

“BUT AS FOR YOU”

Jeremiah 46 (NASB)

Introduction of God’s Judgments on the Nations (v. 1)

GOD’S JUDGMENT ON EGYPT (vv. 2-26)

1. First Judgment (vv. 2-12)

This prophecy refers back to Egypt’s battle against the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar at the Battle at Carchemish in 605 B.C. in which Egypt lost everything West of the Euphrates River.

a. Egypt’s Army Defeated (vv. 3-6)

- *Sarcastic call to battle* (vv. 3-4) — good preparation
- *Surprising change of events* (v. 5) — “terror” 2x
- *Sure and complete defeat* (v. 6) — “stumbled” and “fallen”
 - *The Babylonian Chronicle confirms this picture of hopeless confusion and defeat. The Egyptian army “withdrew” before the Babylonians, but the Babylonians “overtook and defeated them so that not a single man escaped to his own country.”¹*

b. Egypt’s Pride Punished (vv. 7-12)

- *Their pride depicted* (vv. 7-9) — “like the Nile...[to] cover the land”; v. 9 references their mercenary soldiers
- *The curtain withdrawn* (v. 10) — the “LORD God of hosts” has destined this for “a day of vengeance”
 - Vv. 8, 10, 15 = God’s sovereignty is highlighted here—God is the ultimate Actor; nations are His tool (cf. Isaiah 10).
- *The punishment complete* (vv. 11-12) — no remedy, only a distress cry: “stumbled over” each other and “fallen”

2. Second Judgment (vv. 13-26)

This prophecy refers to Egypt’s battle against the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar during his Conquest of Egypt between ~571-567 B.C. (cf. chapter 43:8-13).

a. Egypt’s Perspective—summarized in statements (vv. 14-17)

- *“They’re coming!”* (v. 14) — These cities are in Lower (northern) Egypt where Nebuchadnezzar would attack first.
- *“Coward!”* (v. 15) — The “mighty” were now “prostrate” and bent low in terror and desertion, because “the LORD had thrust them down.”
- *“Fall back!”* (v. 16) — The mercenaries desert Egypt and flee back to their homeland.
- *“Mutiny!”* (v. 17) — They abandon the pharaoh, whose boastful claims are now no more to them but “a big noise” and who had “let the appointed [or opportune] time pass by” when he could have defeated Babylon.

b. God's Perspective—summarized in pictures (vv. 18-24)

- *Names of God (v. 18a)* — “the King” and “the LORD of hosts”
- *Pictures of Battle (vv. 18b-24)* —
 - Babylon is like a great mountain (v. 18).
 - Egypt is like an exiled daughter (v. 19).
 - Egypt is like a pretty heifer (their god, Apis, was a bull); Babylon is like a horsefly (v. 20).
 - Egypt's mercenaries are like cowardly fattened cows, ready to be slaughtered (v. 21).
 - Egypt is like a hissing serpent; Babylon is like a woodcutter driving it away (vv. 22-23a).
 - Babylon's numbers are like the locust clouds (v. 23b).
 - Egypt is like an abused daughter (v. 24).

c. Summary (vv. 25-26)

- *God will punish Egypt entirely—her gods (Amon of Thebes), her Pharaoh, and her people (v. 25a).*
- *God will punish those who trust in Egypt (v. 25b).* — In Jeremiah 42 (esp. vv. 7-22), God warned Johanan from going down to Egypt, but Johanan arrogantly accused Jeremiah of lying (43:2-3).
- *God will sovereignly oversee this punishment (v. 26a).*
- *God will also show mercy (v. 26b).* — “However, the association of Egypt's fortunes with the still-future restoration of Israel (Jer. 46:27–28) and the future focus in some of Jeremiah's other prophecies to the nations (cf. 48:47; 49:39) suggests that the ultimate fulfillment will come during the millennial reign of Christ when Egypt will again be in her land.”²

GOD'S MERCY TOWARDS JUDAH (vv. 27-28)

God comforts His people through contrast — “But as for you...”

- 1. God would save them “from far away.”**
- 2. God would restore them to their land.**
- 3. God would give them peace and security.**
- 4. God was with them.**
- 5. God would punish and successfully correct them.**
- 6. God would not destroy them.**

Jeremiah 31:1-6, 27-34 reiterates these promises under the label New Covenant, the spiritual promises of which apply to the church (cf. Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:7-13; 9:15; 10:14-17; 12:24; 13:20). Therefore, dear Christian, this contrast applies to us today, too — though all goes wrong ... “But as for you”! Hebrews 13:5b-6 — “He has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?’”

¹ Donald J. Wiseman, *Chronicle of Chaldean Kings (626–556b.c.) in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), pp. 67-9 referenced in Charles H. Dyer, “Jeremiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1192.

² Charles H. Dyer, “Jeremiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1193.