

Fact Sheet for **“What Kind of Solution Do We Need?”**  
**Jeremiah 40-44**

Pastor Bob Singer  
03/03/2019

It doesn't take long when you listen to the news to realize that our planet is filled with problems.

In England there is Brexit.

Socialism in Venezuela is driving it into poverty.

Syria has about destroyed itself.

The US is facing an immigration crisis.

China has huge economic problems.

Israel is always at odds with the Palestinians.

Iran is developing weapons to strike Israel.

In addition, many countries are deep in debt.

If you listen carefully to the news you will hear a repeated assertion that what are needed are good political solutions. But God has a different message. What is needed is a good spiritual solution.

Today we are going to be looking at four chapters in Jeremiah that remind us of this exact thing. Jeremiah is the voice of God's spiritual solution. The political leaders had different ideas. But also look in these chapters for what God is saying to you as an individual. He is looking for your fidelity to Him.

*Read Jeremiah 40:1-3.* I find it interesting that Nebuzaradan recognized this, but the people of Judah did not. He continued...

*Read Jeremiah 40:4-5*

So Jeremiah went to Mizpah (about 9 miles N of Jerusalem) where Gedaliah was located.

Now there were other Jews who were not in Jerusalem when it fell (*read Jeremiah 40:7-8a*).

The NLT has an interesting translation of these forces... "guerrilla bands." Among them were a fellow named Ismael (a member of the Jewish royal family) and another named Johanan.

*Read Jeremiah 40:9-10*

And it wasn't only these guerilla forces that returned to Judah (*read Jeremiah 40:11-12*).

Johanan was willing to live with this arrangement with Gedaliah. Ismael was not. Ismael had a more robust political solution in mind. There were some political designs in the background. A day soon came when Johanan warned Gedaliah that the king of the Ammonites had sent Ismael to kill him, but Gedaliah did not believe Johanan. Then one day Ishmael came with ten men to Gedaliah at Mizpah. As they shared a meal they killed Gedaliah. They also killed all the Judeans and the Chaldean soldiers who were there.

*Read Jeremiah 41:4-5.* Notice that they had mixed pagan practices with Jewish ones. Wasn't this part of why God had Israel and Judah fall?

Ismael and his men killed 70 of them.

*Read Jeremiah 41:8.* So much for the values of Ismael's political solution.

Then Ismael then took the all the rest of the people at Mizpah and set out to cross over to the Ammonites. When Johanan hears of it he and all the leaders of the forces with him went after them. The people that Ismael had taken turned back and went to Johanan, but Ismael and eight men went over to the Ammonites.

Now Johanan and everyone with him went and stayed near Bethlehem, intending to go to Egypt. They were afraid of the Chaldeans because of what Ismael had done in killing Gedaliah.

*Read Jeremiah 42:1-6*

Before you think that Johanan was a great guy keep on reading. Ten days later Jeremiah summoned them and delivered God's clear message. If they stayed in the land God would protect and bless them. But if they sought safety by fleeing to Egypt, God would pursue them until they all perished. How did Johanan and the others with him respond? They said, "You are telling a lie. The LORD our God did not send you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to live there,'<sup>3</sup> but Baruch has set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may kill us or take us into exile in Babylon." So much for the words they spoke to Jeremiah. So Johanan and all the commanders of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned to live in the land of Judah, also Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch, and they came into the land of Egypt.

*Read Jeremiah 43:8-13.* This would take place in the middle of the 70 year captivity.

In chapter 44 Jeremiah would also have something to say to the Judeans who came to Egypt. He first reminded them that all this disaster had taken place because of their idolatry while they lived in Judah. Then he rebuked them about their continued idolatry in Egypt, and said that he would punish them with sword, famine, and disease so that only some fugitives would ever return to Judah. Here is how they responded...

*Read Jeremiah 44:15-23*

So the LORD gave them a sign (*read Jeremiah 44:29-30*). I can imagine what some of them must have thought when this actually happened.

All the political solutions in the world at that time wouldn't have saved the Jewish people in Egypt. In reality they needed a spiritual solution.

What is the message for our nation? Well, let me respond this way. Are we as a nation seeking political solutions or a spiritual one? The future looks problematic at best.

What is the message from these chapters for you? Keep you fidelity toward God in place. Love Him with all your heart, soul, and mind. Pursue righteousness. Keep your trust in Him. Even when the people of Judah were being attacked by Nebuchadnezzar God was protecting those whose hearts were really His.

He will see you through what is ahead for our nation. The real solution rests with Him.