

## Unanswered Prayer: Idolatry

The prophet Jeremiah lived in the Southern Kingdom Judah and prophesied before and after the Fall of Jerusalem, which he witnessed. Through the prophet, God reveals why He is expelling the nation from the Promised Land.

Then Yahweh said to me, "A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words, and they have walked after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I cut with their fathers." Therefore thus says Yahweh, "Behold, I am bringing calamity on them which they will not be able to get out of; and they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them. (Jer 11:9-11, LSB)

1. As you observe Jeremiah 11:9-11, what is the definition of key words like "conspiracy" and "iniquities?" What covenant is Jeremiah referring to?

2. What was God's people guilty of? List all the offenses you can see.

3. From your interpretation, how does this apply today? What idols exist today?

## Unanswered Prayer: Idolatry

### Teacher Notes

The prophet Jeremiah lived in the Southern Kingdom Judah and prophesied before and after the Fall of Jerusalem, which he witnessed. Through the prophet, God reveals why He is expelling the nation from the Promised Land.

Then Yahweh said to me, "A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words, and they have walked after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I cut with their fathers." Therefore thus says Yahweh, "Behold, I am bringing calamity on them which they will not be able to get out of; and they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them. (Jer 11:9-11, LSB)

Teach the student: to learn more about a character of the Bible, you can use an online resource like the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.

1. Search: international Bible encyclopedia
2. At the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia website, use their Alphabetical Index: J
3. Select: Jeremiah (2)

1. As you observe Jeremiah 11:9-11, what is the definition of key words like "conspiracy" and "iniquities?" What covenant is Jeremiah referring to?

Encourage the student to always take the time to understand words the way the Bible intended and not the way we understand words in our culture today. If you can't find a word from a variety of Bible dictionaries, use an English dictionary to make sure you have the correct meaning of a word.

Conspiracy = a group of people working together to do something unlawful. In this instance, the leadership of the Southern Kingdom Judah together rejected the calls of God's prophets to fulfill their covenant commitments and instead served other gods.

Iniquity = the Old Testament meaning is about an offense to God's law that includes the idea of the sin and God's judgment / punishment of it.

Introduce a good resource to consider: Vine's Expository Dictionary of OT and NT Words.

1. Search: studylight vines ot words
2. Select: Vine's Expository Dictionary of OT Words
3. Select: letter "I"
4. Select: iniquity

Covenant = the covenant that Jeremiah is referring to is the Mosaic Covenant. This conditional covenant determined if God's people would be blessed with the Promised Land or not. By this time, the Northern Kingdom Israel was gone and out of the Promised Land for their covenant infidelity. Now the Southern Kingdom Judah irrevocably failed to keep their covenant commitments and faced expulsion from the Promised Land.

Remind the student: when you understand words correctly, the meaning (interpretation) of the passage becomes easy to understand, and the more accurately you can apply the principle to your life.

2. What was God's people guilty of? List all the offenses you can see.

Encourage the student to circle all of the offenses he sees in the passage. It's perfectly fine to mark up a Bible! If the student does not fully understand the offenses, explain them.

A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words.

They have walked after other gods to serve them.

The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I cut with their fathers.

3. From your interpretation, how does this apply today? What idols exist today?

Ask the student: what causes people to refuse to hear / listen God's word?

What "gods" do people serve today? How can you tell what you prefer to devote yourself to?

What covenant relationship with God is offered today?

Provide some time to discuss the above findings.