

# Jeremiah 2:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot.

## Analysis

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Despite God breaking their yoke in the Exodus and their initial pledge of obedience, Israel worshipped at pagan high places and under sacred trees, playing the harlot in spiritual adultery.

## Historical Context

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This verse from Jeremiah 2 continues God's covenant lawsuit against Judah, delivered during the late 7th century BC as the nation spiraled toward Babylonian exile. The prophetic indictment addresses systematic idolatry, failed political alliances, and spiritual adultery that characterized Judah from Manasseh through Jehoiakim's reigns. Archaeological evidence confirms widespread syncretistic worship practices condemned here.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does this accusation against ancient Israel reveal patterns of spiritual unfaithfulness that might appear in different forms today?
2. What does God's persistent lawsuit demonstrate about His desire for His people's return versus immediate judgment?

## Interlinear Text

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מִסְרָהִים יְהֹוָה נָפַת קְתִּין  
H3588 For of old time I have broken thy yoke and burst thy bands  
H5769 H7665 H5923 H5423 H4147

גַּבְעַת הַכָּל עַל כֵּן אָעַב דְּלָא וַתִּאמֶר  
and thou saidst H3808 I will not transgress H3588 H5921 H3605 hill  
H559 H5674 H1389

אֶת כָּל עַז יְתַחַת | כָּל עַל כֵּן גַּבְעַת הַכָּל  
when upon every high H8478 H3605 tree and under every green H859  
H1364 H6086 H7488

צָעַת הַזָּהָב:  
thou wanderest playing the harlot  
H6808 H2181

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 12:2** (Parallel theme): Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:

**Leviticus 26:13** (Parallel theme): I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

**Jeremiah 17:2** (Parallel theme): Whilst their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills.

**Isaiah 1:21** (Parallel theme): How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

**Jeremiah 30:8** (Parallel theme): For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:

**Hosea 3:3** (Parallel theme): And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.

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