

# **Jeremiah Lesson 9**

**Jeremiah 40:1 – 45:5**

# Jeremiah's Decision

- Jeremiah 39:11-14 and 40:1-6 Are Not in Synch
- In Jeremiah 39, Nebuzaradan, Captain of the Babylonian Guard, Took Jeremiah From the Court of the Guard in Jerusalem and Entrusted Him to Gedaliah
- In Jeremiah 40, Nebuzaradan Finds Jeremiah With Other Captives in Ramah and Gives Him 3 Choices For His Future
- Tremper Longman Suggests That Babylonian Soldiers Found Jeremiah With Gedaliah and Took Him Prisoner. This is How He Ended Up in Ramah

# Nebuzaradan

- Did You Notice He Speaks the Word of the Lord Given to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 40:1-5?
- We See This Device Elsewhere in Scripture
  - 2 Chronicles 35:20-22 (Pharaoh Neco to King Josiah)
  - Ezra 1:2-4 (King Cyrus of Persia to the Exiles)

# Who Was Gedaliah?

- A Judean; Son of Ahikam and Grandson of Shaphan
- Ahikam Protected Jeremiah After the Temple Sermon (Jeremiah 26)
- Shaphan Read the Book of the Law to King Josiah (2 Kings 22)
- Gedaliah Likely Inherited the Godly Nature of His Father and Grandfather
- A Seal Belonging to Gedaliah Was Found in 1935 in the Ruins of Lachish



A stamp seal found in Lachish in 1935. It reads "Belonging to Gedaliah, who is over the House.";  
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# Why Gedaliah?

- Nebuchadnezzar Wanted Someone He Could Control and the People Would Listen To
- It is Likely Babylonian Soldiers Were Present in Judah to Keep the Peace
- Gedaliah Would Represent the People of Judah to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 40:10)

# Ishmael

- Son of Nethaniah; Grandson of Elishama
- A Member of the Royal Family and an Officer of the King (Jeremiah 41:1)
- We Do Not Know Which King He Served
- Why Kill Gedaliah? Scripture Does Not Say.
- J. A. Thompson Suggests Ishmael Wanted to Be Governor or He Thought Gedaliah Was a Traitor
- Ammon May Have Been Involved to Agitate the Babylonians or to See More Israelites Die or Be Exiled

# To Egypt!

- Johanan and the Other Military Leaders Feared Reprisals From Babylon After the Murder of Gedaliah
- They Took the People They Rescued, the People Left With Gedaliah, Others Who Had Fled Judah, Jeremiah, and Baruch to Tahpanhes in Egypt
- It is Unlikely That Jeremiah and Baruch Went to Egypt by Choice, in Light of God's Oracle
- Not Everyone in Judah Left for Egypt (Lamentations and Nehemiah 1:2-3)



# Jeremiah and Baruch

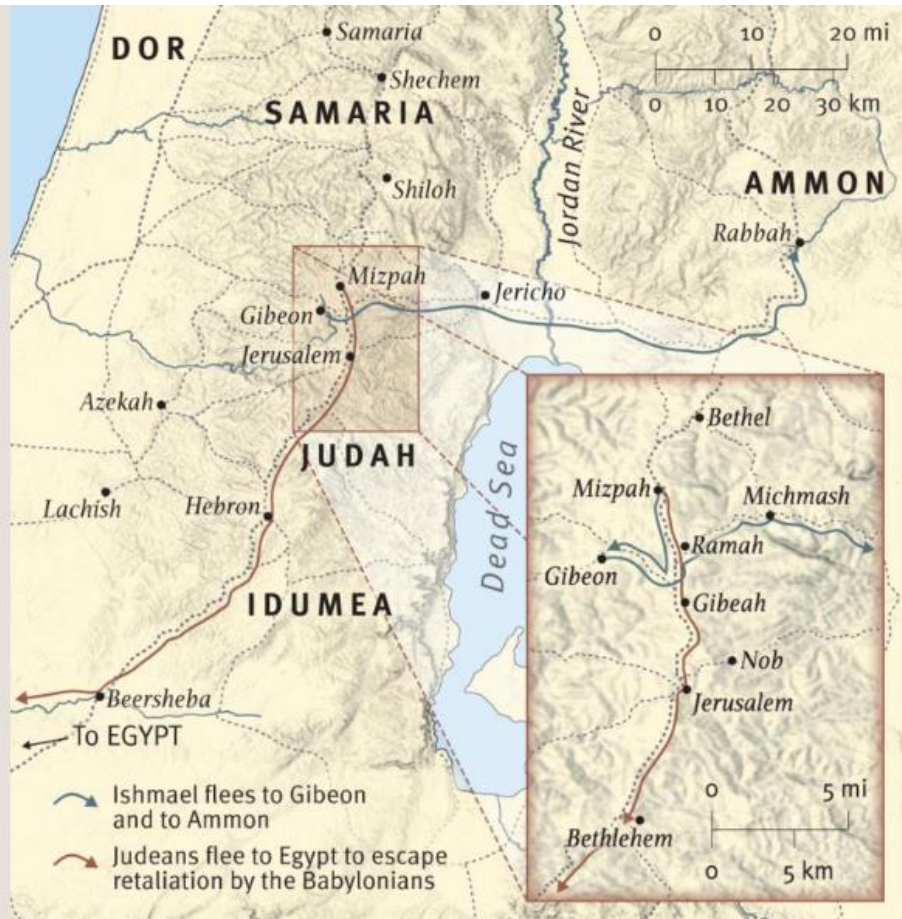
- What Were Their Thoughts Now?
- They Had Not Disobeyed God, But God's Pronouncements About the Jews Who Fled Egypt Was Exact
- God Promised to Deliver Jeremiah in Chapter 1
- God Promises Baruch That He Will Live (Jeremiah 45:5)
- A Small Remnant Will Return From Egypt to Judah (Jeremiah 44:28)

# Jeremiah and Baruch

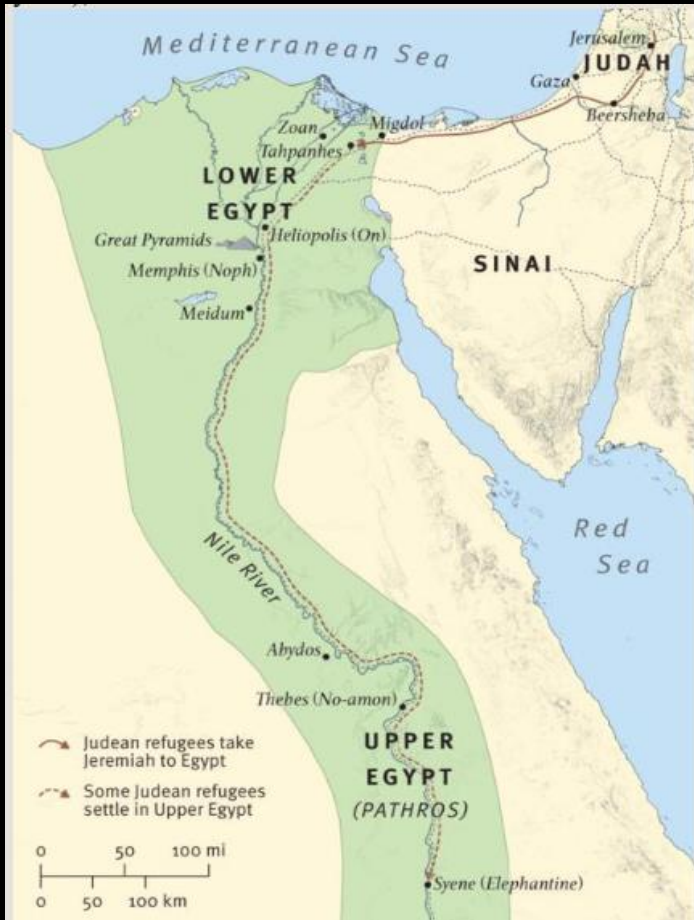
- Where Did They Die? Scripture Does Not Say.
- The Early Church Father Tertullian Wrote That the Jews in Tahpanhes Stoned Jeremiah Because They Objected to the Truth He Spoke
- The *Lives of the Prophets*, a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Extrabiblical Work Makes the Same Assertion
- No Writings by Tertullian About Baruch Were Located

# The Prophecy About Egypt

- Nebuchadnezzar Invaded Egypt Twice After the Destruction of Jerusalem
- 582 BC, 4 Years After the Destruction
- 567/566 BC. Pharaoh Amasis Was Defeated in Battle But Maintained His Crown and Independence From Babylon
- Pharaoh Amasis Deposed and Execute Pharaoh Hophra
- This Fulfills Jeremiah 44:30



Map of Judah Showing Jerusalem, Ramah, Mizpah, Gibeon, and Bethlehem; copyright: ESV Bible Study Notes, 2008, Crossway Bibles



Map of Egypt Showing Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, Thebes, and Pathros; copyright: ESV Bible Study Notes, 2008, Crossway Bibles



Statue of Astarte or Ishtar; Found at the Necropolis of Hillah Near Babylon; copyright: photograph by Marie-Lan Nguyen. Statue at Louvre Museum, Paris, France.

## Jeremiah

### Lesson 9: Jeremiah 40:1 – 45:5

- When we read the accounts of Jeremiah in Chapter 39: 11-14 and 40:1-6, we see that they are out of synch.
  - In Jeremiah 39:11-14, Nebuchadnezzar gave his captain of the guard, Nebuzaradan, specific instructions to take care of Jeremiah and ensure that no harm came to him. They took Jeremiah from the court of the guard in Jerusalem where he had been held after Ebed-Melech pled for his life and he had been rescued from the cistern. The Babylonians entrusted Jeremiah to Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed as the governor of Judah.
  - In Jeremiah 40:1-6, Nebuzaradan finds Jeremiah among the bound captives of Jerusalem and Judah at Ramah, where they are being held before being transported to Babylon. Nebuzaradan gives Jeremiah 3 choices for his future and Jeremiah elects to remain in Judah among the people. Jeremiah goes to stay with Gedaliah.
  - How might we reconcile these 2 passages?
  - Scripture provides no answer, but Tremper Longman, in his Jeremiah commentary, suggests that perhaps Babylonian soldiers found Jeremiah with Gedaliah and took him prisoner. This is how he ended up in Ramah.
- Did you think it interesting that the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 40:1-5 was delivered by Nebuzaradan and not by Jeremiah?
  - We see this device elsewhere in Scripture.
  - In 2 Chronicles 35:20-22, God sends a word to Pharaoh Neco of Egypt and tells him that God has commanded him to hurry north to fight the Assyrians. He tells King Josiah of Judah the following, “What have we to do with each other, king of Judah? I am not coming against you this day, but against the house with which I am at war. And God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, lest he destroy you.”<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, Josiah did not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but came to fight in the plain of Megiddo. “

- In Ezra 1:2-4, we see God speaking to Cyrus of Persia, “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. <sup>3</sup> Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> And let each survivor, in whatever place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”
- The 2 passages we just reviewed in Jeremiah 39 and 40 present us with Gedaliah, appointed Governor of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.
  - Who was Gedaliah?
    - He was a Judean, not a Babylonian. He was the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan.
    - You may recall from Jeremiah 26 that Jeremiah was threatened with death by the priests, the prophets, and the people by speaking the word of the Lord in the Temple court during the reign of Jehoiakim (the Temple Sermon). Ahikam protected Jeremiah from death.
    - Shaphan is mentioned in 2 Kings 22. He was secretary to King Josiah, and it was he who read the Book of the Law when Hilkiah found it in the Temple.
    - We can surmise that Gedaliah inherited the godly nature of his father and grandfather.
    - A seal belonging to Gedaliah was found in 1935 in the ruins of the burned city of Lachish, circa 586 BC.
  - Why was Gedaliah chosen to be Governor of Judah?
    - Nebuchadnezzar would want someone in charge to whom the people would listen as well as someone he felt he could control. A man of Judah fit the bill.
    - It is likely that there was a contingent of Babylonian soldiers in Judah to keep the peace, in any event.
    - Gedaliah tells the people the following in Jeremiah 40:10, “Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. <sup>10</sup> As for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, to represent you before the Chaldeans who will come to us.”



- We read in Jeremiah 40 and 41 that Gedaliah was murdered by Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama.
  - Jeremiah 41:1 tells us that Ishmael was a member of the Judean royal family and was one of the chief officers of the king.
  - We do not know which king Ishmael served, but Jeremiah 36:12 tells us that Elishama was the secretary to King Jehoiakim. Ishmael could have served Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, or Zedekiah.
  - Why did Ishmael want to kill Gedaliah?
  - Scripture does not say. In his Jeremiah commentary, J. A. Thompson suggests that Ishmael had wanted to be appointed Governor of Judah or thought Gedaliah was a traitor for agreeing to serve in that position.
  - Why did Baalis, King of Ammon, support Ishmael? J. A. Thompson suggests that perhaps he just wanted to agitate the Babylonians. Perhaps he hoped that more Israelites would be die or be exiled. There was certainly no love lost between Judah and Ammon.
- After the murder of Gedaliah and the rescue of the hostages Ishmael took with him, Johanan and the other military leaders of Judah feared reprisals from Babylon (Jeremiah 41:17-18).
- These leaders took the people they rescued, the people left with Gedaliah, others who had fled Judah to surrounding nations who had returned after the destruction of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, and Baruch to Tahpanhes in Egypt.
- A few points we should consider.
  - It is unlikely that Jeremiah and Baruch went to Egypt by choice, in light of God's oracle that all who fled to Egypt were doomed to die.
  - Not everyone in Judah left for Egypt. Lamentations is addressed to the remnant who remained in Judah and Nehemiah 1:2-3 records the existence of Jews in Judah as follows, "And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

- What were Jeremiah's and Baruch's thoughts when they were taken to Egypt?
  - They had not disobeyed God; yet God's pronouncements on the Jews who fled to Egypt was exact.
  - From God's first words to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1, God told Jeremiah he would be with him to deliver him.
  - God promises Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, in Jeremiah 45:5 that Baruch would come out of the Babylonian invasion and exile with his life. Note that Jeremiah 45 is out of chronological sequence and takes place at the same time as Jeremiah 36, in the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah.
  - Jeremiah 44: 28 records that a very small remnant of those who ran to Egypt will survive the coming sword and famine and would return to Judah.
- Scripture does not record where Jeremiah and Baruch died. The early church father Tertullian wrote that the Jews in Tahpanhes, Egypt stoned Jeremiah because they objected to the truth he was telling them. The *Lives of the Prophets*, a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD extrabiblical book, makes the same assertion. I could not locate any writings by Tertullian about Baruch.
- Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt twice after the destruction of Jerusalem.
  - In 582 BC, 4 years after the destruction of Jerusalem
  - In 567/566 BC. In this invasion, the Pharaoh Amasis, who had deposed and executed Pharaoh Hophra, was defeated in the battle with the Babylonians, but managed to maintain his crown and independence from Babylon. So, this fulfills 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."
- We close today with a little map work.
- Ramah was a staging point for Jews being taken into exile in Babylon, including Jeremiah.
  - Ramah was about 5 miles north of Jerusalem. It is associated with modern-day El Ram, a Palestinian city or possibly Ramallah, also a Palestinian city.
  - Given the context of Jeremiah 40 and the situation of the exiles, this passage from Jeremiah 31:15 takes on new meaning: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more."

- After the destruction of Jerusalem, there could be no seat of power in that city. Therefore, Gedaliah served as Governor of Judah from Mizpah, another city about 5 to 8 miles north of Jerusalem. Tell en-Nasbeh is one possible site for the ancient city of Mizpah. Other possible locations are Nabi Samwil and Sh-afat.
- Gibeon is about 5 miles northwest of Jerusalem and this is where the military leader Johanan rescued those Judeans taken captive by Ishmael. From Gibeon, it would have been a straight shot due east across the Jordan River to get to Ammon.
- Tahpanhes, Egypt (which the ancient Greeks called Daphnae) is associated with Tell Defenneh, now located on the Suez canal. During the reign of Pharaoh Hophra, it was likely a regional capital. Thus, it likely would have had a palace for Pharaoh as well as temples to various Egyptian gods and goddesses.
- Jeremiah 44 also mentions other locations in Egypt.
  - Migdol, located near Tahpanhes
  - Memphis, a major city in Northern Egypt which was about 13 miles north of the modern city of Cairo
  - Pathros, which was a reference to Upper Egypt, the location of the ancient city of Thebes. Its ruins are within the modern city of Luxor. Across the Nile lies the Valley of the Kings.
  - The point of including all of these locations is to stress all the places in Egypt where Judeans had fled to avoid the Babylonians.

## Jeremiah

### Lesson 9: Jeremiah 40:1 – 45:5

#### **Judah's Futile Rebellion Against Babylon (40:1-41:18)**

1. Despite Nebuchadnezzar's command that Jeremiah be treated kindly (Jeremiah 39:11-12), the prophet is apparently caught up with the exiles taken in chains to Ramah (a small town five miles north of Jerusalem) on their way to Babylon (40:1-6). What choice does the captain of the guard give Jeremiah, and why is he given this choice? What does Jeremiah decide to do?
  - Nebuzaradan, the captain of the Babylonian guard, seems to have realized God's power and Jeremiah's role as a prophet in delivering God's message. He says, "The LORD your God pronounced this disaster against this place. <sup>3</sup> The LORD has brought it about, and has done as he said. Because you sinned against the LORD and did not obey his voice, this thing has come upon you." Jeremiah 40:2-3
  - Jeremiah is given 3 choices:
    - Go to Babylon with Nebuzaradan, who promised to look after him well.
    - Go anywhere in the land he wanted to.
    - Remain in Judah. In this case, he was instructed to return to Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed as governor of the cities of Judah.
  - Jeremiah chose to go to Gedaliah and live with him among the people of Judah who were left in the land.
2. The Babylonians appoint Gedaliah as governor of those remaining in the land. What instructions does Gedaliah give to the people (40:7-12)? What is the significance of gathering wine, summer fruits, and oil?
  - Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. <sup>10</sup> As for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, to represent you before the Chaldeans who will come to us. But as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and store them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken. Jeremiah 40:9-10

- According to Jeremiah 52:12, Nebuchadnezzar had arrived in Jerusalem in the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the Hebrew calendar. This coincides with July – August of our calendar. The grapes, figs, and olives ripened at this time.
  - This passage suggests that Nebuchadnezzar had not destroyed all the surrounding vineyards and trees when he destroyed Jerusalem.
  - The people who had been in Jerusalem had been under siege for 3 years. They were starving.
3. What concerns does Johanan raise to Gedaliah (40:13-16)? How does Gedaliah respond?
- Johanan reports that Baalis the king of the Ammonites had sent Ishmael to kill Gedaliah. Johanan requests permission to secretly kill Ishmael.
  - Gedaliah told Johanan that he was speaking falsely about Ishmael and not to kill him.
4. Johanan's worst fears are realized when Ishmael and his men assassinate Gedaliah, his attendants, and the Babylonian soldiers with him (41:1-3). After disposing of the bodies, Ismael takes the remaining people at Mizpah captive and sets out toward Ammon (41:4-10). How does Johanan respond (41:11-18)? What do the people fear will happen to them?
- Johanan and the leaders of the military forces who were with them set out after Ishmael and the captives. They found Ismael and the captives at Gibeon. At that point, the captives went back to Johanan.
  - Johanan, his soldiers, and the captives stayed at Geruth Chimham near Bethlehem. They feared the Babylonians (Chaldeans) and planned to go to Egypt.
  - They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do after Ishmael assassinated Gedaliah.

### **Judah's Futile Rebellion against God (42:1-45:5)**

5. At this point Jeremiah reappears in the narrative, apparently caught up in the group of people captured by Ishmael and rescued by Johanan. What does Johanan ask Jeremiah to do (42:1-6)? How do the people promise to respond to Jeremiah's instruction?
  - Johanan, his military commanders, and the people asked Jeremiah to pray to God for them. They wanted Jeremiah to ask God about which way they should go and what they should do.
  - The people promised to obey God with whatever message was revealed to them through Jeremiah.
  
6. Ten days later Jeremiah summons the people to hear the word of the Lord. What is God's message (42:7-22)? What promises and warnings does he give?
  - If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I relented of the disaster that I did to you. Jeremiah 42:10
  - Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid. Do not fear him, declares the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. Jeremiah 42:11
  - I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and let you remain in your own land. Jeremiah 42:12
  - If you set your faces to enter Egypt and go to live there, <sup>16</sup> then the sword that you fear shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine of which you are afraid shall follow close after you to Egypt, and there you shall die. <sup>17</sup> All the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to live there shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. They shall have no remnant or survivor from the disaster that I will bring upon them. Jeremiah 42:15-17
  - As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an execration, a horror, a curse, and a taunt. You shall see this place no more. Jeremiah 42:18

7. Despite their earlier promise to “obey the voice of the Lord our God...that it may be well with us” (42:6), the people disregard the word of the Lord and head for Egypt (43:1-7). When they arrive at the city of Tahpanhes, God once again speaks to the people (43:8-13). What is his message?
- Take in your hands large stones and hide them in the mortar in the pavement that is at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah, <sup>10</sup> and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, **I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden**, and he will spread his royal canopy over them. <sup>11</sup> **He shall come and strike the land of Egypt, giving over to the pestilence those who are doomed to the pestilence, to captivity those who are doomed to captivity, and to the sword those who are doomed to the sword.** <sup>12</sup> **I shall kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them and carry them away captive.** And he shall clean the land of Egypt as a shepherd cleans his cloak of vermin, and he shall go away from there in peace. <sup>13</sup> **He shall break the obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt, and the temples of the gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire.** Jeremiah 43:9-13
8. Sometime later the Lord speaks to all the Judean exiles living in Egypt (44:1-14). What practices of these exiles does God condemn? What reminders does he give? What will be the fate of those who remain in Egypt?
- Why do you commit this great evil against yourselves, **to cut off from you man and woman, infant and child, from the midst of Judah, leaving you no remnant?** Jeremiah 44:7
  - Why do you provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, **making offerings to other gods in the land of Egypt** where you have come to live, so that you may be cut off and become a curse and a taunt among all the nations of the earth? Jeremiah 44:8
  - **Have you forgotten the evil of your fathers, the evil of the kings of Judah, the evil of their wives, your own evil, and the evil of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?** <sup>10</sup> **They have not humbled themselves even to this day, nor have they feared, nor walked in my law and my statutes that I set before you and before your fathers.** Jeremiah 44:9-10

- Behold, I will set my face against you for harm, to cut off all Judah. <sup>12</sup> **I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to come to the land of Egypt to live, and they shall all be consumed. In the land of Egypt they shall fall; by the sword and by famine they shall be consumed.** From the least to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine, and they shall become an oath, a horror, a curse, and a taunt. <sup>13</sup> I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, <sup>14</sup> so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to live in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return to dwell there. For they shall not return, except some fugitives.” Jeremiah 44:11-14

9. How do the people respond to God’s message through Jeremiah (44:15-19)? What do the people resolve to continue to do?

- As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you. Jeremiah 44:16
- But we will do everything that we have vowed, **make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her**, as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our officials, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 44:17
- And the women said, “When we made offerings to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands' approval that **we made cakes for her bearing her image** and poured out drink offerings to her?” Jeremiah 44:19
- Note: the queen of heaven is a reference to Astarte, a Semitic fertility goddess.

10. What does this section (44:1-3) teach us about the nature and effects of idolatry? How have you seen these effects in your own life?

- Idolatry is sin and it violates the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Commandments (no other god before me; make no idols and worship no idols).
- When we worship anything other than God, we take our minds off God and his Word. Effectively, we are turning our backs on God. We are showing no allegiance to God.
- Sin begets sin.
- I have seen the effects of putting my job as a first priority instead of putting God first.



## 11. Gospel Glimpses

### **God is With us to Save us**

- Jesus promised in Matthew 28:20 to be with us always, to the end of the age. He remains as Immanuel, God with us, until he returns. (Revelation 1:18)
- The Apostle John said that Jesus was the Word. Jesus was the physical embodiment of all of God's words: past, present, and future. (John 1: 1-3).
- Although Jesus is not physically with us any longer, he left the Holy Spirit, the indwelling of Jesus and God, to teach us all things and remind us of everything Jesus said to us. (John 14:26)
- The Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we do not know what to pray. (Romans 8:26)
- The Holy Spirit intercedes for believers according to the will of God. (Romans 8:27)

### **God Shows Abundant Mercy**

- The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 2 Peter 3:9
- Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Psalms 25:6
- What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! <sup>15</sup> For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." <sup>16</sup> So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. <sup>17</sup> For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." <sup>18</sup> So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. Romans 9:14-18

## 12. Whole-Bible Connections

### God's Servant

- God used many people throughout the Bible to be his servants on earth. Everything they did was directed by God for God's purposes. In Jeremiah, we see that God used King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to punish the people of Judah who had sinned greatly and turned away from God and his laws. Despite everything that happened to Israel and Judah, the people kept sinning. God finally sent his Son, Jesus, to serve God's people and save them from their sins.

### Fleeing from God

- God is omnipresent and omniscient. It is impossible to flee from God because he is everywhere, and he sees everything we do and hears everything we say. God knows our hearts.

## 13. Theological Soundings

### God Relents

- In Jeremiah 42:10, we see that God relented from the destruction that he wrought on Judah and Jerusalem at the hand of his servant, Nebuchadnezzar. It is painful for all when God must punish his people to such a degree. We see this in God's Covenant with Noah, where he says in Genesis 8:21-22 "the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. <sup>22</sup> While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

### God's Name

- God's name is holy like God is holy. This is why the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment instructs that we should not misuse the name of the Lord. (Exodus 20:7)
- God's name is inscrutable: "I Am Who I Am." In ancient cultures, to know a man's name created a relationship with that person and a man's name signified who he was. (Example: Immanuel means "God With Us." Knowing a person's name also provided potential power over that person. Because God's name is inscrutable and holy, we cannot know it except through His attributes. And God's power is greater than anything we can imagine.

## **God's Word Must Trump Our Circumstances**

- God knows what is best for us. He sees our circumstances. All things on this earth were created through Jesus (John 1:3) and God orchestrates everything on earth according to His will. Once we understand this, then we can rise above our circumstances because we know God understands what we need.

### **14. Jeremiah 40:1-45:5 in total**

- One would think that, after experience complete devastation of Jerusalem, famine, war, and pestilence, the people would learn to listen to and rely on God. Yet that is not what happens in Jeremiah 40 – 45:5. The people continue to disregard God's words from the prophet Jeremiah, and they persist in sinning. These chapters are a clear example of why God had to send his Son Jesus to save the people of this world. We are incapable of stopping the practice of sin without Jesus' saving power.