

בא

Jeremiah

46: 13-28

Part 1

13] מוֹן הַדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל-יִרְמְיָהוּ
הַנְּבִיא לְבֹא נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל
לְהַפֹּת אֶת-אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:
14] הַגִּידוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם
וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ בְּמִגְדוֹל
וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ בְּנֶף וּבַתְּחַפְּנֶחָה
אִמְרוּ הַתִּיצֵב וְהַכֵּן לָךְ
כִּי-אֶכְלָה חֶרֶב סְבִיבֶיךָ:
15] מְדוּעַ נִסְחַף
אֲבִירֶיךָ לֹא עָמַד
כִּי יְהוָה הִדְפּוֹ:
16] הַרְבֵּה כּוֹשֵׁל
גַּם-נָפַל אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ
וַיֹּאמְרוּ
קוֹמָה | וְנִשְׁבָּה אֶל-עַמָּנוּ
וְאֶל-אֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתָּנוּ
מִפְּנֵי חֶרֶב הַיּוֹנָה:
17] קְרָאוּ שֵׁם פְּרַעְזָה מֶלֶךְ-מִצְרַיִם
שֶׁאֵין הָעֵבֶיר תִּמְוָעַד:
18] חַי-אֲנִי נְאֻם-הַמֶּלֶךְ
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שָׁמוּ

Part 2

The career of Jeremiah, an inward and agonized man, spanned some forty years. He was called to prophecy in the last quarter of the 7th century B.C.E., when Judah lay in grave danger between two contending superpowers, Egypt and Babylonia. Later, when Babylonia destroyed Jerusalem (586 B.C.E.), Jeremiah found himself an exile in Egypt.

The sidrah tells of the ancient Pharaoh's struggle with God. The haftarah updates the tale: again a Pharaoh of Egypt will suffer a bitter defeat.

46:13] This is the word the Eternal spoke to Jeremiah the prophet concerning an attack on Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon:

14] Declare it in Egypt!
Announce it in Migdol,
and in Memphis and Tahpanhes!
Say: Take your stand, be ready,
for the sword is devouring
all around you.

15] Why did Chaf flee?
Your champion did not stand fast,
for the Eternal has driven him away.

16] He made many stumble,
one falling over the next,
and they said,
"Quick, let us go back to our people,
to the land where we were born,
away from the flashing sword!"

17] There they called Pharaoh king of Egypt:
Big Noise Who Has Missed His Chance.

18] As I live—says the Eternal One,
the Sovereign God of heaven's hosts—

13] *Nebuchadnezzar.* Jeremiah often calls this Babylonian king *Nebuchadrezzar*, yet in translation we follow the spelling used most in the Tanach.

14] *Memphis.* נֹף (*Nof*), capital of ancient Egypt.
Tahpanhes. An outpost in the eastern Nile delta where Jeremiah was apparently languishing as an

elderly exile when he composed this prophecy.

15] *Chaf.* Reading נס חף (*nas chaf*, Chaf has fled), following the ancient Greek translation, rather than נס חף (*nis-chaf*). In Jeremiah's time, worship of this bull-god had become Egypt's national focus; thus, the image of his flight symbolizes Egypt's downfall.

PDF/AUDIO
8:14-16

AUDIO
8:17-19

AUDIO
8:20-22

AUDIO
8:23-25

as Tabor is among the mountains,
 as Carmel is by the sea,
 so shall [Nebuchadnezzar] come.
 19] Pack your bags for exile,
 Fair Egypt, dwelling so safe and sound!
 Memphis will become a desolation,
 an uninhabited ruin!
 20] Egypt is a lovely heifer
 upon whom a gadfly from the north [has descended].
 21] Even the mercenaries in her midst
 were like fatted calves;
 for they too have turned and fled as one,
 making no stand.
 For their day of disaster had come upon them,
 their hour of doom.
 22] Hear her hiss like a snake
 when [the Babylonians] come in force
 to attack her with axes,
 like woodchoppers.
 23] Says the Eternal One:
 They cut down her forest,
 impenetrable though it is,
 for they outnumber the locusts,
 and cannot be counted.
 24] Fair Egypt shall be put to shame,
 given over to a northern people.
 25] The God of heaven's hosts, the God of Israel, says:
 Behold, I punish Amon, [god] of [the town of] No,

כִּי פְתָחוּ בְהָרִים
 וּכְכַרְמֵל בַּיָּם
 יָבוֹא:
 19 כְּלִי גוֹלָה עֲשֵׂי לְךָ
 יוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּתִמְצָרִים
 כִּי־נָח לְשִׁמְהָ תִהְיֶה
 וְנִצְתָה מֵאֵין יוֹשֵׁב:
 20 עֲגֹלָה יִפְהֶ־פִיָּה מִצְרַיִם
 קָרַץ מִצְפּוֹן בָּא בָּא:
 21 גַּם־שֹׁכְרֶיהָ בְּקִרְבָּהָ
 כַּעֲגֹלֵי מִרְבֵּק
 כִּי־גַם־הִמָּה הִפְנוּ נְסוּ יַחְדָּיו
 לֹא עָמְדוּ
 כִּי יוֹם אִידָם בָּא עֲלֵיהֶם
 עַת פִּקְדָתָם:
 22 קוֹלָהּ בְּנִחֹשׁ יִלָּךְ
 כִּי־בְחִיל יִלְכוּ
 וּבְקִרְדָּמוֹת בָּאוּ לָהּ
 כַּחֲטָבֵי עֵצִים:
 23 בָּרַתּוּ יַעֲרָה
 נֹאֲם־יְהוָה
 כִּי לֹא יִחַקֶּר
 כִּי רַבּוּ מֵאַרְבֶּה
 וְאֵין לָהֶם מִסְפָּר:
 24 הִבְיִשָּׁה בְתִמְצָרִים
 נִתְּנָה בְיַד עַם־צְפּוֹן:
 25 אָמַר יְהוָה יְהוָה עֲבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 הִנְנִי פוֹקֵד אֶל־אֲמוֹן מִזֹּא

18] *Tabor... Carmel.* Both hills can be seen from afar; to the traveler they pop up out of nowhere. Just so will Nebuchadnezzar seem to arrive suddenly.

20] *Gadfly.* Babylon had "stung" Egypt.
Upon whom. Following the Septuagint, whose text apparently read בא בה (*ba bah*) instead of בא בא.
From the north. Babylon (present-day southern

Iraq) actually lay southeast of Israel. But because of intervening desert, its troops had to march northward into Syria and then turn southward to Israel.

22] *Hear her.* That is, Egypt.

24] *Northern.* See comment on verse 20.

25] *Amon.* Jeremiah prophesied during an age when No and its god Amon enjoyed great prestige.