

FINAL WARNING TO THE REMNANT IN EGYPT

TEXT: JEREMIAH 44:1-30

INTRODUCTION:

1. In Jeremiah 43:7 we see that the Jewish remnant came into the land of Egypt, and stopped for a while in Tahpanhes.
2. This was because, "they obeyed not the voice of the LORD" (43:7).
3. Now in Jeremiah 44, we have Jeremiah's final warning to this backslidden, rebellious, impenitent remnant.
4. The message was for all the Jews who were now scattered in different parts of Egypt -- "at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros" (44:1).
5. The LORD reminded them of "all the evil" that He had brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah "because of their wickedness," specifically their idolatry (44:2, 3).
6. He sent them prophets, "saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate" (44:4), "but they hearkened not" (44:5).
7. Because of their wickedness, the LORD poured out His fury and anger upon the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem (44:6).

I. GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON THE REMNANT

1. The LORD asked them, "Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls?" (44:7). They were not only sinning against God, they were doing great harm to themselves.
2. Habakkuk 2:10 says, "Thou...hast sinned against thy soul."
3. They were hurting themselves. Their evil conduct meant they would be "cut off" and there would be "none to remain" (44:7, 8).
4. The same thing is happening today in Europe, in Canada, and here in America -- rampant immorality, including homosexuality, low birth rates, legal abortion, combined with Muslim immigration, will eventually cause these nations to be "cut off."
5. When the American Civil Liberties Union was organized they published a statement listing their goals: "We are for socialism, disarmament, and ultimately for abolishing the state itself... We seek the social ownership of property, the abolition of the propertied class, and the sole control of those who produce wealth. Communism is the goal."
6. Following are some of the stated goals of the ACLU, from its own published Policy Issues:

* the legalization of prostitution (Policy 211);

- * the defense of all pornography, including child porn, as "free speech" (Policy 4);
 - * the decriminalization and legalization of all drugs (Policy 210);
 - * the promotion of homosexuality (Policy 264);
 - * the opposition of rating of music and movies (Policy 18);
 - * opposition against parental consent of minors seeking abortion (Policy 262);
 - * opposition of informed consent preceding abortion procedures (Policy 263);
 - * opposition of spousal consent preceding abortion (Policy 262);
 - * opposition of parental choice in children's education (Policy 80)
- not to mention the defense and promotion of euthanasia, polygamy, government control of church institutions, gun control, tax-funded abortion, birth limitation, etc. (Policies 263, 133, 402, 47, 261, 323, 271, 91, 85).

7. Regarding Policy 80 -- "opposition of parental choice in children's education," something is happening now that should concern all freedom-loving Americans, especially Christians, but it is largely being ignored by the news media.
8. This is from an article entitled, "OBAMA ADMIN WANTS TO DEPORT CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS" (*Human Events*, March 5, 2013).
9. The Romeike family fled their German homeland in 2008 seeking political asylum in the United States – where they hoped to home school their children. Instead, the Obama administration wants the evangelical Christian family deported. The fate of Uwe and Hannelore Romeikie – along with their six children – now rests with the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals – after the Dept. of Homeland Security said they don't deserve asylum. Neither the Justice Dept. nor the Dept. of Homeland Security returned calls seeking comment. "The Obama administration is basically saying there is no right to home school anywhere," said Michael Farris, founder of the Home School Legal Defense Association. "It's an utter repudiation of parental liberty and religious liberty." The Justice Dept. is arguing that German law banning home schooling does not violate the family's human rights. "They are trying to send a family back to Germany where they would certainly lose custody of their children," Farris told Fox News. "Our government is siding with Germany." Farris said the Germans ban home schools because "they don't want to have religious and philosophical minorities in their country."

“That means they don’t want to have significant numbers of people who think differently than what the government thinks,” he said. “It’s an incredibly dangerous assertion that people can’t think in a way that the government doesn’t approve of.”

He said the Justice Dept. is backing that kind of thinking and arguing ‘it is not a human rights violation.’”

Farris said he finds great irony that the Obama administration is releasing thousands of illegal aliens – yet wants to send a family seeking political asylum back to Germany.

“Eleven million people are going to be allowed to stay freely – but this one family is going to be shipped back to Germany to be persecuted,” he said. “It just doesn’t make any sense.”

The fear of persecution is why an immigration judge granted the family political asylum in 2010.

German authorities demanded the family stop home schooling. They faced thousands of dollars in fines and they initially took away their children in a police van.

German state constitutions require children attend public schools. Parents who don’t comply face punishment ranging from fines to prison time. The nation’s highest appellate court ruled in 2007 that in some cases children could be removed from their parents’ care.

“Families that want to have an alternative education can’t get it in Germany,” Farris said. “Even the private schools have to teach public school curriculum.”

After authorities threatened to remove permanent custody from the Christian couple – they decided to move to the United States.

Uwe, a classically-trained pianist, relocated their brood to a small farm in the shadow of the Smokey Mountains in eastern Tennessee.

“We are very happy here to be able to freely follow our conscience and to home school our children,” he told Fox News. “Where we live in Tennessee is very much like where we lived in Germany.”

Uwe said he was extremely disappointed that their petition to seek asylum was appealed by the Obama administration.

“If we go back to Germany we know that we would be prosecuted and it is very likely the Social Services authorities would take our children from us,” he said.

Uwe said German schools were teaching children to disrespect authority figures and used graphic words to describe sexual relations. He said the state believed children must be “socialized.”

“The German schools teach against our Christian values,” he said. “Our children know that we home school following our convictions and that we are in God’s hands. They understand that we are doing this for their best – and they love the life we are living in America on our small farm.”

Farris said Americans should be outraged over the way the Obama administration has treated the Romeike family – and warned it could have repercussions for families that home school in this nation.

“The right of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children has been at the pinnacle of human rights,” he said. “But not in this country.”

10. Pray for our country! We are provoking God to anger.

11. The Jews provoked God unto anger (44:3, 8) with their idolatry -- "this abominable thing that I hate" (44:4).

12. God judged them because of their sin, and they have become "a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth" (44:8; cf. vs. 12).

13. Apparently they had forgotten the wickedness of their fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of the wives of the kings of Judah, and their own wickedness, and the wickedness of their wives, which they had committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem (44:9).

14. Three times in this chapter, the LORD said He would "cut off" Judah (44:7, 8, 11) for their idolatry (44:3-8); for their pride -- "They are not humbled even unto this day" (44:10); because they did not fear God -- "neither have they feared" (44:10); and their refusal to walk in God's law and in His statutes" (44:10).

15. The LORD set His face against them for evil, and He cut off all Judah (44:11).

16. The rebellious and disobedient remnant that thought they would escape the sword, the famine, and the pestilence by fleeing to Egypt, would in fact die in Egypt by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence (44:12-14).

II. THEIR REBELLIOUS RESPONSE (44:15-19)

1. The backslidden people continued worshipping idols once they settled down in Egypt.

2. In Jeremiah 44:16 and 17 these impenitent idolaters defiantly said to Jeremiah, "As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her..."

3. H.A. Ironside said, "It was willful, deliberate, high-handed opposition to the truth!" (*Jeremiah and Lamentations*).
4. Back in Jeremiah 7, the LORD condemned them for worshipping the pagan "queen of heaven" (7:17-20). Apparently they never gave it up.
5. Roman Catholics call Mary the "queen of heaven," but in the Bible Mary is never referred to this way. The "queen of heaven" was a pagan idol, like Ashtoreth, or Ishtar, Semiramis, Diana, Venus, and Aphrodite.
6. The "queen of heaven" was thought to be the wife of Baal and a fertility goddess.
7. Merrill Unger says this pagan worship "had great appeal to women, to whom it gave a superior role, for the goddess was thought to bring fertility" (*Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*).
8. These confused women were so blinded by idolatry that they claimed King Josiah's reforms (he rooted out the idolatry in Judah) led to the downfall of Judah (44:17, 18).
9. Their argument illustrates the danger of trusting in experience rather than following the Word of God. They were walking by sight, and not by faith, so they reasoned that when they ignored the Lord's word and burned incense unto the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, they had a measure of prosperity; at least they had plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil (44:17).
10. The women defended their idolatry and claimed that they had their husbands' approval (44:19). Unger says, "When women lead in sin, the day of doom is near."

III. JEREMIAH'S FINAL MESSAGE TO THE REMNANT (44:20)

1. Jeremiah said they had it all wrong. The calamities that had befallen them did not happen because they had stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven (44:18). It was because they had burned incense, and because they had sinned against the LORD, and had not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; that this evil had happened unto them (44:20-23).
2. The LORD is patient and longsuffering, but He could no longer put up with their wickedness (44:22).
3. Jeremiah told them that since they had vowed to continue with their idolatrous worship, they would surely accomplish their vows and the LORD would give up on them (44:24-26).

4. Psalm 94:23 says, "And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off."
5. "I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt" (44:26). They had crossed God's deadline.
6. How much time does America have left?
7. The LORD swore that that the remnant in Egypt would "be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them" (44:27).
8. A few would return to Judah from Egypt (44:28). They would tell others about God's judgment upon them.
11. The LORD said people "shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs" (44:28). Irving L. Jensen said, "All the conflicts of the world today can be summed up in the one critical conflict: *The word of man vs. the Word of God*" (*Jeremiah and Lamentations*).
9. The LORD promised them a sign, a sign of His punishment "in this place" (Egypt), a sign so that they would know that His words would surely stand against them for evil: Pharaoh-hophra, the king of Egypt, would be given into the hand of his enemies, just like King Zedekiah was given into the hand of his enemies (44:29, 30).

CONCLUSION:

1. Isaiah 36:6 says, "Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him."
2. Instead of trusting in God, these stubborn, backslidden Jews were leaning on this broken reed, Pharaoh-hophra. This was the same Pharaoh who promised to help King Zedekiah against the Babylonians.
3. The LORD told them the broken reed upon which they leaned would soon be broken. Historians confirm this prophecy. Pharaoh-hophra was taken down by his own army, and was assassinated by one of his own soldiers.