

JEREMIAH 44: 1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews who lived in the land of Egypt, who lived at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Memphis, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

Jeremiah reproves the Jews in Egypt for continuing in idolatry after the exemplary judgments indicted by God on their nation for that sin, Jer 44:1-14; and, upon their refusing to reform, denounces destruction to them, and to that kingdom wherein they sought protection, vv. 15-30.

Verse 1

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews - Dahler supposes this discourse to have been delivered in the seventeenth or eighteenth year after the taking of Jerusalem.

Which dwell at Migdol - A city of Lower Egypt, not far from Pelusium.

Tahpanhes - Daphne Pelusiaca, the place to which the emigrant Jews first went.

Noph - מִפְּנֵי Maphes, Targum. Memphis. a celebrated city of Middle Egypt, and the capital of its district.

The country of Pathros - A district of Upper Egypt, known by the name of the Thebais. See Bochart, Lib. Phaleg, lib. iv., c. 22. Thus we find that the Jews were scattered over the principal parts of Egypt.

JEREMIAH 44: 2 Thus says the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel: You have seen all the evil that I have brought on Jerusalem, and on all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwells therein,

Verse 2

No man dwelleth therein - The desolation of the land of Judea must have been exceedingly great when this, in almost any sense, could be spoken of it.

JEREMIAH 44: 3 because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, to serve other gods, that they didn't know, neither they, nor you, nor your fathers.

JEREMIAH 44: 4 However I sent to you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Oh, don't do this abominable thing that I hate.

Verse 4

O, do not this abominable thing - A strong specimen of affectionate entreaty. One of the finest figures of poetry, when judiciously managed, the anthropopathia, the ascribing human passions to God, is often used by this prophet: so God is said to grieve, to mourn, to have his bowels moved with

compassion, to repent, to be angry, etc. Here he is represented as tenderly expostulating: O, do not; or, I entreat you, do not that abominable thing which I hate.

1. Do it not: your God commands.
2. O, do it not: your Father entreats.
3. It is an abominable thing, and should not be done.
4. I hate it, and on that account ye should abstain from it.

JEREMIAH 44: 5 But they didn't listen, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense to other gods.

Verse 5

But they hearkened not -

1. They disregarded the authority of their God.
2. They were not moved by the entreaties of their most affectionate Father.
3. In abominations they delighted. And,
4. They loved that which God hated; and, apparently, because he hated it.

JEREMIAH 44: 6 Therefore my wrath and my anger was poured out, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as it is this day.

JEREMIAH 44: 7 Therefore now thus says the LORD, the God of Armies, the God of Israel: Why do you commit great evil against your own souls, to cut off from yourselves man and woman, infant and nursing child out of the midst of Judah, to leave yourselves no one remaining;

Verse 7

This great evil against your souls - Will not self-interest weigh with you? See what ruin your conduct has brought upon your country. Your fathers sinned as you are doing; and where are they now? Either destroyed, or in captivity. And you are now taking the same way to your own destruction.

JEREMIAH 44: 8 in that you provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you have gone to live; that you may be cut off, and that you may be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?

JEREMIAH 44: 9 Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives which they committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem?

Verse 9

Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers - It seems that the women were principal agents in idolatrous practices; for the queens - the wives, of rulers and of common people, burnt incense to the queen of heaven, (the moon), Jer 44:17, and poured out drink-offerings to her.

JEREMIAH 44: 10 They are not humbled even to this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

JEREMIAH 44: 11 Therefore thus says the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel: Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, even to cut off all Judah.

JEREMIAH 44: 12 I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to live there, and they shall all be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall; they shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine; they shall die, from the least even to the greatest, by the sword and by the famine; and they shall be an object of horror, an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.

JEREMIAH 44: 13 For I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence;

JEREMIAH 44: 14 so that none of the remnant of Judah, who have gone into the land of Egypt to live there, shall escape or be left, to return into the land of Judah, to which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for no one shall return save such as shall escape.

JEREMIAH 44: 15 Then all the men who knew that their wives burned incense to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, even all the people who lived in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

 Verse 15

Then all the men - and all the women - We have not seen the women in determined rebellion before. Here they make a common cause with their idolatrous husbands.

JEREMIAH 44: 16 As for the word that you have spoken to us in the LORD's name, we will not listen to you.

JEREMIAH 44: 17 But we will certainly perform every word that has gone out of our mouth, to burn incense to the queen of the sky, and to pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil.

JEREMIAH 44: 18 But since we left off burning incense to the queen of the sky, and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

JEREMIAH 44: 19 When we burned incense to the queen of the sky, and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her, without our husbands?

 Verse 19

And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven - The Moon seems to have been called מלכת melecheth, as the sun was called מלך molech. The Hindoos pour out water to the sun thrice a day; and to the moon whenever they worship her.

The idolatrous worship of these people was a sort of imitation of the worship of the true God; only sacrifice was not common in it. The factious women here tell us in what it consisted.

1. They burnt incense to the moon, and perhaps to the sun and the planets.
2. They poured out libations to her.
3. They made and consecrated cakes to her.

All these were prescribed in the worship of the true God. See, among others, Exo 29:23, etc.; Lev 2:4; Lev 23:16; and Num 6:15. And the women vindicate their conduct by asserting that they did all this by the consent of their husbands: "Did we worship her without our men?"

JEREMIAH 44: 20 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, to the men, and to the women, even to all the people who had given him an answer, saying,

JEREMIAH 44: 21 The incense that you burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, didn't the LORD remember them, and didn't it come into his mind?

JEREMIAH 44: 22 so that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which you have committed; therefore your land has become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day.

 Verse 22

Therefore is your land a desolation - I grant that ye and your husbands have joined together in these abominations; and what is the consequence? "The Lord could no longer bear because of your evil doings; and therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, this day."

JEREMIAH 44: 23 Because you have burned incense, and because you have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil has happened to you, as it is this day.

JEREMIAH 44: 24 Moreover Jeremiah said to all the people, and to all the women, Hear the LORD's word, all Judah who are in the land of Egypt:

JEREMIAH 44: 25 Thus says the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, saying, You and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and with your hands have fulfilled it, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of the sky, and to pour out drink offerings to her: establish then your vows, and perform your vows.

JEREMIAH 44: 26 Therefore hear the LORD's word, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great name, says the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, As the Lord GOD lives.

JEREMIAH 44: 27 Behold, I watch over them for evil, and not for good; and all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until they are all gone.

JEREMIAH 44: 28 Those who escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, who have gone into the land of Egypt to live there, shall know whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs.

JEREMIAH 44: 29 This shall be the sign to you, says the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that you may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil:

JEREMIAH 44: 30 Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of those who seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, who was his enemy, and sought his life.

Verse 30

Behold I will give Pharaoh-hophra - That is, Pharaoh Apries. How this and the prophecies in the preceding chapter were fulfilled, we learn from ancient historians. The sum of such information is this: the subjects of Pharaoh Apries rebelling, he sent Amasis, one of his generals, to reduce them to their duty. But no sooner had Amasis begun to make his speech, than they fixed a helmet on his head, and proclaimed him king. Amasis accepted the title, and confirmed the Egyptians in their revolt; and the greater part of the nation declaring for him, Apries was obliged to retire into Upper Egypt; and the country being thus weakened by intestine war, was attacked and easily overcome by Nebuchadnezzar, who on quitting it left Amasis his viceroy. After Nebuchadnezzar's departure, Apries marched against Amasis; but, being defeated at Memphis, was taken prisoner, carried to Sais, and was strangled in his own palace, thus verifying this prophecy. See Herodotus in Euterpe.

Thus Nebuchadnezzar made an easy conquest of the land. He conquered it as easily as "a shepherd puts on his cloak: he went thence in peace," having clothed himself with its spoils; and left all quiet under a viceroy of his own choosing. The rebellion of Pharaoh's subjects was the "fire that God kindled in Egypt," Jer 43:12. And thus was he "delivered into the hands of his enemies," his revolted people; and "into the hand of him who sought his life," i.e., Amasis his general. And thus the whole prophecy was literally fulfilled.