

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

Jeremiah reproves the Jews in Egypt for continuing in idolatry after the exemplary judgments indicted by God on their nation for that sin, Jeremiah 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 - מִצְרַיִם (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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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), Jeremiah 44:17, and poured out drink-offerings to her.

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.

Verse 19

And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven - The Moon seems to have been called *melecheth*, as the sun was called *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, Exodus 29:23, etc.; Leviticus 2:4; Leviticus 23:16; and Numbers 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?"

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."

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," Jeremiah 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.