

***PRECEPTS FOR LIFE***  
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**SERIES: Jeremiah, Part 2 (God's Certain Judgment)**

**TITLE: Program 29 – Self-Deception And Its Consequences**

**THURSDAY**

**OPEN**

Have you ever been deceived? Don't you absolutely hate it? I hate being deceived. But what is worse is, I hate being deceived when I could have done something about it, when the deception was because I was blind, not because somebody had blindsided me. We're going to talk about being deceived and the consequences that come from self-deception. You don't want to miss a precept of God's Word.

**PART ONE**

We're in Jeremiah chapter 42 and what you're going to see is: the deception that comes because you fear the face of man instead of fearing God. Instead of listening to God you choose to walk the way of your flesh because you think that you know better. And you know what? When you find out that you didn't know better it is a real bitter pill to swallow. And that's why to me, as I've told you all week, this section of Jeremiah is the saddest of them

all, because here is a situation that is totally avoidable if they will just fear God, if they will just trust God, if they will just listen to God. And they have gone, remember, to Jeremiah, Johanan has taken the people and rescued them from Ishmael who was taking them to Ammon. Here he is camped right outside of Bethlehem on the way the Egypt. (See Jeremiah 41:15-17) And he stops and he asks Jeremiah to “Go to the Lord and find out what the Lord is saying and come back and tell us. And whatever God tells us, whether it’s pleasant or unpleasant. Whatever He tells us we will do it. We will listen to God.” (See Jeremiah 42:1-3) So Jeremiah comes back and he tells them and it’s not what they think it ought to be. (See Jeremiah 42:4-6) They think that they are smarter than God. Somehow they think that they can control their destiny by their own decisions, by their own reasoning and they’re leaning to their own understanding. (See Jeremiah 43:1-4) And the Bible says [“Lean not to your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge God, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths. Trust in the Lord.”] (PARAPHRASE Proverbs 3:5-6) They are not trusting in the Lord. So Jeremiah is warning them about what’s going to happen if they choose to not listen, if they choose to go down to Egypt. (Jeremiah 42:7-21) Well, it is my goal to get us through these remaining chapters by the end of this week, so let’s get on with it. In verse 13 of chapter 42 he has told them to stay in the land. He’s told them that God will bless them. That God will relent concerning the calamity, that He’s going to show them compassion; that He’s going to restore them. (See Jeremiah 42:10) I mean what a check God has written on their behalf. And all they have to do is listen to God and obey. I mean, it hasn’t been the habit of their life, but now they have another opportunity. He says in verse 13: **“But if you are going to say, ‘We will not stay in this land,’ so as not to listen to the voice of the LORD your God, saying, ‘No...we will go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see war or hear the sound of a trumpet or hunger for bread, and we will stay there.’”** (Jeremiah 42:13-14) In other words, we’re going to go

because we don't want to hear about war. We don't want to hear a trumpet. We want to have plenty of bread, as if Egypt is going to provide that for them. **"Then....,"** Jeremiah says, **"...in that case listen to the word of the LORD, O remnant...."** (Jeremiah 42:15) **"If that's what you say."** He says, **"...Thus says the LORD of hosts... 'If you really set your mind to enter Egypt and go...[and] reside there.'"** (Jeremiah 42:15) **"If you set your heart on this, if this is what you're gonna do, do or die, then you need to know."** **"Then the sword, which you are afraid of, will overtake you there in the land of Egypt...."** (Jeremiah 42:16) **"You're gonna go there and die."** **"...And the famine, about which you are anxious...."** (Jeremiah 42:16) **"Cause you said, 'We'll have plenty of bread down there.'"** He says, **"...will follow closely after you...in Egypt, and you will die there. So all the men who set their mind to go to Egypt to reside there will die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence...."** (Jeremiah 42:16-17) Remember those are God's three judgments: sword/war or conflict, famine, and pestilence—the pestilence that comes as a result of famine as a result of being sick, as a result of not having the proper nourishment. He says, **"So all the men who set their mind to go to Egypt to reside there...."** Now you want to mark it. **"...Will die by the sword....,"** red slash, **"...famine....,"** black 'cause it turned your skin black, **"...and...pestilence; and they will have no survivors or refugees from the calamity that I am going to bring on them."** (Jeremiah 42:17) **"You go, I'm going to bring calamity. You disobey, I'm going to bring calamity. You don't walk the way I said walk I'm going to bring calamity."** You see, Precious Ones, we forget that God is God. We forget His character. We forget His holiness. We forget His righteousness. We forget His justice. We forget that because He is holy and righteous and just that He has to deal with sin. He cannot let it go un-dealt with. His righteousness commands His judgment. He says, **"[So] thus says the LORD [God] of hosts... 'As My anger and wrath have been poured out on the inhabitants of**

**Jerusalem....” (Jeremiah 42:18)** That happened in chapter 39. (See Jeremiah 39:1) They saw it. They were part of it. They experienced it. **“...So My wrath will be poured...on you when you enter Egypt....” (Jeremiah 42:18)** “I want you to know that when you get to Egypt I’m gonna deal with you.” He says, **“...You will become a curse, [you will become] an object of horror, an imprecation and a reproach; and you will see this place no more.” (Jeremiah 42:18)** I’m offering you the land I offered to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the land that I gave them as an everlasting possession. (See Genesis 17:8) I’m offering you blessing, and I want you to know that if you go to Egypt you will not see this land again. Beloved, God sets before us life and death, blessing and cursing. There are consequences to our choices and He is letting them know fully. And you know what? They’re not going to listen. Watch what he says. **“The LORD has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah, ‘Do not go to Egypt!’ You should clearly understand that today [today] I have testified against you [do not go to Egypt].” (Jeremiah 42:19)** What are you doing that you know that you shouldn’t be doing? Whose bed are you going to that you know you shouldn’t be going to? Who are you meeting? What are you watching on the Internet? What are you taking and you know you shouldn’t do it? Unless you’ve seared your conscience, you know that that’s wrong. Who are you flirting with? Is it someone of the same sex? Is it someone that is perverted and twisted in their mind and in their thinking? And are you going after that because it’s titillating? Listen, don’t go there. There are consequences. And then He says **“...Don[’t] go to Egypt!’ You should clearly understand that today I [God] have testified against you. For you have only deceived yourselves; for it is you who sent me to the LORD...,”** Jeremiah’s speaking, **“...sent me to the LORD...saying, ‘Pray for us to the LORD our God; and whatever the LORD...God says, tell us so, and we will do it.’ So I...told you today, but you have not obeyed the LORD your God....” (Jeremiah 42:19-21)** When I come to “obey” I put a big blue circle. If it’s “not obey” I

put a slash through it. And he has said, “You sent me to God. I’m telling you what God said, and God’s message is: ‘Don’t go to Egypt.’ And I’m begging you.” How many of you have been begged by someone that loved you, don’t keep drinking? Don’t take those drugs. Don’t go there. Don’t get in that car? Don’t walk off. Don’t leave your kids. Don’t leave your wife. But you were determined. You thought you knew better. You thought you could be happy. You thought you could call the shots and you’ve forgotten something. There is a God in heaven and you cannot transgress against God. “Transgress” means step over the line and get away with it and not reap the harvest. O Beloved, Jeremiah is saying, “Do not go to Egypt!” He says, **“Therefore you should now clearly understand that you will die by the sword, [and] by famine and by pestilence....,”** now listen, **“...in the place [in which] you wish to...reside.” (Jeremiah 42:22)** You die in the place that you chose to go to, the place of your disobedience. You see, **“...The wages of sin is death....” (Romans 6:23)** It’s speaking of eternal death. But James chapter 1 tells us that [when our lusts, our desire has conceived it brings forth sin and sin brings forth death.] (PARAPHRASE James 1:15) And there’s a death there. I mean I have been with women that I have ministered to in prison, but it is so sad for me to see the courtyards. Where they go outside, to see the grounds, there’s not one tree. There’s not one shrub for fear that they will hide behind it. They live in a barrenness. Now many times that’s what it takes to get them to fear God, to get them to listen to God. Otherwise what they do is, they go deeper and deeper into bitterness and hardness and anger and perversion and sin. O Beloved, fear God. To fear God means to listen to Him. To fear God means to honor Him as God. You die. I wrote it in the margin next to verse 22, “you die where you wish to reside.” (See Jeremiah 42:22) They had a choice. Chapter 43: **“But as soon as Jeremiah, whom the LORD their God had sent, had finished telling...the people all the words of the LORD their God...,”** then this

happened. (**Jeremiah 43:1**) What happened? We'll tell you when we get back.

## **PART TWO**

If you think that you can call the shots to life, if you think that you can make your decisions and have what you want, that you're the captain of your own fate? You know what it's called? It's called arrogance, arrogance. Don't tell me what to do. Don't tell me. I'm sorry, I know better. I know it all. I've got it together. And if you don't have it together you think you have it together, or you think that this is what's going to satisfy you. O Beloved, listen, in Jeremiah chapter 43, verse 1 it says, **"...As soon as Jeremiah, whom the LORD their God has sent, had finished telling...the people all the words of the LORD their God—that is, all these words—Azariah...and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men...."** (**Jeremiah 43:1-2**) I would underline it. **"...Said to Jeremiah, 'You are telling a lie! [You're telling a lie!] The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there....'"** (**Jeremiah 43:2**) "We do not agree. You are lying to us." What have these people done? They had said, "Tell us whether it's pleasant or unpleasant, we will do it." (See Jeremiah 42:6) They really didn't mean it, did they? They wanted confirmation that they should go down to Egypt. That's all they wanted. They just wanted God to bless their plans, to bless their disobedience, to bless their arrogance. And listen, Precious One, you cannot fight against God. And He's saying, "You better believe Me. Because someday you're gonna stand face to face with Me, and you're going to give an account for the way that you have lived. You're going to give an account for turning your back on Me." And these people were going to do the same thing. They thought that they could get away with it. Now just stop and think. Reason with me for a few minutes. This is Jeremiah. Jeremiah has been prophesying for 41 years. Everything that he's prophesied has come to pass, except they haven't been in captivity

70 years, and God has not set up His kingdom and David's not yet on His throne. But everything about the judgment, everything about the Babylonians all came to pass. So they're not listening to someone that has a good track record. So it says, verse 3, and they're still talking, **"But Baruch the son of Neriah is inciting you against us to give us over [to] the hand of the Chaldeans, so [that] they will put us to death or exile us to Babylon."** (Jeremiah 43:3) That's what you're doing. Now they just asked this man for advice. Now they're accusing him. **"So Johanan...and all the commanders of the forces, and all the people, did not obey the voice of the LORD to stay in the land...."** (Jeremiah 43:4) Did you get that? **"[They] did not obey the voice of the LORD to stay [to stay] in the land of Judah. But Johanan...and all the commanders of the forces took the entire remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations to which they had been driven away, in order to reside in the land of Judah—the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters...every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard had left with Gedaliah...together with Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah—and they entered the land of Egypt...."** (Jeremiah 43:4-7) Jeremiah had no choice. He was taken with them. The people were taken to Egypt. Now listen, by ungodly leadership that would not submit to the word of God, that thought they knew better than God, and that went against the word of God. One of the things that I watch carefully is: how the Prime Minister of Israel is responding to the pressure of the nations. Because if he will believe God and not give away the land, and not compromise, and not stop building settlements, God will bless, but the minute he cautions to the nations instead of fearing God, he's in trouble. Our help doesn't come from the east or from the west. (See Psalms 75:6-7) It comes from the Lord who made the heavens and the earth. (See Psalms 121:2) So watch what it says. **"...They entered the land of Egypt...."** (Jeremiah 43:7) They took the entire remnant of Judah. Go down to verse 7. **"...They entered the land of**

Egypt...,” and then he wants to make sure you understand why: **“...(for they did not obey the voice of the LORD)....” (Jeremiah 43:7)** They didn’t fear God. To fear God is to depart from evil. (See Job 28:28) To fear God is to make Him your shield, your fortress, your trust. (See Psalms 144:2, KJV) **“...And [they] went as far as Tahpanhes. Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes....,”** and that’s in Egypt, **“...saying ‘Take some large stones in your hands...hide them in the mortar [that’s] in the brick terrace which is at the entrance of Pharaoh’s palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of some of the Jews.’” (Jeremiah 43:7-9)** “I want you to do it. I want the Jews to see what you’re doing.” It’s a visual aid. **“And say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts...God of Israel, “Behold, I am going to send and get Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and I am going to set his throne right [here] over these stones....”’” (Jeremiah 43:10)** In other words, Nebuchadnezzar is going to be brought down to Egypt. “Nebuchadnezzar, that you were fearing, Nebuchadnezzar, the one that you said, ‘Oh we can’t stay in the land because he’s gonna get us,’ I’m gonna bring him here.” It says, **“...I[’m] going to set his throne right over these stones that I have hidden; and he will spread his canopy over them.” (Jeremiah 43:10)** In other words, his canopy—his tent—that shows that he is the conqueror. **“He will...come and strike the land of Egypt; those who are meant for death will be given over to death...those for captivity to captivity...those for...sword to the sword. And I...,”** God is speaking, **“...[will] set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt, and he will burn them and take them captive. So he will wrap himself with the land of Egypt....” (Jeremiah 43:11-12)** This king of Babylon is just going to take the land of Egypt and **“...[he’s going to wrap himself with the land of Egypt] as a shepherd wraps himself with his garment[s], and he will depart from there safely. He will also shatter the obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt; and the temples of the gods of Egypt he will burn with fire.” (Jeremiah 43:12-13)** “Listen,



he's coming here. He's going to set his throne right here. And when he sets his throne and spreads his canopy over it, he is going to go in and he is going to destroy the temples of the gods." He's going to destroy their idols and he is going to leave Egypt safely. "You wouldn't listen to Me. You thought you knew better. And I want you to know, you don't know better." Now what comes next? **"The word [of the Lord to] the Jews [when they're] living in...Egypt. (Jeremiah 44:1)** And when you look at this word of the Lord, what you're going to see tomorrow is, that when you don't listen to God you do great harm to yourself. O Beloved, don't die because of your sin. Listen to God. Don't fear the face of man. Don't think that you're the captain of your fate. Listen, you only have breath because God has given you breath. You're listening because God wants to draw you to Himself. He wants to introduce you to His Son Jesus. He wants to give you life. Go online and find out about it at "[preceptsforlife.com](http://preceptsforlife.com)".