



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

# BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

**JEREMIAH 34-52,  
LAMENTATIONS  
AND OBADIAH**

Week 2

## Assassination!

---

Jeremiah 41

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

What are some of the most famous assassinations of recent history? How did they affect the countries in which they occurred?

---

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. What were Ishmael and Gedaliah doing when Gedaliah was assassinated (vs. 1-3)?
  2. Who else did the assassin Ishmael kill (v. 3)?
  3. What were the 80 men whom Ishmael deceived, and then killed, coming to do (vs. 4-5)?
  4. What did most of the people Ishmael had captured do when they saw Johanan and his officers (vs. 13-14)?
  5. Why didn't Johanan return to Mizpah in Judah (vs. 16-18)?
- 

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. Have you ever had someone speak well of you in front of you, but then tear you down behind your back?
  2. Was your betrayer someone you knew well?
  3. How do you tell a true friend from a fair-weather friend?
- 

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

***"To the house of the Lord"*** (v. 5). *The Temple had been destroyed, but these men nevertheless wanted to worship at its site. They may have been planning to celebrate one of the Hebrew festivals.*

# Which Way Do We Go?

---

DAY 9

Jeremiah 42

Have you ever experienced a time when you weren't sure which direction to go? What were your options? How do you think your decision worked out?

---

1. What request did Johanan and his entourage make of Jeremiah (vs. 1-3)?
  2. What promise did Johanan and the people make to Jeremiah (vs. 5-6)?
  3. What was the Lord's reply to their request for guidance (vs. 7-18)?
  4. Where did many of the people want to go (vs. 15-16)?
  5. What kind of mistake did Jeremiah warn the people they were making (v. 20)? (a) tragic, (b) colossal, (c) minor, (d) fatal.
- 

1. What method do you normally use when you are seeking God's direction for your life? Do you rely mainly on: (a) prayer, (b) Scripture, (c) friends and counselors, (d) all the above?
2. Have you ever asked a trusted Christian friend to help you make a critical decision? Do you feel his or her counsel was wise?

## **OPENING**

up to the Word

## **DIGGING**

into the Word

## **LIVING**

out the Word

## Nowhere to Hide

---

Jeremiah 43

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Was there a time in your life when you knew what God wanted you to do—but you rebelled against doing it?

---

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. How did Jeremiah describe the men who responded to his prophecy (v. 2)?
  2. Who did Johanan and Azariah accuse of trying to incite Jeremiah against them (v. 3)?
  3. Did the people ever make it into Egypt (v. 7)?
  4. Why do you think Jeremiah ended up in Egypt (v. 8)?
  5. Jeremiah's prophecy (vs. 9-13) indicated that (a) Egypt would keep them safe, (b) Egypt would hand them over to Babylon, (c) Nebuchadnezzar would conquer Egypt.
- 

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. Of all the decisions you have faced as a Christ-follower, what has been the most difficult?
  2. What were you afraid might happen to you, and why do you think you were so frightened?
- 

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

**Tahpanes** (v. 7) was a fortress city on the border of northern Egypt. **Pharaoh's palace** (v. 9) must have been a secondary palace where Pharaoh stayed when he was in Tahpanes. His main residence was in Elephantine in southern Egypt.

# The Idol Queen

DAY 11

## Jeremiah 44

When things go their way and all is well, most people say they've been *lucky*. How often do you attribute beneficial circumstances and events to God?

**1.** What were the Jews, who had escaped to Egypt, doing that provoked the Lord to anger against them (v. 8)?

**2.** By God's decree, how many Jews who fled to Egypt would ever return (v. 14)?

**3.** Who was taking the lead in burning incense to the idol called the *Queen of Heaven* (v. 15-17)? (a) the priests, (b) the women, (c) the men, (d) the young people.

**4.** What reasoning did the people use to justify their continued idol worship (v. 18)?

**5.** What sign would the people receive that God was going to punish them as he promised (vs. 29-30)?

**1.** When something unexpectedly wonderful happens to you, how do you usually explain it to others? (a) attribute it to good luck, (b) attribute it to God's gracious love, (c) attribute it to shrewd decisions on your part.

**2.** When life is going well for most of your friends, to what do they attribute it?

**3.** How often do you attribute good things to God? (a) always, (b) usually, (c) sometimes, (d) seldom, (e) seldom—but things are going to start to change!

**The Queen of Heaven** (v. 17) most likely refers to Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love and fertility. Her Greek name was Astarte. She was the goddess of war and love, and represented female fertility.

### OPENING

up to the Word

### DIGGING

into the Word

### LIVING

out the Word

### WINDOW

on the Word

## Illuminating Secret Ambitions

---

Jeremiah 45

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Have you ever had a great ambition in life that you finally realized you would never accomplish?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. Who was Baruch, and what did he do for Jeremiah (v. 1)?
2. What was Baruch's complaint (v. 3)?
3. What does God reveal was really Baruch's greatest frustration (v. 5)?
4. God's advice to Baruch (v. 5) is: (a) take a more active role in prophecy, (b) get over it! (c) be happy I spared your life—others won't be spared, (d) be patient—soon you will get your chance.
5. God offers Baruch a great promise in light of all the judgment and danger he has to witness. What is that promise (v. 5)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. Do you have a secret ambition?
2. How would you accept it if you realized that you would never be able to fulfill your ambition?
3. Even though you may not fulfill your secret ambition, how has God blessed your life in other ways?

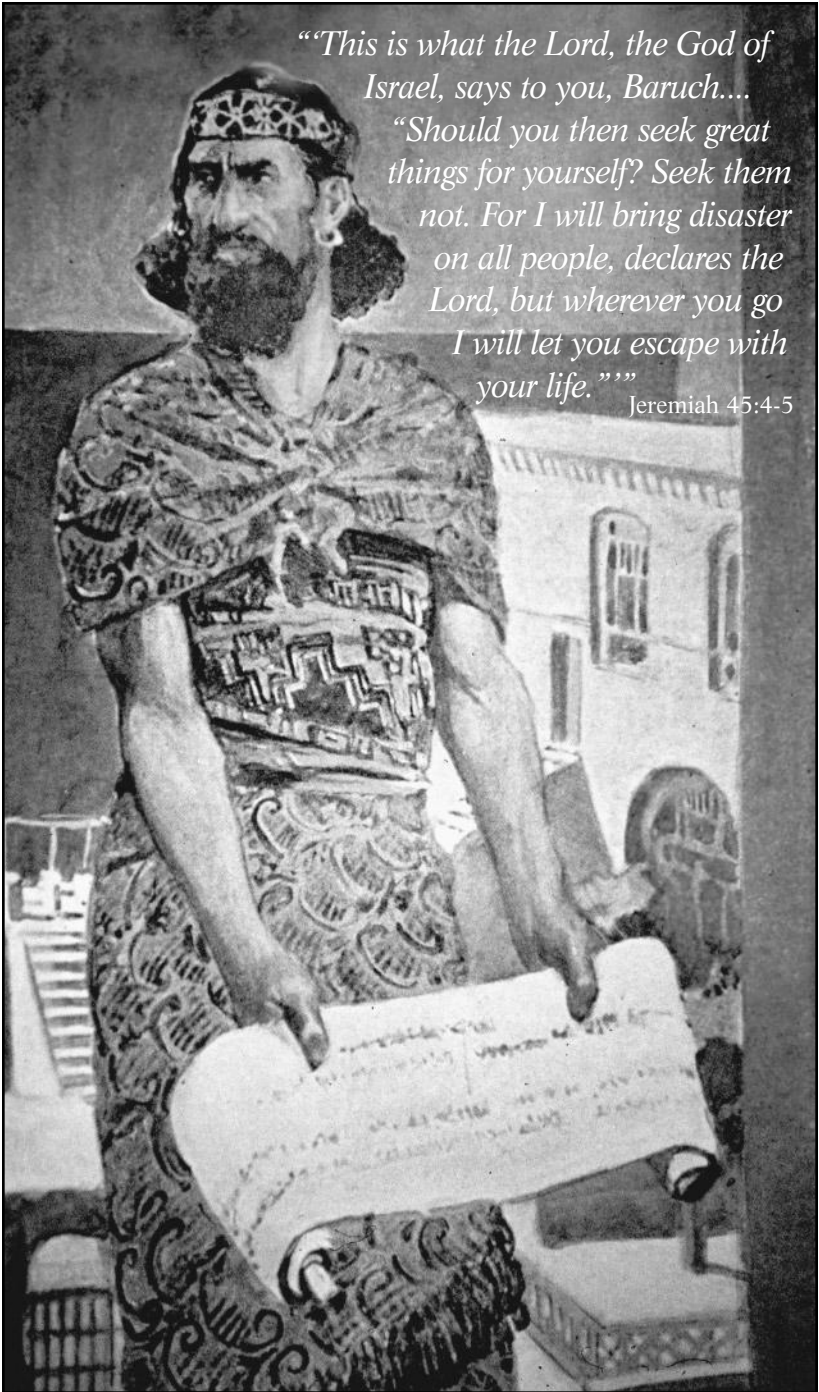
**WINDOW**  
on the Word

**Baruch, son of Neriah** (v. 1), Jeremiah's secretary, came from an influential family of noble birth, and was the grandson of Mahseiah, who was governor of Jerusalem during the reign of Josiah (2Ch 34:8). His brother had been chief chamberlain in the court of Zedekiah (Jer 51:59). Baruch may have had ambitions of attaining a high office, or even the prophetic office. God knew the secret things of Baruch's heart and the reason for his complaining.

*“This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to you, Baruch...”*

*“Should you then seek great things for yourself? Seek them not. For I will bring disaster on all people, declares the Lord, but wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.””*

*Jeremiah 45:4-5*



Portrait of Baruch by James Tissot

*“Concerning Egypt: This is the message against the army of Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt, which was defeated at Carchemish on the Euphrates River by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.”*

Jeremiah 46:2



***Sculpture of Pharaoh Psamtik II, of the 26th Egyptian Dynasty. Both Pharaohs Neco (2Ki 23:29; Jer 46:2) and Hophra (Jer 44:30) were members of this dynasty. Psamtik II was successor to Neco.***



# The Embarrassing Sounds of Retreat

---

DAY 13

Jeremiah 46

When was the last time you made a claim that you found yourself unable to back up?

---

1. Who defeated Pharaoh Neco's army (v. 2)?
  2. What was the ultimate reason Pharaoh Neco's armies would be defeated (v. 15)?
  3. *Fattened calves* was the term God used to describe whom (v. 21)?
  4. Who was the target of God's punishment (vs. 25-26)?
  5. In spite of Egypt's downfall, who was promised that they would not ultimately be destroyed (vs. 27-28)?
- 

1. *Sometimes my pride gets me in trouble, and I make claims I cannot back up.* Is this statement: (a) frequently true of you, (b) occasionally true of you, (c) seldom true of you, (d) never true of you?
  2. When you are unable to back up your own claims, how do you feel? (a) humiliated, (b) angry, (c) ashamed, (d) all of the above.
  3. When you have to admit you can't back up your exaggerated claims, do you get angry with yourself, others or God? What lesson can you learn from your answer?
- 

**Pharaoh Neco** (v. 2) killed Josiah, King of Judah, in 609 B.C. In 605 B.C. Neco's army was defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army. Nebuchadnezzar would not invade Egypt until 571-567 B.C.

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## Flood Warnings

---

Jeremiah 47

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

When a catastrophe is near, warnings are issued to give people time to get to safety. Has anyone ever warned you of a catastrophe coming your way?

---

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

**1.** “Waters rising in the north” (v. 2) refers not to literal water, but a great danger for the people. Do you think water refers to (a) an invading army, (b) a swarm of locusts, (c) hail and lightning from heaven?

**2.** This judgment would be so intense that fathers of children will do something unnatural (v. 3)? What will they do?

**3.** What does *cut yourselves* (v. 5) refer to?

---

**LIVING**  
out the Word

**1.** Have you ever been through a natural disaster, such as fire, flood, hurricane, tornado or earthquake?

**2.** Have you ever been through a *spiritual* catastrophe?

**3.** In your opinion, which was worse—the natural catastrophe, or the spiritual catastrophe? Why?

---

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

Because a specific **Pharaoh** is not named in verse 1, several possibilities have been suggested. Some see this as Pharaoh Neco, who conquered the Philistines at Gaza when he defeated King Josiah at Megiddo. Others see this as Neco when he was returning from his defeat at Carchemish. Another explanation is that this is Pharaoh Hophra, who conquered Gaza when he fought against Tyre and Sidon. **“Waters...in the north”** (v. 2). Flood waters are often used as imagery. In this case they describe an invading army that is seen as unstoppable. **Cutting oneself** (v. 5) was a pagan act of humiliation to seek a god’s favor.



*“This is what the Lord says: ‘See how the waters are rising in the north; they will become an overflowing torrent. They will overflow the land and everything in it, the towns and those who live in them. The people will cry out; all who dwell in the land will wail . . . ’”*

Jeremiah 47:2