

We Will Not Harken Unto Thee

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

Jeremiah 44:15-17, "Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, 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."

Jeremiah, chapters 42-44, tells of those who came to Jeremiah and asked him to pray and seek God's will for them. They promised that whatever it was, good or bad, they would gladly do it. The prophet did as they requested and gave them God's answer to their question. After Jerusalem had been conquered by the Babylonians many Jews, not carried away to Babylon, wanted to flee to other countries. God told them to stay in Judah, but these Jews that came to Jeremiah wanted to go to Egypt.

They answered Jeremiah's message by telling him that his words were false. Why? They were not told what they wanted to hear. We can't help but wonder why they bothered to seek God's will since they already knew what they wanted

to do. Maybe they had a hope that God would tell them to do what they wanted to do. God doesn't change his will to suit the desires of man, but he demands that those who will follow him, do just that, follow him. The Lord had a plan in mind for his people, and for it to work for their good, they had to trust him. They did not. So basically they called Jeremiah a liar and went their own way.

The Lord told them by Jeremiah that they would perish in Egypt, but they refused to listen. Like so many throughout the ages they did what they wanted regardless of what God said. They would come to regret their decision, but it was too late. Mankind will always come to a time of sorrow when he will not take counsel of God. Then, when sorrow and hard times come, a person has to admit that he brought it upon himself.

Why is it that people never seem to learn from the past? If we were as smart as we think we are, we shouldn't keep making the same mistakes that our forefathers made. In the past the people of Israel had the law and the prophets but they didn't listen to either of them at times. Today we have the bible and the ministers that God has called to present his word. Some folks listen and try to walk in the truth of God's word and some play at it, while others don't care one way or another. Many look at the world and say, "Why does God let bad things happen?" They don't stop to think that bad things happen because men and women go their own way, making

sinful choices and refusing to follow the word of God.

Those who commit crimes against humanity and sin against God are free to make their own decisions. God doesn't force a person to trust and obey him. We decide what we believe and do just like those who withstood Jeremiah so long ago. We choose our path in life when we decide to walk in the light of God's word, or to walk according to the desires of the flesh. If we read our bibles and go to church it is because we choose to do so. Those who lie, cheat, steal, and do wicked things do it because they choose to go down that path in life.

The person who chooses to live in sin is saying to God, "We will not harken to thee!" They have the same invitation to come to God and receive the salvation of Christ as the Christian, but refuse to do so. Life is about making choices and the decisions that we make will change the course of our lives. The Jews who went to Egypt instead of listening to God and obeying his word suffered, but those who obey and trust God are blessed.

Did you notice that it wasn't a question of having faith in God? They believed in God and believed that Jeremiah was a prophet but still chose to go their own way. Many people who will not listen to the word of God today will say that they believe in God. Yet, by their failure to obey the commands of God they are saying the same as the disobedient Jews of Jeremiah's day - We will not harken unto to thee.

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THE FORGOTTEN ONES

THE STORY OF ABRAHAM'S WIFE, SARAH, AND HIS BELOVED SON ISAAC, IS WELL RECORDED—AS IS THAT OF HAGAR, WHO BORE ABRAHAM'S FIRST SON, ISHMAEL, BUT LITTLE IS SAID OF THE WIFE THAT ABRAHAM TOOK AFTER SARAH'S DEATH, KETURAH. THIS FINE WOMAN GAVE ABRAHAM NOT ONE—NOT TWO—NOT FOUR—BUT SIX SONS!



FOUR TERSE VERSES (GENESIS 25:1-4) GIVE SHORT SHRIFT TO KETURAH AND HER SONS:
ZIMRAM, JOKSHAN, MEDAN, MIDIAN (FOUNDER OF THE MIDIANITE NATION) ISHBAK, AND SHUAH.

BUT ABRAHAM, FATHER OF EIGHT SONS, LOVED BEST THE ONE OF WHOM GOD SAID, "I WILL MAKE OF HIM A GREAT NATION", FOR, AS GENESIS 25: 5 REPORTS: "ABRAHAM GAVE ALL THAT HE HAD TO ISAAC.!"

NEXT WEEK: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONCUBINES!

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