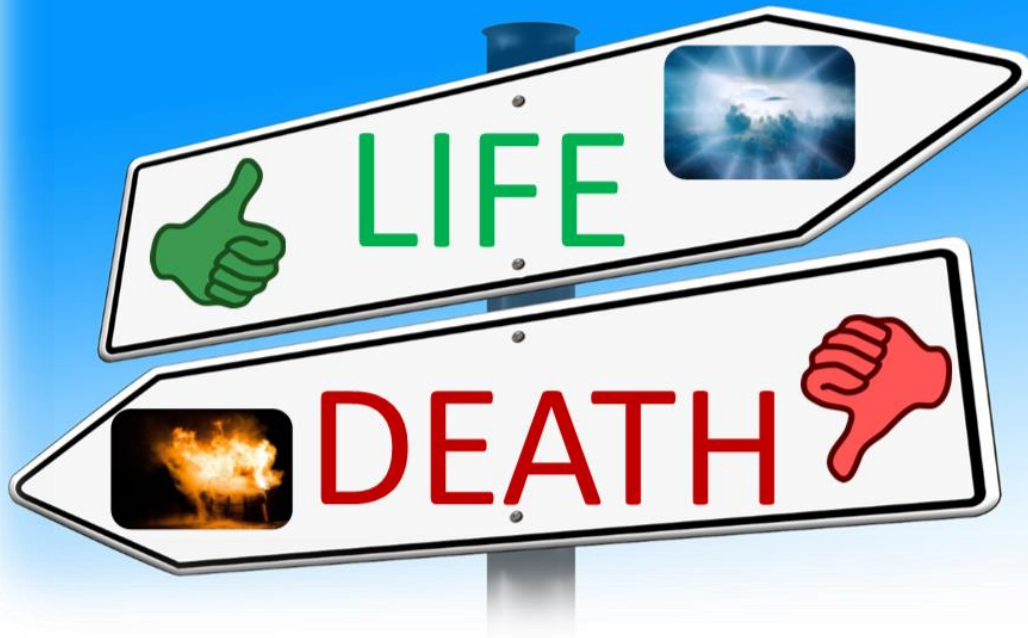


DO NOT GO TO EGYPT!

Text: Jeremiah 42-44

The LORD has said to you, O remnant of Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Know for a certainty that I have warned you this day that you have gone astray at the cost of your lives. For you sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD our God, and whatever the LORD our God says, declare to us and we will do it.' And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in anything that he sent me to tell you. Now therefore know for a certainty that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go to live."

(Jeremiah 42:19-22 ESV)



Most people in the world and the church systems of the world choose death over life.

This story is a classic example of this tragedy.

INFORMATION

➤ Who are the characters in this story?

1. Jeremiah - Prophet who'd been ministering since his youth in the days of Josiah; persecuted and misunderstood by his own people; target of several assassination attempts; name means "the LORD exalts," or "The LORD will be exalted," or "The LORD will arise" in Hebrew; asked to give counsel to the people and did so after ten days; met with opposition; forced to relocate to Egypt against his will; confronted the people of Judah in Egypt again with the word of the LORD
2. Johanan - Leader of the remnant of Judah, captain of the forces; rescued them from Ishmael
3. Jezaniah - Leader of the remnant of Judah, captain of the forces; rescued them from Ismael
4. Gedaliah – Babylon's appointee to govern the land of Judah; grandson of Shaphan who supported Jeremiah in his ministry; assassinated by Ishmael
5. Ishmael – troublemaker; hired by the Ammonites to start trouble; assassinated Gedaliah
6. Baruch – Jeremiah's scribe and long-time associate: wrongfully accused of inciting Jeremiah to speak the message that the remnant of Judah did not like
7. Remnant of Judah – various men and women from Judah; fled to Egypt and boasted of their decision to resume idolatry in Egypt

➤ When did this event take place?

Around 586-583 B.C. after the third deportation of Babylon

- Where did this event take place?

Judah/Egypt

- What happened?

1. The remnant of Judah is fleeing from Babylon when they really did not need to worry about anything, because of Gedaliah's assassination. Ishmael had killed him, and Johanan and his people rescued the ones whom Ishmael captured. Ishmael fled back to the Ammonites, and the people were packing their belongings for a road trip to Egypt.
2. As they were on their way, they ask Jeremiah to go pray and give them godly counsel while they are on their way to Egypt.
3. Jeremiah agrees, and ten days later the word of the LORD comes to him, and he lays it on them. He holds nothing back, as he promised.
4. The remnant of Judah does not listen to the counsel of God that came from his mouth. They tell him basically, "You're a liar!"
5. The remnant of Judah makes a false accusation that Jeremiah's scribe Baruch incited him to speak the way he did.
6. The leaders (Johanan, Jezaniah, et al.) take all the people, including Jeremiah and Baruch, and go to Egypt.
7. When they get there, the word of the LORD comes to Jeremiah again, and he confronts the people. They go back and forth in dispute.
8. The people have decided to worship the false gods they worshipped while living in their homeland. They defend their ways before Jeremiah, and Jeremiah rebuffs them, warning them again of the impending disaster.
9. Finally, Jeremiah tells the people that God is saying, basically, "When all the disaster I warned you about finally comes upon you, **then** we'll see whose word will stand—Mine or yours!"
10. Jeremiah tells them the sign that God will use to vindicate Jeremiah's message: Babylon's armies will defeat Egypt.

REVELATION

- The people caved in to **FEAR**.
- The root of their unwise decision to go to Egypt was unreasonable **FEAR**.
- The people had already made up their minds and really did not want to hear anything different than what they had already decided to do.
- The people lied to themselves and were hypocrites in their hearts.
- The people took Jeremiah's words and declared that it was all a lie to justify themselves and their idolatrous ways.
- Egypt represents several things: the world, fleshly wisdom, apparent ease and comfort, deceptive peace where there really is no peace, bondage, corrupt worship, and corrupt wisdom.
- When you follow false gods, you end up hurting the people you originally wanted to save (like the whole remnant of Judah).
- When you break the first commandment "thou shalt have no other gods before me," you end up breaking them all.
- Going astray from God's commands has dire consequences.
- Spiritual amnesia: you forget history and repeat the failures of the past.
- Sometimes God has mercy and spares His people of total annihilation (Jeremiah said that a few would survive). For example, in Acts 27 God saves Paul and all those in the shipwreck.
- But** do not tempt the Lord.
- Going back to addiction and addictive behavior: it usually happens when you think "I got this, I can control this" when it is really controlling you.
- Jeremiah did not abandon the call to pray for and speak the word to the people. He did not have to disassociate himself from all the people in his life that God wanted to use him to influence.

APPLICATION

➤ Negative Applications

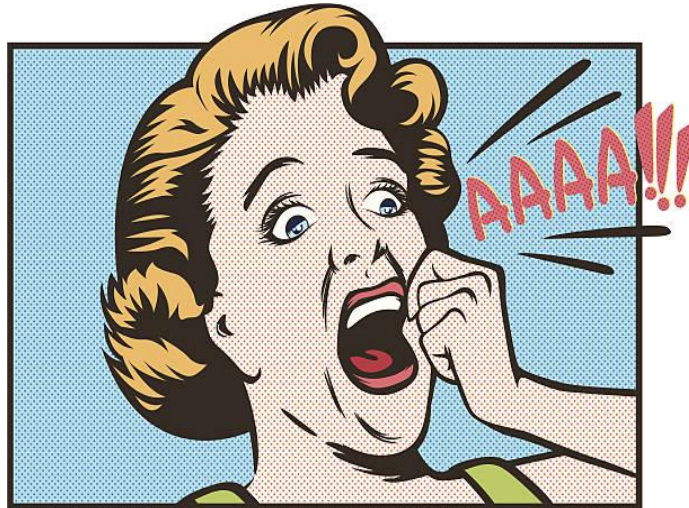
Do not go to Egypt! (Egypt = world, flesh devil)

Do not be afraid of what is happening in the world!

Do not make hasty decisions when you are overly emotionally charged and cannot think clearly – especially about a JOB, MINISTRY, FINANCIAL INVESTMENT, or MAJOR RELATIONSHIP (wife, husband, family member, long-time friendship, or partnership)!

Do not lie to yourself if fear is driving you!

Is this you?



Do not love the world or the things in it (1 John 2:15-17).

Do not say God or His prophets are lying just because they rub you the wrong way.

Do not assume that this message must be for your friend, that neighbor, that ministry leader in OKM, that boss on your job, that teenager you have. It might be, but first look in the mirror and say, "Is it me, O Lord?"

➤ Positive Applications

Do pray to God with an honest, open heart.

Do follow God and carry out the instructions He gives to you.

Do rest in God and wait patiently for Him (Psalm 37:7).

Do be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, make your requests known to God (Philippians 4:7).

Do take the narrow path.

Do walk in His great commandment which is LOVE.

- See John 13:34-35 (how else will they know we belong to Him?)
- See Mark 12:29-31 (the scribe who had the right response)
- See Galatians 5:13-14 (all the law is fulfilled in "love your neighbor as yourself")

Do be careful to keep fear out. Even if God wants you to “stay where you are,” you can still be courageous (see Joshua 1:1-9).

This guy is a picture of courage on steroids.

I have courage, but not like this!



➤ Positive and Negative Applications

Do be careful to note false doctrines and disassociate yourself from them, so that they will not lead you to a place of Egypt, so that you will not be deceived.

Beware of the Decepticons!



Examples of subjects that often lead people astray into error and deception:

- False doctrines about Christ (for example, He is just a phantom, the resurrection was staged, He is not God incarnate, He did not really die, etc.)
- False doctrines about marriage/divorce (who my dream spouse is, God told me this is the one, etc....marriage as a contract vs covenant, worldly practices of marriage and relationships, God's view of adultery, fornication, divorce, remarriage, etc.)
- False doctrines about prosperity (the "gospel" of prosperity) that stroke the ego (you can have your best life now at the expense of the cross that all believers must carry)
- False gospels of triumphalism (like, "we're already in the 1,000-year reign!"—um, no we aren't)
- False teachings about angels (for example, do we have the right to command them or order them around, or is that the job of the Lord Sabaoth, the Captain of the Host?)

- False teachings about the church – “Kirke” the Lord’s house, traditional building mentality vs. *ekklesia*, a gathering assembly of believers who are the spiritual legislative representatives from the kingdom of God on earth
- False teachings about yoga, new-age religions, spiritism, Kabal, etc.
- False teachings about spiritual warfare (for example, the binding of the principalities and powers phenomenon, what is legal in the spirit realm and what is dangerous and foolish?)
- False teachings about spiritual gifts (what are they, are they still in operation, too much emphasis on the spectacular at the expense of character)
- False teachings about the Sabbath (when did it change from Saturday to Sunday?)
- False teachings about same-sex activity, bisexuality, LGBTQ+ (it is sin, let’s just be clear, but you do not have to stay in it)
- False teachings about spiritual gifts (for example, there are no more apostles, no more healing, no more miracles, no real tongues, etc.)
- False teachings that twist the Bible to support any kind of racist and/or prejudiced thinking that is rooted in pride (all Jews are trying to take over the world, Christians replace Jews, replacement theology, broad brush stroke affect that paints all White people, Black people, Italians, Africans, Hispanics, etc. with the color of prejudice)
- False teaching about the devil (for example, there is no devil)
- False hope in politics and/or politicians on the left or right

And God’s people said: “Wow Yoki, that is too much stuff to remember! I’m on overload! Can you simplify this?”

Yoki said: Why, yes of course. The basic thing to remember is to look at, evaluate, and re-evaluate your understanding of the Bible on many issues presented to you from the church, family members, pastors, the culture, etc....and to study to show yourself approved, understanding the difference between what people say and what God says in His word. And then, live according to a proper understanding of the Word, regardless of who goes with you.

Do be patient with yourself. If you have been called to ministry in preaching/teaching/pastoring/evangelizing, you are going through a soul-searching, theological shifting. Do not give up but submit to God's process and do as much studying and research as you can. You still have a calling and a purpose in God. Just stay away from Egypt distractions. Instead of jumping to join fellowships and church groups out of fear of isolation, wait on the Lord. Wait in His wings. Stay with your small group ekklesia meetings and let God teach you.

Do walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

Do immerse yourself in "remedy verses" that keep you out of fear and motivate you to stay in the known will of God for your life and ministry. Verses like:

Deliver me from my enemies, O LORD!

I have fled to you for refuge.

Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God!

Let your good Spirit lead me
on level ground!

(Psalm 134:9-10 ESV)

And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers^[a] are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

(Mark 3:31-35 ESV)

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

(Ephesians 5:15-17 ESV)

Do encourage yourself when you speak the truth, but others do not listen to you. You have a purpose for the word God has given you to share. Please, do not keep it bottled up. Remember Jeremiah. He tried that before and it didn't work. It was like a fire shut up in his bones, and he was weary of holding it in. I pray that you feel the same way.

Do remain on this planet, no matter how evil it gets. If God will not have you going back to Egypt, He will not have you going to another planet either. Then you would have to leave this planet, and I do not recommend trying to do that. The other eight planets in our solar system do not support human life, so God has limited our choices on suitable planets to live on. You are in the world but not of it, remember? Jesus told us that.

And finally, most importantly:

Don't just hear the do's but do the do's.

SELAH (pause and calmly think of that).