

JEREMIAH 46

A PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT

In the foregoing prophecies and history, we learned how judgment began at the house of God; but now we shall find that it did not end there. In this and the next five chapters, we have predictions of the desolations of the neighboring nations around the land of Judah; and those judgments were mostly brought upon them by the king of Babylon – until, at length, Babylon itself came to be reckoned with. From the earliest ages, the nations of the earth were more or less in direct antagonism with the Lord's chosen people. There was always a struggle between the Lord's children and the people of the world; and this struggle is still going on today, in various forms. But alas! The corruption of God's people often made them an easier prey to their foes; and in numerous instances, God gave them up to their malignity and power. He used these enemies as His instruments of vengeance, and then He set them aside. They did not know that they were being employed as the Lord's instruments; their only intentions were to carry out their own ambitious projects. The Most High God often uses wicked men to bring about His grand designs, although their motives are the most selfish; and as they are fulfilling His Divine purposes, they are only filling up the measure of their own guilt. Therefore, His anger eventually falls upon them; when they have accomplished all His purposes, they are utterly swept away.

It is by no means surprising that the great prophets of the Jewish nation – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and several others – should denounce the crimes of foreign nations, and predict their downfall. To the child of God, they are full of interest – even though they contain passages that are often tragic in character and overwhelming in power. Let it not be thought that such portions of the Inspired Word are destitute of interest to ourselves! Superficial readers of the Bible will pass them by, for they only keep close to the “beaten path” of favorite chapters and verses; but those who truly love the Lord will turn to these pages with the expectation of finding precious gems of truth, even here – and they will not be disappointed in their search. In the world of nature, there are regions which are seldom trodden by the feet of man. There are beauties which he seldom sees, and melodies which he seldom hears. And so also, there are portions of inspired truth which are largely unknown to the majority of Scripture-readers; but to those who study them, they yield rich lessons of instruction, and valuable material for reflection and thought! Such are these wonderful prophecies against the old foes of the people of God.

The first judgment which the Lord pronounces through the mouth of His prophet is against the land of Egypt – the earliest of the enemies of His chosen

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ A prophecy of Egypt's defeat in the Battle of Carchemish – verses 1-12
- ❖ A prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt – verses 13-26
- ❖ A word of comfort to God's people in the midst of those calamities – verses 27-28



people of Israel. This chapter contains two different prophecies against Egypt. The first (verses 2-12) relates to the defeat of this nation in the Battle of Carchemish, in the fourth year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah (605 BC). Jeremiah foretells the overthrow of the army of Pharaoh Necho, by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who enjoyed such a complete victory that he thereby recovered all the land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates River. In graphic imagery, the prophet details the scene and the outcome of the awful Bat-

tle of Carchemish, as the two mighty nations wrestled with each other for supreme power of the world. The Egyptians are here upbraided by the prophet concerning the mighty preparations which they made for this battle against the Babylonians. But he also reproached the Egyptians for their cowardice and fearful flight which they would display when they actually came to the battle; they would make a shameful retreat, and yet they would not be able to make their escape.

The second of these prophecies against Egypt (verses 13-28) strikingly depicts the invasion of that country by the king of Babylon, around 570 BC – about 18 years after the destruction of Jerusalem. A very remarkable figure of speech is used here (verse 18). King Nebuchadnezzar is compared to Mount Tabor among the mountains, and to Mount Carmel by the sea. Thus the king of Babylon would present such an appearance of majesty and power, that Egypt would tremble with dismay and be brought down. Her great cities, magnificent temples, and splendid palaces would all be delivered into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers.

But even in the midst of all these threatenings upon the land of Egypt, we still find a promise for the Lord's people! (verses 27-28) Jehovah is their Deliverer! And no matter what becomes of the nations of the earth, His people shall be preserved. The Lord promises to make a complete destruction of the enemies of Himself and His people; and although His own children are not left without Fatherly chastisement, they are here assured that His corrections do have a limit. Thus they will never be utterly cast off!

Lord, we pray that we may not be superficial readers of the Bible, who pass over these chapters as dull and uninteresting. We ask for grace so that we may turn to these pages with the expectation of finding precious gems of truth. We do acknowledge the lamentable fact that our own sins and rebellions sometimes render Your Fatherly chastisements necessary, yet we give thanks to You that we can never be cast off; for no matter how unworthy we are in ourselves, we are beheld as very precious in Your eyes, for we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus! Amen.