

Arrogance is pride, a sin in all of us. Arrogance is seen when we view God as a power to enlist for our cause, rather than a Lord for us to obey His cause. We have seen this pride for several chapters, within the not listening, the not shema, not obeying of the people. Arrogance is seen when we claim that God is on our side, against others. Arrogance causes a cascade of damage. The aftermath of arrogance.

The group of chapters that we are now studying, chapters 40 to 45, tell the story of how Old Testament Israel continued even after it seemed to die in the year 586. How? The answer is God provided them with the Word of God.

Those who were brought into exile in Babylon took prophets with them – their names were Daniel and Ezekiel. And in our chapter today we see that those who went into Egypt, also took a prophet with them, by the name of Jeremiah.

What is the significance?

God would continue to speak His Word to arrogant sinners, to provide clear instructions to His people, even while in exile in Babylon. And God would continue to speak to His people, even while they disobeyed God and went to Egypt. This should sound familiar, for long prior, God spoke through the great prophet Moses in Egypt. Here God spoke through His prophet Jeremiah in Egypt.

What should we call it that God's people did not listen to God's Word?

One way we can describe it is arrogance.

Arrogance leads to rejecting God's Word, self-deception, disobedience and destruction. We need God's grace of rescue and salvation.

1. Those who rejected God's Word entered self-deception, made false accusations, disobeyed God, and took God's prophet captive into Egypt! (v.1-7)

Even though the people had promised in chapter 42 to abide by whatever instructions God had for them, they would not abide by God's instructions when the clear instructions came. Instead, they promptly rejected God's Word. How do we know? We know from our first two verses of chapter 43.

Verse 1, Jeremiah just finished speaking the Word from the LORD to all the people. Then, two men Azariah and Johanan, responded. We are told something about these men, and all the group of men around them. We are told in verse 2, that they were insolent men. Insolent here is another word for arrogant men. It is from a root word that means to boil up. Their reaction to God's Word came from deep within them, and boiled up as anger, insolence, and arrogance, and that is the response they gave to the prophet Jeremiah. God's word came, and they said, "*it is a lie.*"! That is how we know that they promptly rejected God's Word!

This is a picture of you and me. When our desires are contrary to God's Word, our tendency to deny God's Words finds its origin in the garden of Eden. The serpent first appealed to the arrogance of humans, when the serpent created doubt about God's words in Genesis 3:1, "*He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?''*" And just 3 verses later, the serpent got bolder, when "*The serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die.'*" An arrogant and direct contradiction of God's statement! And the serpent went farther when the serpent made rebellion appear attractive with this lie, "*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*" That is ever so appealing to our prideful hearts, but it is simply not true. Rather than our eyes being opened by sin, our eyes will be darkened by sin. Adam and Eve rejected God's Word, and so do we.

Back to our study of Jeremiah 43, what is interesting is that previously in chapter 40, when Johanan had given a warning to Governor Gedaliah about an assassination plot, Gedaliah had said, "It is a lie," and Gedaliah would not believe Johanan. And now Johanan was saying the same phrase to Jeremiah, "It is a lie," and Johanan would not believe Jeremiah.

What is the proof of Jeremiah telling the truth? According to God's Word in Deuteronomy 18:22, the proof of a prophet telling the truth is that the prophet predicts, later comes true. Well, Jeremiah had predicted the invasion of Jerusalem, and that came true. So, it is incredible and ill-advised that Johanan was calling Jeremiah a liar now. The Babylonian invasion and the fall of Jerusalem should have served them as incontrovertible proof that Jeremiah was a true prophet of God speaking God's truth.

What was the supposed lie to which Johanan was reacting? That God instructed the people to stay in the land, and not flee to Egypt. The arrogant men flatly denied that the LORD had sent Jeremiah to dissuade them from fleeing to Egypt. In Johanan's arrogance, he now suspected a conspiracy plot by Jeremiah, his assistant Baruch, to keep Johanan in the land, so that the King of Babylon could kill Johanan. But is that true?

This has turned into a test of how much confidence the arrogant Johanan would have in God's Word.

Verse 3, Johanan falsely accused Baruch, the assistant of Jeremiah of a set up. Johanan was saying Jeremiah was a puppet of the mastermind Baruch. That was a lie, developed from their growing suspicions, which were unfounded.

Verse 4, the sad and descending situation was such that because of their arrogance, Johanan and all of those around him, would not listen to the voice of the LORD; they would not remain in the land.

So, verse 5, Johanan gathered what people were left there, such as verse 6, the men, women and children, and Jeremiah and Baruch, and we are told in verse

7, that they all went into Egypt, because, again, they arrogantly would not listen to the LORD.

According to verse 6, their arrogance even resulted in the silly scene where they brought the faithful prophet Jeremiah himself along with them, while they were running away from God! By rejecting God's instructions, and then in addition, by taking Jeremiah with them, they were making things worse by actually kidnapping the prophet of God. They were taking Jeremiah captive not to Babylon, but rather to a different foreign land with a history - Egypt. Rather than being concerned about the reaction of the King of Babylon for killing Gedaliah, they should be concerned about the reaction of the LORD God for their arrogance, their disobedience, and their kidnapping of Jeremiah! What would God do?

Fast forward to the time of Jesus. What did the apostle Peter say to the crowd who had crucified Jesus? Acts 2:23, "*This Jesus, You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men...(v.36), ...let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. (v.37) Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers what shall we do? (v.38) And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins...'" The very One that they crucified, is the only Name by which they would be forgiven by God! They must turn to God through Jesus, who is the Word of God. Similarly, Johanan must turn to God through Jeremiah's prophesying of the Word of God. But Johanan remained arrogant.*

2. Even in Egypt, the LORD gave His Word and an object lesson. (v.8-10)

In verse 8, the LORD gave to Jeremiah an object lesson. In verse 9, it was large stones to be hidden in the pavement. In verse 10, the meaning is that God will surely send Nebuchadnezzar there to Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar's throne will be placed upon those stones in the pavement.

Where have you heard about Nebuchadnezzar and stone? In Daniel chapter 2, there is the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. He demanded that someone tell him not just the interpretation of his dream, but the content of the dream itself. God gave both to Daniel. The point of the dream was the God removes kings, and God sets up kings. That God is the King over all kings. Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed about himself being a giant statue, but then a stone came and broke down the statue. The stone was cut out by no human hand, showing that it was an object lesson of God's kingdom. That stone broke the statue into pieces. Then, the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. The stone showed, as we read from Daniel 2:44, "...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed...it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever."

Where else have you heard about a stone and God's kingdom? Fast forward to a time later in Jerusalem. God's kingdom would bring God's king, the Lord Jesus Christ. Caesar was the king. Would the people follow Jesus instead. Listen to John 19:11-16, *"From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified."*

After He was crucified, it would seem that God's kingdom had come to an end with the death of Jesus. When Jesus' body was buried, what was rolled in front of the tomb? A stone! And Pilate ordered that the stone be sealed. Listen to the words from God in Matthew 28:2, *"an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it."* The King of Kings arose! The stone was just an object lesson. The stone rolled away was not for Jesus to exit, for He was already gone. It was for people to enter and receive the object lesson.

3. God said He would use Babylon to destroy Egypt! (v.11-13)

In verse 11, Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon would come into Egypt, under Pharaoh, and attack it. In verse 12, God himself will struck a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt, and burn them, and carry them away captive. What does that sound like? Since God was willing to destroy His own temple in Jerusalem and take His own people away captive, why wouldn't God be willing to destroy the temples of false gods in Egypt and take their gods and their people away captive? The victory of Nebuchadnezzar over Egypt, according to verse 12, would be as effortless as shepherd wrapping himself in a garment. The word wrap has a double meaning. It is to clean your shepherd's coat of lice and mice, and also to cover yourself with the coat. It suggests that Nebuchadnezzar would easily plunder the Egyptians, and take their gold and silver, and walk away in peace, without much of a resistance from the army of Egypt! Nebuchadnezzar would not even suffer much of a loss of troops. This was God's doing!

In verse 13, God would allow Nebuchadnezzar to demolish the religious pillars in the temple of the sun in the city of the sun. Egypt was the center of sun worship, about 10 miles northeast of Cairo, Egypt.

History tells us that this all came true. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt in the 37th year of his reign, in the year 568, when Pharaoh Amasis was on the throne in Egypt. It is clear that Egypt remained its independence, and did not become part of the Babylonian Empire. It is also clear that Egypt established friendly

relationship with Babylon going forward. Babylon had halted Egypt's interference in the ambitions of Babylon. But we know from our chapter what God was doing. God was disciplining His people who would not obey His voice, and God was vindicating His faithful prophet Jeremiah, who had warned people from Jerusalem all the way to Egypt.

Conclusion: The title of the sermon is the aftermath of arrogance. But that is not the end of the story. God in His grace sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins of arrogance, and to clean up the aftermath of our sin.

Listen again to Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 11, section 5, "God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of His countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance."

The call to repent does not mean that we are left to redeem ourselves. God redeems us, by His grace. God humbles us by His grace, and so rest of the story after our arrogance has caused a bad aftermath, is that there is a good result, a good aftermath to our being humbled by God's grace. 3 applications to us here.

1. The aftermath of being humbled by God's grace is that we accept God's will for our suffering and redemption. Here in chapter 43, the people called God's word lies! Sometimes, God wants us to stay in place. God wanted them to stay in the land of promise, and not leave for Egypt. Sometimes, God wants us to stay in a place of affliction and face it, rather than seeking to escape it. When Peter presented an escape for Jesus, the reply of Jesus was "Get behind me, Satan!" Matthew 16: 21-23, "*Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." 23 But [Jesus] turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*

2. The aftermath of being humbled by God's grace is that we accept God's discipline and correction. We hunger for God's guidance, and yes, even God's discipline and correction. We want it. We pray for it. We watch for it. We crave it. Here in chapter 43, the people who foolishly reject God's discipline and try to escape the power of Babylon, will be pursued by the power of Babylon even into the foreign land of Egypt. Those from Jerusalem who had accepted God's discipline, were sitting in Babylon, seeming to be in danger! And those who ran

from God's discipline were now sitting in Egypt, seeming to be safe. However, in the hands of God, Babylon was safe, and Egypt was danger. The lesson is the lesson of Jonah. You cannot run from God's discipline and correction, so don't run from God's discipline and correction. Embrace it. Even ask for it. Psalm 139:23-24, "*Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*" This is asking for God's searching us, God's finding our arrogance, and God's leading us out of it. This sort of praying is the result of God's grace humbling our hearts.

3. The aftermath of being humbled by God's grace, is that we are confident of God's love for us. Since we cannot drift beyond the reach of God's judgment and God's word of warning, we also cannot drift beyond the reach of God's love and care. This chapter is about a God who still gives His Word through Jeremiah to people who had wandered out of the promised land and into forbidden Egypt. They received God's Word! That is the loving and patient heart of God. Romans 5:8, "*God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*"

Let me illustrate God's heart of love for us arrogant sinners. SI - Out of parental concern and a desire to teach our young son responsibility, young father require the boy to phone home when he arrived at his friend's house, a few blocks away. The boy grew more confident in his ability to get to his friend's house without any trouble, so he developed a pattern of forgetting to call home. The first time he forgot, the father telephoned the friend's house, to be sure his son had arrived safely. The father asked for the son to come on the phone, and told his son that the next time he failed to call, the boy would have to end his visit and come home immediately. A few days later, however, the telephone again lay silent, and the father knew that if he was going to learn, he would have to learn through discipline. But the father did not want to discipline him! The father went to the telephone, regretting that his son's fun time would be spoiled by his own lack of contact with his father. As the father dialed, the father prayed to his Heavenly Father for wisdom, and the Lord seemed to say, "You're your father, and you are my son. Treat your son like I treat you." With that, as the telephone rang one time, the father hung up. A few seconds later his own phone rang, and it was his son calling from the friend's house! "I'm here, Dad!" "What took you so long to call?" I asked. "We started playing and I forgot. But Dad, I heard the phone ring once and I remembered." How often do we wrongly think of God as One who waits to pounce and to punish us when we step out of line? Instead, God our Father has a heart of love, and often rings just once, prompting us to phone home.

The aftermath of being humbled by God's grace is that we accept God's will for our suffering and our redemption, we accept God's discipline and correction, and we are confident of God's love for us.

We used to be arrogant sinners leaving behind us a wake of damage, but then God's mercy and love has saved us by His grace, and now we leave behind a wake of healing and good works for the Lord.

Ephesians 2:3-5, *"we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved..."*