the discontinuance of Wednesday night prayer and especially of the cessation of the effectual fervent prayer based on righteousness, in spite of these conditions in most churches, they confoundently think (and this is another contrast between the way God thinks and the way churches think, that because it is group prayer in their church, it will be heeded and answered. Somehow it is thought that in spite of all the bad habits and the “Den of Thieves” in any house of God, that somehow when you mix all that unrighteousness together collectively among a large body of the people of God, it becomes holy; and that the prayers as expressed by that group become somehow righteous and effectual prayers. What a fiction!

“Let the wicked forsake his way.” (Isaiah 55:7a)

“Ah-ha, preacher, I have you now as here it is obvious that God’s Word in Isaiah is talking about those outside the churches and temple, about the wicked, the heathen, the atheists, and the agnostic!” Well, brother and sister, read on in Isaiah.

“And the unrighteous man, his thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:7b)

You see, it is talking about any unrighteous man, whether he is in a temple or a church, or any house of God, or outside of such; and by the way, it is a call for change in thoughts, a change in the way of thinking among God’s people, because then as now, the people had ways and means of thinking that were and are so drastically different from the thoughts and ways of God. And then the clincher comes in the last part of Isaiah 55:7c, that it is about God’s own people, then and now!

“Let him RETURN to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God for He will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55:7c)

2. Not only is the LORD God Creator of the Universe more intelligent than we are; but also the patterns of His thoughts and ways are so much higher and holier than the thinking of even God’s own people!
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**Isaiah 55:8,9**

3. The similarity of the Word of God, the Bible, and the words of God that fall into the lives of all God’s people to rain and snow is that: (a) it prospers in lives of faith and righteousness for the sake of God (God prospers); (b) it is not voided but God receives back from His investment in lives; (c) God gets a RETURN on His investment; and (d) the Bible accomplishes in the lives of certain believers what God pleases—"many of called but few chosen".

4. One difference between the seen, like rain and snow and money and investment returns and profits; and the unseen, is exactly that we live in a world where the materials such as money and rain and snow are more seen and noticed than the unseen matters of God and faith.

5. Another difference between the seen things of this world such as rain, snow, and money and the unseen things of God such as faith and the Bible words that change lives is in the unseen things, God: (a) PROSPERS; (b) Gets RETURNS on His investment; (c) gets ACCOMPLISHMENTS in the world as well as in heaven; and (d) God gets PLEASURE more than us.

23-3: The book of Isaiah as background to fully understand Jeremiah.

Primarily we are after background to understand the history of thought of God’s people in the time of Jeremiah that allowed them to ignore the Temple Message of Jeremiah from God.

1. Like B.H. Carroll records, and based on Sampey that went before him, the book of Isaiah was wisely placed in the Old Testament ahead of all the Prophets from Isaiah to Malachi, not because of historical sequence {Obadiah, Joel, Jonah, Amos, and Hosea were before or contemporary with Isaiah}, but because Isaiah spreads out the total message of Prophecy and history.

2. The key verse of BIBLE REPORTS, of this book, that of the "who has believed our report" of Isaiah 53:1 is suggested by Carroll and Sampey as the "Heart of the prophetic message, from Isaiah to Malachi, of the Old Testament {Please see THE MESSAGE OF THE WRITING PROPHETS*, where all the Prophets, major and minor, of the OT are purported to have preached a single message, this also is a thesis of unheeded Bible Reports. A suggestion, of course, that no more than a very small remant will ever believe! (Read Isaiah 1:9) *MESSAGE OF THE WRITING PROPHETS is volume 5 of the LCC."
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(1). In order to appreciate this middle position of Isaiah 53, that is in the middle of the last 27 chapters of Isaiah, the chapters on Peace, we should quickly consider the top outline of Sampey on Isaiah.

____________Sampey’s Outline of Isaiah____________

I. Prophecies on Judgment, 1:2 through 35:10.

NOTE: For a world and present perspective, we should note that one of the detailed judgments, far beyond on Babylon and Assyria and Moab and Judah and Israel, is the precise judgment on all nations, a judgment that is still pending; and a judgment which can not be ignored in America today, as part of the world, even if this country can ignore and minimize the chastisement of the recent series of calamities on this nation since 911.

2. Book of Immanuel, Isaiah 7-12.
3. Foreign Prophecies, Isaiah 13-23.
5. Book of Zion or Woes, Isaiah 28-33.

II. Historical Interlude: God’s Miraculous Rescue of Jerusalem from the King of Assyria in 710 B.C. Isaiah 36-37.

NOTE: As we look at the Temple Message of Jeremiah in order to understand what in the world God’s people were thinking, we may find some rationalization or justification in the heritage of their history that God had rescued them before. This would help somewhat to understand the concept of salvation and peace in spite of the fact that the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel were now virtually gone—except for a few inhabitants—into Captivity, and in spite of the daily and eminent threats from foreign kings to their own freedom and survival. (Of course they trusted often in the nation of Egypt for their salvation, a false sense of security against which both the Prophet Isaiah and the Prophet Jeremiah warned! Sometimes we must wonder if the trust of Israel for rescue by the United States, and for Peace, is also not a false sense of security for the Israel of today! Of course, we know final rescue comes from God, Revelation 20:9.

III. The Three Last Books of Peace, Isaiah 40-66.
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NOTE: By the way Carroll likes to call these last 27 chapters of Isaiah on Peace, chapters 40-66, “One Great Messianic Poem”. What God is really doing here is to lay out his eternal plan for the earth and for the people of God. Comfort and assurance, that He has it all under control in spite of all the chastisements, punishments, judgments; and in spite of the believing of the reports by only a “very small remnant”. Each generation may have only a very small remnant of real people of God that are called and chosen; however, God will extend history long enough until the very small remants of each year add up to enough thousands of years to make a vast multitude that no man can number in eternity, to repopulate the new earth!

1. The Purpose of Peace, Isaiah 40-48

Now, we can appreciate that right in the middle of all this peace from God and all this summary from Isaiah of complete prophesy of the OT is the BIBLE REPORTS of Isaiah 53:1. And of course, we could not leave this background of Isaiah point, without a quick look at (1) the introductory words of Isaiah 53:1 how it is both on the salvation of God and the Messiah as the means of salvation, and (2) the atonement or crucifixion of Christ as predicted in Isaiah 53:5,6 and fulfilled in the BIBLE REPORTS of the four gospels, explained in the rest of the New Testament.

(1). Introduction to the BIBLE REPORTS of the Bible, Isaiah 53:1, as on God’s salvation and on God’s Messiah as the method of salvation.

“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? {Often in history as in the times of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and today, it has seemed as though not only is none listening among God’s people, but also who in the world is left for the salvation of God, or “who then can be saved” is the rich and well-to-do are not automated for salvation.) For HE...” {And that HE, of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross for the sins of the world.] (Isaiah 53:1,2a)

(2). The atonement, crucifixion, or cross introduced in initial words, 53:5,6.

“But He was wounded for our transgressions....And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” (Isaiah 53:5,6)
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3. Isaiah is a large book, although smaller than Jeremiah which we try to summarize from the first six chapters and in the Temple Message; but as Sampey and Carroll also point out in order to give us a condensed view of the history of God’s people, the Prophet Isaiah gives us in the very first chapter “A Preface to the Whole Book of Isaiah”.

23-4: Isaiah 1 as a Summary of Isaiah and of the Prophetic Message of the OT.

Once again from Sampey and Carroll, all of Isaiah and all of prophecy is summarized in the four points of chapter 1.

1. The charges and indictments from God Himself against God’s own people. (Isaiah 1:2-9)

Even as the Prophet Isaiah had in mind all of Israel, that is Judah and Israel, when he mentions Jerusalem as the city of God and Judah as the nation of God’s people, so God in the writing of the message of the prophets, just like we sing today about Jerusalem and Zion, had in mind all of God’s people of all time and of all nations. While we might be inclined to think that certain judgments, charges and indictments, of God against all nations were obliterated on the cross of the Messiah; not so, those charges of God against His own people of all time still stand. God still chastises like in the calamities from nature on Judah and Jerusalem, and then finally captivity, in such calamities of nature as the US has seen since 911; and the ultimate judgment on all nations by God is pending for the United States as it is for the rest of the world! (2 aspects of Day of the LORD)

What are those charges or indictments of God? They are six in number; and you yourself decide if they apply to America today, or at least which ones do and do not apply?

(1). God’s people, that God nourished and raised, have REBELLED against Him: “they have rebelled against Me”. (Isaiah 1:2b)

(2). God’s people no longer know God or even think about Him, “But Israel does not know, My people do not consider.” (Isaiah 1:3b)

NOTE: You see here in verse 1:3b how Israel is used for Judah and Jerusalem, for the united and divided kingdoms of God, alias for all the people of God of all time!
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(3). God’s children are corrupt in their wickedness, and they have departed from the living God, “Children who are corrupters, they have forsaken the LORD.” (Isaiah 1:4b)

(4). God had already chastised them so much there was no room on their body left for stipes, and the chastisement had ceased to bring gain: “There is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores...” (Isaiah 1:6b)

(5). The country of God’s people would become desolate and the remnant would go into captivity. (Isaiah 1:7) {Predicted long before Jeremiah!}

(6). An introductory preface is given here to the Program, Prince, and Purpose of Peace that is introduced by Isaiah, the message of the last 27 chapters of Isaiah, as a big ray of hope is given that there will always be “a very small remnant” of salvation that God will keep for Himself. (Isaiah 1:9)

NOTE: Face it, even like today, the long history of God’s people in the Old Testament with full exceptions is one of falling away, of rebellion, of chatisement, and of wickedness; and when suddenly we want to shed a ray of hope on all this dismay history, we are practicing the prophetic message of the Old Testament as introduced by Isaiah. The bottom line of which is that God’s called people, that is most of them, will also degenerate into wicked and rebellious people, but that out of each generation, sometimes more and sometimes less, much less in the generation of Jeremiah, God selects a very small remnant of His own called and chosen people until finally He has enough for a vast multitude for eternity and for the end of time. And to think any less or any more, is neither optimistic or pessimistic; but is the reality of the prophetic message of the Bible, the realities from God Himself. {You do not hear this from the fundamentalists!}

And we continue with the summary of the book of Isaiah and consequently of the whole prophetic message from Isaiah chapter one, with the four points of Isaiah.

2. God’s people had no shortage of religion and worship, but God’s people had replaced spirituality with formality. (Isaiah 1:10-17). We will find that also in the Temple Message of Jeremiah where God said that He was tired of their sacrifices and other aspects of worship, that to obey was better than to sacrifice; and I hope this summary point of Isaiah and prophecy reminds you of how Paul summarized the bad habits of church members in II Timothy 3:1-8 as “a
form of godliness without the power”, alias religion and worship and attendance without any internal change from God and spirituality.

“Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me.” (Isaiah 1:13)

NOTE: Please keep this definition of “abomination” in mind, when in the Temple Message of Jeremiah, God says after committing all these abominations all week, you have the nerve without even blushing before Me, to come before Me and say as part of your worship and thought, “We are delivered to do all these abominations”.

By the way, in Isaiah unlike in Jeremiah, there was still room for the repentance in the people; and here in Isaiah 1:17, we see what God considers to be the cure for FORMALITY WITHOUT SPIRITUALITY, whether in Isaiah, Jeremiah, or today among God’s people.

“Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor {something not very popular today from the pulpit or otherwise as the concept of tolerance of the American Democratic Faith overcomes the sense of godliness and righteousness of Christian and Bible Based Faith}; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.” (Isaiah 1:17)

NOTE: Who is pleading for the widow that recently lost her home in America, or lost her retirement as her 401K was destroyed by American greed and selfishness. And while we might hear and want to hear of a few stories of care for the fatherless and the widows, no doubt in this economic crisis it has grown worse and worse for the poor as even from the government we hear every day of a redistribution of wealth away from middle class and the poor into the hands of those of incomes of 250,000 plus. Even in Russia and with a noted professor of history, Americans are believing in the possibility of a divided United States caused by conflict over inequality in financial distributions. {Average tea party member is rich, white, and a senior.}

That was quick, we are half through with Isaiah and all the Prophets of the Old Testament, that is as summarized in the first chapter of Isaiah in four points.

3. In Isaiah and Prophesecy as summarized in the third point of Isaiah 1, Isaiah 1:18-23: (1) God offered grace and mercy; (2) God appealed to reason; and (3) God gave assurance of the deepest cleansings of the deepest pollutions.
4. Finally in the Isaiah 1 summary of Isaiah and all prophesy, Isaiah 1:24-31, God tells how the judgment on the ungodly is both punitive and corrective.

(1) Punitive judgment {Second and final aspect of the Day of the LORD}.

Even in the three books of peace, remember the last 27 chapters of Isaiah, the concluding verses of all three books in Isaiah 57:21, in Isaiah 48:21, and in the very last words of Isaiah 66:24, are eternal words of God’s punitive judgment against the ungodly.


b. Isaiah 57:21, “no peace, says my God, for the wicked”.

c. Isaiah 66:24, corpses of men who transgressed against God.

(2) Corrective judgment, calamities from God here on earth.

23-5: Surely Jeremiah 1-6 Provides Insight on the Thoughts of the People.

State of the Country in Judah with God’s own People. (Jeremiah 1-6)

There are two ways to understand the Temple Message of Jeremiah in chapters 7 and 23: Either (1) to consider the background for the message in chapters 1 through 7; or (2) to look at what is happening in the Judah today of the United States. Since the first is less painful and more likely to be heeded, we will start with it. (God’s people until recently have been those of America.)

1. First we note in Jeremiah 1:1-3 that the book of Jeremiah records “word of Jeremiah”; that it was to Jeremiah “to whom the word the of L ORD” (we will presume that this is our same L ORD God the Father, the same L ORD of hosts of all Jews and Gentiles, the same God of all God’s people); and the outstanding event was “the carrying away of Jerusalem captive” of 626 B.C. You might note for purposes of determination of the thought patterns of the people of God, that approximately one hundred years had passed since the background of Isaiah and one hundred years approximately since they had been saved from captivity to Assyria.

2. Jeremiah was ordained by God Himself as contrasted to all the official prophets and priests of the nation at that time, of whom the record says, “They ran and I did not call them” (Jeremiah 23:21); and Jeremiah was specifi-
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cally ordained to be “a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5). God had in the book of Jeremiah a message not only for His own people of His own nation, but also a message for all the nations of the earth. And we should note as we have seen in Isaiah and will see again in Jeremiah that it was a perennial message of all time for all nations. Especially the charges, indictments, and judgments of God were lasting for all times, right up to eternity. You see that inclusive and for all time nature in the words of Isaiah 1:10.

“See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.” (Jeremiah 1:10)

3. You will see as you have never seen in the inspiration of the Bible, and the concept of inspiration, how God chose the very words of the book of Jeremiah. “Behold”, the wording is in Jeremiah 1:9, “I have put My words in your mouth”. Please keep this in mind as God gives Jeremiah the words of the Temple Message where we find point by point by God Himself a description of what God’s people of that time were doing, what they were saying, and what they were thinking. These are God’s own thoughts on their thoughts, and God’s own conclusions of the way they were thinking and living, the favorite words for which were the “ways and doings” of God’s people.

4. Even as you have learned from Isaiah one hundred years previously that God had sent so many calamities for chastisements on His own people that no room was left on their backs for chastisement, for they had become hardened against chastisement, so you learn from both books that one “more calamity from the north shall break forth” (Jeremiah 1:14).

5. We are forewarned in Jeremiah 1:10 that through these words given to Jeremiah and recorded in the book of Jeremiah, “I will utter My judgments against them concerning all their wickedness”. God will again like in Isaiah enumerate both all his charges, indictments, and judgments, and enumerate the details of their wickedness, even get into with the Temple Message that He gave Jeremiah, of the thoughts and sayings of the people. Of course, God has Jeremiah both record the sayings of the people and what they thought about those sayings; but then made the final judgment call on what the people were thinking when they made certain common statements in the temple and otherwise. You will find that some of the statements recorded from the people were actually part of the praise songs in their temple worship each Sabbath day.
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6. The reasons for this judgment from God against their wickedness is given first on the general level: (1) because God's people had "forsaken Me"; (2) because they burned "incense to other gods" {you recall how even 100 hundred years ago and in Isaiah God was tired of their incense and sacrifices in worship, and you will find further in the temple message that during the week on rooftops throughout the cities of Jerusalem and Judah, the families as part of family worship and activity would offer incense to the Queen of Heaven}; and (3) "worshipped the works of their own hands". {Also common today!}

NOTE: Even if God's people in the many churches of America today can claim innocence from forsaking God and from burning incense to other gods, and that is questionable, they can not claim innoncence from the worship of the works of their own hands, albeit it be a temple or church dedicated to God, or a home, or a work building, and so on.

7. God warns Jeremiah in 1:18,19 that he has been made a "fortified city" because all the nation is going to fight against him: (1) the kings of Judah will fight against him and the message; (2) the princes, or government of Judah, will fight against the Prophet Jeremiah and his message; (3) the priests, of all people, and we will see why as we get into the Temple Mesege, will fight against him {by the way Jeremiah was the son of a priest of Anatoth and the people there tried to kill him when he would not cease to deliver the same message from God}; and (4) the "people of the land" will fight against you.

8. Jeremiah 2 (2:1-3) starts with a "Go" to Jeremiah, to GO "cry in the hearing of Jerusalem" even though the message is to be addressed to Israel; and once again rather than being to the divided northern kingdom of Israel already in a series of occupations and deportations with Assyria, is another way to talk about both, all of God's people. The lament is of how the mighty have fallen from when they came into the holy land under Joshua to take possession, a lament over when "Israel was holiness to the LORD" under the judges, Samuel, King Saul, King David, and Solomon.

"Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. Thus says the LORD: 'What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, have followed idols, and have become idolaters?'" (Jeremiah 2:4,5)

(1). God goes back to His heritage in the 12 tribes of Jacob, later named Israel with the "all the families" of Israel."
(2). God at this point is pleading for justice in the treatment of His people, for Himself, and justice on the two-way covenant that was made between God and His people.

(3). God calls Israel by an interesting term in 2:3, "the firstfruits of His increase", a picturesque manner in which to say those 12 tribes of Israel were to be the beginnings of a building of a people of God; and notice at this point it is LORD instead of LORD of hosts which always implies the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews.

(4). Part of the covenant on God’s part was security and protection, all surrounding nations that attempted to devour them would experience disaster. Among other victorious deliverances this would primarily remind Jerusalem of the miraculous deliverance in Isaiah from Sennacherib, the King of Assyrian, in 710 B.C. (Jeremiah 2:3)

(5). As Israel had during the last 100 plus years gone to follow idols, they had simultaneously “gone far from” God. (2:5)

(6). The lament of God Himself over backsliden Israel continues in that His own people did not even say, “Where is the LORD who rescued us out of Egypt” and preserved us for 80 years in the wilderness? (2:6-7) God brought them into a “bountiful land” and led them in the dominance over their neighbors.

a. Not even the priests were saying during the generations since entrance into the land, “Where is the LORD?” They did not even miss the God who brought them there, God laments.

b. The scribes and scholars of the law did not even know and understand God. Along with the word of God through the Prophet Isaiah and other Prophets, the law through the Prophet Moses had been given to Israel; and yet those very custodians of the law did not “know” God.

c. The rulers were violating the law of the Ten Commandments and the covenant in that they “transgressed against Me”, leaving us open to the possibility we will confirm in the Temple Message that simultaneously with false knowledge of God Himself was a lack of understanding of the real meaning of the Ten Commandments. A thing we do find prevalent today as gambling on many fronts is rationalized; as greed and great gain overlooks covetousness; and as intellectual honesty is divorced from integrity.
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d. The Prophets, all except Jeremiah, did two basic things wrong in the sight of God, although we will find much more wrong with them especially on special revelations based on visions and dreams: first, they prophesied in the name of Baal like so many of their neighbors; and two, “they walked after things that do not profit.” {We will hear much more about what does not profit in the Temple Message.}

(7). The defiling of the land given by God was more than a hundred years old as it started, God says, right after His people entered the land (2:7b).

(8). As in Isaiah, in God’s sight “an abomination” is a word that God uses often in Jeremiah. Here in 2:7b, it is that God’s people have “made My heritage an abomination.” It is a sad day, especially to God, when a people have even made the heritage of their history an abomination in the sight of God. It would seem that the 80 year plus investment that God made to get these people out of Egypt and to preserve at least the younger generation of them was wasted as the returns from the people was an abomination instead of a blessing to the glory of God. When you think of the returns, profits, and prosperities to God of Isaiah 55, instead in the times of Isaiah and Jeremiah it was an abomination.

9. Who among all the nations of the earth, among all the heathens, has it ever been heard that “a nation changed its gods, which are not gods?” Think of it, China in its long history retains its many gods; the Buddhist countries retain their gods; and the Muslims, mostly Arabs, retain the god of Allah and the Prophet Muhammed who wrote the Koran to emulate the Bible.

10. Profit comes up again on this subject of changing gods as God laments that “My people {a people God had chosen to be His own back at Abraham before they existed} have changed their glory”, that is what was the very “Glory” of the nation, that they had as God the God of the Universe Himself, was changed into something which would not profit.

11. The famous saying from God--My people have committed two evils (another word for two abominations) in that (1) they have forsaken Me as the fountain of living waters and (2) they have built themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water--is introduced as part of the lament in 2:12 and 13 with an appeal by God to the heavens as He can think of no higher appeal than to Himself as the real Creator of the heavens instead of the false gods like the Queen of Heaven:
“Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid {you get the implication here that such forsaking of God has long range and eternal implications for the final destruction of the heavens and the earth}: Be very desolate {already God has decided on that the defiled earth and the defiled heavens would be destroyed in favor of a new heaven and a new earth along with a new people of God, and begins to leak out some of this ultimate truth--don’t forget in the end passages of the previous oracles of God from Isaiah is a solid introduction to the new people, the new earth, and the new heavens}, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 2:12)

NOTE: At this point in the reading of the first six chapters of Jeremiah, you would begin to think that much of the Temple Message will be an elaboration on the two evils or abominations of the people: (1) the forsaking of the God of the foundation of living waters, alias salvation now and eternally; and (2) the ways and doings as the people built broken cisterns that would not hold water, and sought to justify with excuses and praise songs, their “ways and doings” even in the worship service and attendance at the Temple of God. You will be startled by the accusation of God against them through Jeremiah’s Temple Message as God says you don’t even blush when you come before me with sacrifices and little praise songs of lying words about the abominations you have commmitted all week. You even have the nerve to say that the very reason we are delivered each year is in order to continue to do all these abominations. Later in the Temple Message, you will hear Jeremiah decry about “the lying words that do not profit”; and we will come to focus on some of these lying words as clues to what in the world the people of God were thinking.

12. Now the book of Jeremiah in 2:14 comes to focus on the northern kingdom of Israel as part of the families of God, and the fact of their Captivity under Assyria. Actually on the northern kingdom there were many raids by the Assyrians over many years, at least the one hundred between Isaiah and Jeremiah; some residents were killed, others transplanted, and more faithful to Assyrian rulers and residents imported. Even the close neighbors of Nop and Tahpanhes {western lands of the Arabian desert} were taking advantage of the northern kingdom.

(1). You recall from New Testament studies that this was the beginning of intermarriage of the northern kingdom centered around Damascus and Samaria, that later caused Judah and Jerusalem to treat them as half-breeds, as even
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the disciples of Jesus were surprised that Jesus spoke with the woman of Samaria at the well, and about living water.

(2). Such picturesque words from God as “Is Israel a Servant” (2:14-17) remind them of all these bad results of invasion from Assyria: (a) born as slaves in a foreign land, (b) the land of the northern kingdom constantly plundered, (c) youth of a younger country made the land waste, (d) cities were burnt, became uninhabitated and deserted, and (e) neighbors took advantage of them (by the way, Isaiah and Jeremiah both pass on the judgments of God against all these neighbors for the wrongs they did to the people of God, including the more distant neighbors of Assyria and Babylon. You may recall that Isaiah mentions “Cyrus” by name, the king of Persia who destroyed the kingdom of Babylon).

(3). “Have you not brought this on yourself?” (2:17) God and Jeremiah were telling the people of Israel and Judah, that whether you recognize it in the face of all the lying words you speak in the Temple and elsewhere, it is true that you brought this calamity of captivity upon yourself!

23–6: Concluding Purpose and Prayer of this Book Against Excuses.

The concluding prayer of this book is that you will see in the many excuses (“lying words in the sight of God) of Jeremiah, the same rationalizations and justifications that God’s people in the churches use today to continue a formality of worship mixed with unamended abominations in the sight of God, also based in the thought patterns and excuses of the American people in the land! Primarily the big excuses of: (1) since this building is a house of God, or a Temple of God, we are safe and saved in it, likewise about the buildings of our government, nation, and cities; and (2) that the sacrifices we make for attendance in these houses of God is sufficient for salvation in spite of our “ways and doings” during the week (that God sees as abominations); and (3) the substitution of many broken cisterns of life, other gods and objects of loyalty, in the place of the Living God of the Living Water of Continued Salvation.

Like for God’s people of Jeremiah and Isaiah, it is the only way of continued survival for a nation of God’s people. Without the righteousness and godliness that comes from amended abominations like the three listed above, the series of calamities since 911 will continue unabated no matter how many times southern baptist and others rebuild; and without the effectual fervent prayer to God as a natural outgrowth of this righteousness, there can be no continued salvation for church members and the nation!
In several ways, the book of Jeremiah is the largest in the Bible; and diligent Bible Studies are required to get an appreciation for the content of the message from God. (By the way, it is one of the most literal, without much Prophetic interpretation in the Bible, as quite often the Prophet Jeremiah just records directly what God has to say. Fewer other places in the Bible does “thus saith the LORD”, or the “Word of the LORD came saying” have so much meaning.) For more on “Bible Studies in Jeremiah and Prophecy” the reader is referred to that subject on the SunGrist_Bible website, http://biblecombibleman.com/BibleStudiesInJeremiah/.

However, we are fortunate that God in His provision to communicate, had Jeremiah preach the essentials of the book at the gates of the Temple everyday, and then record those essentials in Jeremiah 7. (Below is a brief outline of the Temple message.)

The Temple Message of Jeremiah.

1. Amend Your Ways and Doings.

2. Do not Trust in Lying Words: the Misplaced Trust in Buildings for Salvation.

3. Do not Trust in Lying Word that Cannot Profit.

   (1). The lies were based on a misunderstanding of the law in the ten commandments.

   (2). They were based on mistrust in their past as a continued means of salvation for the future. {the heritage of their faith}

   (3). They did not blush, nor were they ashamed about the contradiction between their weekly “ways and doings”-abominations in the sight of God--and their boldness to stand before God in worship, in His house, and on the Sabbath.

   (4). Indeed, the very fact that they still existed as a House of God and as a Nation was proof to them that they were doing what was right, “We are delivered to do all these abominations.”

4. “Do you not know that the patience of God leads you to repentance?”
5. The "Den of Thieves" of Jeremiah 7:11 and from Jesus with the House of Prayer from Jesus and Isaiah. (In the mean time until May please refer to the "Den of Thieves" E-book of SunGrist_Bible. Please see:


6. No more Prayer for the People of God.

7. To obey is better than any sacrifice in worship or attendance.

8. "Truth Has Perished" (Jeremiah 7:28-34), and "the land shall be desolate".