

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part LXXI: Judah's Failure To Trust God's Word Above Her Own Understanding (Jeremiah 42:7-43:7)

I. Introduction

- A. When Johanan the son of Kareah's fear that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah might want to kill Gedaliah sadly proved to be true, it led Johanan and his followers to rely heavily on his understanding in times of crises.
- B. However, they ended up trusting man's understanding over God's Word, not only an error, but what led to sin, a great lesson for us, and we read about it and view it in Jeremiah 42:7-43:7 for our insight and edification:

II. Judah's Failure To Trust God's Word Above Her Own Understanding, Jeremiah 42:7-43:7.

- A. After Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had assassinated the Babylonian puppet governor Gedaliah, what Johanan the son of Kareah had unsuccessfully tried to warn Gedaliah to avoid, Johanan and the people he now led traveled south near Bethlehem poised to travel down into Egypt for refuge from the Babylonians, Jer. 41:18.
- B. However, they first sought the word of the Lord from Jeremiah, the prophet whose correct prediction of Jerusalem's fall to the Babylonians had proved him to be God's true prophet, Jer. 42:1-6 with Deut. 18:20-22.
- C. In our last lesson we learned that this effort to obtain Jeremiah's message from God was very hypocritical, for Scripture forbade Judah's people from returning to Egypt (Deuteronomy 17:16) and proven prophet Jeremiah's message had all along been that Judah's people were to submit to Babylon, Jeremiah 28:1-17; 38:1-3, 17-18.
- D. Nevertheless, at the people's request, Jeremiah had offered to seek the Lord's counsel (Jeremiah 42:4), and ten days later, the Lord delivered His message on the matter to Jeremiah, Jeremiah 42:7.
- E. Predictably, God's message was consistent with what God had before told Jeremiah to say, Jeremiah 42:8-18:
 - 1. Upon calling Johanan the son of Kareah and all the guerilla force leaders and the rest of Judah's people together, Jeremiah reported that God was offering to build them up and not continue tearing them down as He had in the Babylonian invasion providing they not fear Babylon's king, for God would show them mercy were they to stay in the land, living by faith in the Lord and under Babylon's rule, Jeremiah 42:8-12.
 - 2. However, were they to disobey God and choose not to stay in Judah, but instead flee into Egypt, instead of escaping war and gaining alleged livelihood security, the sword, famine and disease they had faced in the Babylonian invasion in Israel, they would instead face war there when Egypt was invaded, Jer. 42:13-18.
- F. However, knowing the people had already decided to enter Egypt regardless what message he were to give them, Jeremiah warned his hearers that they had strayed from the Lord in promising that they would obey the message he gave them when they had already determined to go down into Egypt, Jer. 42:19-21 with 42:5.
- G. Thus, the people would die by the sword, famine and disease in Egypt where they were headed, Jer. 42:22.
- H. In response to Jeremiah's message, the people put their own understanding over the proven word of God from Jeremiah, holding their understanding to be right and that Jeremiah had not presented God's Word, Jer. 43:1-3:
 - 1. Johanan the son of Kareah and all the people with him **PROUDLY** charged Jeremiah with lying about giving them God's Word, claiming God had not told him to tell them not to enter Egypt, Jeremiah 43:1-2.
 - 2. Rather, they charged Jeremiah with being influenced by his scribe, Baruch, the son of Neriah, that Baruch had planned to turn them over to the Babylonians who, in vengeance for the assassination of their puppet governor Gedaliah, would kill some of them and take the rest captive were they to stay in Judah, Jer. 43:3.
 - 3. This reasoning was based on their recalling the Ishmael and Gedaliah matter: Johanan and the people with him thought that since Johanan had once discerned that Ishmael had had evil plans against Gedaliah and them, for someone else like Jeremiah not to agree with Johanan's and their understanding of their need to go into Egypt meant they were planning evil against them like Ishmael had done. In effect, they put their own understanding above the words of a proven prophet, their own understanding above the Word of God!
- I. Thus, Johanan the son of Kareah and all the guerilla forces and people took Jeremiah and his scribe, Baruch, down with them into Tahpanhes in northeastern Egypt, Jer. 43:4-7; Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, fn. to Jer. 2:16.

Lesson: *By proudly trusting their own understanding above God's Word that was given by God's proven messenger Jeremiah, the people of Judah disobeyed the Lord by going down into Egypt to their eventual catastrophic harm.*

Application: *(1) May we not rely on our own understanding above God's Word, Proverbs 3:5-6. (2) May we avoid the sin of pride that can lead us to rely on our own understanding over God's Word, Jeremiah 43:2. (3) If a reputable man of God ever gives us a warning, we must AT LEAST evaluate it in light of written Scripture!*