

Broken Cisterns



Jeremiah 2:11–13; 17:5–13 · This week: Before I Formed Thee in the Belly I Knew Thee, Jeremiah 1–3; 7; 16–18; 20

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 43, “Before I Formed Thee in the Belly I Knew Thee,” on Gospel Library**

START

Jeremiah asks us to picture two ways to get water. One is a spring that never stops flowing. The other is a cracked tank dug into the rock.

READ TOGETHER

In the dry hills of Judah, people cut cisterns, or tanks, into the rock to catch rainwater. A cracked cistern leaked, and whatever water stayed in it went stale. Water from a spring was called living water, because it kept moving.

JEREMIAH 2:13

¹³ For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

JEREMIAH 17:7–8

⁷ Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. ⁸ For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

WHAT IT TEACHES

In Jeremiah 2:13, the Lord says his people did two wrong things. They left him, “the fountain of living waters,” and they dug their own cisterns, “broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” Their idols took hard work and gave nothing back.

Jesus used the same picture with a Samaritan woman at a well. He told her the water he gives becomes “a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:10–14). He is the fountain Jeremiah described.

Jeremiah 17:5–6 compares a person who trusts only in people to a scrub bush in a salt desert. Verses 7 and 8 compare a person who trusts the Lord to a tree planted by a river. Its roots reach the water, so its leaves stay green in the heat, and it keeps bearing fruit in a dry year. A few verses later, Jeremiah calls the Lord “the fountain of living waters” a second time (Jeremiah 17:13).

TALK ABOUT IT

What are some “broken cisterns” people dig today, things that take a lot of work and still leave them thirsty? What helps you drink from the Savior’s living water?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Jeremiah called the Lord “the fountain of living waters.” Everything else we dig for ourselves leaks, and his water never runs out.