

Jer. 43:1 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, *even* all these words,

Jer. 43:2 Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

Jer. 43:3 But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

Again, this chapter continues in a chronological flow from the last chapter.

Once Jeremiah had delivered God's message to the people, the two main leaders, Azariah and Johanan, with the support of all other arrogant men who had decided that they knew better than God, accused Jeremiah of lying. I liked a quote used by JFB on this section of verses: "Pride is the parent of disobedience and contempt of God."

These men reasoned that Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe/assistant, had talked him into delivering them to the Babylonians to be taken as captives. Presumably, they felt that Jeremiah and Baruch were trying to better their own standing with the Babylonians.

Those who have chosen to reject God often try to justify their actions at the expense of people of faith. I think that they didn't trust Jeremiah and Baruch because they themselves were so untrustworthy. It seems that they had asked for prayer with the mindset of expecting God to affirm their own desires. Do we not often do the same?

Jer. 43:4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.

Jer. 43:5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah;

Jer. 43:6 *Even* men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

Jer. 43:7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to Tahpanhes.

Johanan seemed to be the de facto leader with the support of several other influential men. They easily persuaded the people to disobey God's word as delivered by Jeremiah and leave Judah. Evidently, the whole group was under the command of Johanan. They took every person that had been left with Gedaliah to Egypt—including Jeremiah and Baruch. I do not believe they were

given the option of staying, because I believe Jeremiah and Baruch would have obeyed God.

We are told that they stopped in Tahpanhes, a fortress city on the border of the Sinai Desert. According to the IVP Old Testament Commentary, there were other existing Jewish settlements in Egypt in the cities of Migdol, Memphis, Pathros and Elephantine. Adam Clarke notes that according to St. Jerome, it was in Tahpanhes that Jeremiah was killed by stoning.

Jer. 43:8 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

Jer. 43:9 Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which *is* at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah;

Jer. 43:10 And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

Jer. 43:11 And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, *and deliver such as are* for death to death; and *such as are* for captivity to captivity; and *such as are* for the sword to the sword.

Once in Tahpanhes, God once again speaks to Jeremiah. He instructs Jeremiah to gather some large stones and hide them in the mixture in the kiln that is used to make bricks at the entry to Pharaoh's house in plain view of the men of Judah. He is then to declare the word of the LORD, the God of Israel. He declares that God is going to send Nebuchadnezzar to conquer Egypt and establish his throne over Egypt on this very spot. When he comes, many will be killed and many will be taken captive. Point is made that Nebuchadnezzar will be acting as God's servant in judgment.

Yet again we are reminded that God uses some of the most unexpected people and methods of accomplishing His purposes.

Jer. 43:12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace.

Jer. 43:13 He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that *is* in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

The LORD is determined to destroy the temples to the false gods in Egypt by fire. Nebuchadnezzar is going to take away the ornate idols along with other treasures, and the wording indicates that he will meet with little resistance.

Bethshemesh is also known as Heliopolis or On, the city of the sun, and was about six miles northeast of Cairo. This city was known as the center of worship to the sun god.

Some commentaries note that there is no evidence that Babylon conquered Egypt. The NIV Commentary has the following notation: "A fragmentary text in the British museum indicates that Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt occurred in the thirty-seventh year of his reign (568–567 B.C.)." The following quote comes from Burton Coffman's Commentary: "...both the Babylonian historian Berossus 'confirms the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar'; and the Jewish historian Josephus flatly declared that, 'Nebuchadnezzar fell upon Egypt to subdue it; and he slew the king that then reigned and set up another.'"

Isn't it sad that the people continued to trust the wisdom of men rather than the proven word of God delivered by His prophet. Again I hear that familiar verse echoing in my brain...

Proverbs 14:12 "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."