

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Jeremiah: Prophet Of Judgment Followed By Blessing

Part LXXIV: God's Judgment On Judah For Her Self-Deceiving Apostasy

(Jeremiah 44:15-30)

I. Introduction

- A. The Apostle Paul predicted that in the latter days of Church History, people would "go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13 NIV), so we will increasingly encounter deceived people.
- B. Self-deception is perhaps the greatest depth of apostasy, where one not only turns away from God's truth, but exchanges truth for error to make sin become righteousness and righteousness sin. The exiles of Judah did this, and we view the Jeremiah 44:15-30 record of the matter for our insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Judgment On Judah For Her Self-Deceiving Apostasy, Jeremiah 44:15-30.

- A. In response to his Jeremiah 44:1-14 message of judgment on them in Egypt, Judah's exiles who had fled to Egypt for refuge from Babylon not only refuted Jeremiah's message, but also rejected the Lord, Jer. 44:15-19.
 - 1. Of note, they claimed that the judgment Jeremiah just predicted was **his** message, indicating that they did **not** believe it to be **God's** message just as they had charged back in Jeremiah 43:1-3. (Jeremiah 44:16)
 - 2. However, they went further in not only denying Jeremiah to be God's true prophet, but adding that they did not believe Jahweh was true God either, for they would heed their **own** words in saying they would follow pagan gods like they, their fathers and rulers had done in Judah, for they alleged that life had been good when they worshipped those gods, that neglecting them had led to Judah's fall, Jeremiah 44:17-18.
 - 3. [Of note, the exiles' burning incense to the "queen of heaven" in Jeremiah 44:19 referred to the worship of the goddess whose origin was Semiramis, founder of what will be "Babylon the Great" in the Great Tribulation that today also exalts Mary the Mother of Jesus for worship in Roman Catholicism! (Bryce Self, "Semiramis, Queen of Babylon," www.Idolphin.org; Renald E. Showers, "The Queen of Heaven," Israel My Glory, July-August 2004, p. 23 cited in a-voice.org/tidbits/queen.htm)]
- B. Jeremiah in turn refuted this very apostate refutation by Judah's exiles, Jeremiah 44:20-30:
 - 1. He explained that the truth was just opposite their claim, that because Judah's people had burned incense to false pagan gods that God's wrath had been roused against them over a long time period until the Lord had finally brought about Judah's destruction in judgment for idolatry, Jeremiah 44:20-23.
 - 2. God's prophet added that the Lord had heard Judah's exiles say they would heed their own words and continue in their worship of the pagan gods, Jer. 44:24-25. Thus, the Lord took an oath in His own Name that the exiles of Judah would no more swear by His Name, but He would watch over them for harm and see them consumed by the sword and by famine, Jer. 44:26-27. Only a few of Judah's remnant would survive and realize it was **God's** words that would stand and not **their** words, Jeremiah 44:28.
 - 3. Proof that this prophecy was true would be the sign to Judah's exiles that God would give Pharaoh Hophra over to his foes who would kill him just as the Lord had handed Judah's king Zedekiah over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Jeremiah 44:29-30. "According to" secular Greek "historian Herodotus, Hophra lost his throne in 570 B. C. He sent Amasis, one of his generals, to quell a revolt among his army; but the army united behind Amasis and made him Pharaoh. Amasis defeated Hophra in battle and imprisoned him. Sometime later Amasis handed Hophra over to the Egyptians who were clamoring for Hophra's death, and they strangled him (Herodotus 2. 161-3, 169." ([Bible Know. Com., O. T.](#), p. 1191)
 - 4. Hophra's death occurred approximately two years before Babylon invaded Egypt (Ibid., p. 1190, 1191), so Judah's exiles would have been very anxious for the two years between Hophra's fall and Babylon's invasion, for Hophra's death indicated that Jeremiah's prophecy about the exiles' fall to Babylon was true.
- C. Tragically, Judah's exiles overlooked the fact that Jeremiah was a proven prophet of the true God since only he in Judah had rightly called the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon in line with Moses' Deuteronomy 18:21-22 test of a true prophet, Jer. 28:1-17 with 39:1-10. Judah's exiles overlooked this proof to stake **their** words against **Jeremiah's** words when in reality, as Jeremiah 44:28 revealed, it was **their** words against **GOD'S** words!

Lesson: For neglecting to heed the Biblical credibility of God's true prophet Jeremiah, Judah's exiles viewed his words as a mere man's words and so chose to heed their words above God's words and God to their destruction.

Application: May we heed Scripture's definitions of what is reality to avoid deceiving ourselves by twisting reality around to end up defining righteousness as sin and sin as righteousness, resulting in God's great discipline!