

11

JEREMIAH 42:7-22

GOD'S COUNSEL



THIS WEEK'S **focus**

What if you were tasked with cooking a five-course meal for England's royal family? Would you just try to figure it out yourself, or would you ask for advice? Not only would you probably ask for advice, but you might also hope to find someone who had cooked for the royal family before. That chef's experienced advice would make your task immensely more doable. God knows how to do everything, so when He calls us to do something, we know He has the limitless wisdom and resources to accomplish it through us. In today's session, God's people asked for God's counsel on what to do next. The problem was, they'd already made up their minds about what they wanted to do. God has limitless wisdom to pour out into our lives so we can thrive in His plans. But in order to walk in His wisdom, we must be submitted to His will.



CENTRAL **truth**

Obeying God's guidance leads to our good.



EXPLORE

scripture

JEREMIAH 42:7-22

JEREMIAH 42:7-12

7 At the end of ten days, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, 8 and he summoned Johanan son of Kareah, all the commanders of the armies who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest. 9 He said to them, “This is what the LORD says, the God of Israel to whom you sent me to bring your petition before him: 10 ‘If you will indeed stay in this land, then I will rebuild and not demolish you, and I will plant and not uproot you,

because I relent concerning the disaster that I have brought on you. 11 Don’t be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear; don’t be afraid of him’ — this is the LORD’s declaration — ‘because I am with you to save you and rescue you from him. 12 I will grant you compassion, and he will have compassion on you and allow you to return to your own soil.’

JEREMIAH 42:13-18

13 “But if you say, ‘We will not stay in this land,’ in order to disobey the LORD your God, 14 and if you say, ‘No, instead we’ll go to the land of Egypt where we will not see war or hear the sound of the ram’s horn or hunger for food, and we’ll live there,’ 15 then hear the word of the LORD, remnant of Judah! This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: ‘If you are firmly resolved to go to Egypt and stay there for a while, 16 then the sword you fear will overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine you are worried about

will follow on your heels there to Egypt, and you will die there. 17 All who resolve to go to Egypt to stay there for a while will die by the sword, famine, and plague. They will have no survivor or fugitive from the disaster I will bring on them.’ 18 “For this is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: ‘Just as my anger and fury were poured out on Jerusalem’s residents, so will my fury pour out on you if you go to Egypt. You will become an example for cursing, scorn, execration, and disgrace, and you will never see this place again.’

JEREMIAH 42:19-22

19 The LORD has spoken concerning you, remnant of Judah: ‘Don’t go to Egypt.’ Know for certain that I have warned you today! 20 You have gone astray at the cost of your lives because you are the ones who sent me to the LORD your God, saying, ‘Pray to the LORD our God on our behalf, and as for all that the LORD our God says, tell it to us, and we’ll act

accordingly.’ 21 For I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the LORD your God in everything he has sent me to tell you. 22 Now therefore, know for certain that by the sword, famine, and plague you will die in the place where you desired to go to stay for a while.”

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE JEREMIAH 42:6

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

JEREMIAH 42:7-12

DWELL

God is stronger than any threat, so He told the frightened Jews, “Stay and settle in.” God was as full of compassion and power at that moment as He was on the day He delivered Israel from Egypt’s oppression. New threats, same God. The same is true for us today: there will always be enemies and obstacles we face, and we’ll always, to some degree, be vulnerable and in desperate need of help. Fortunately, our God is the same now as He was back then: He has counsel to direct us and power to protect us.

← What were some of the challenges worrying the people who Jeremiah was speaking to in this passage? Do you think His words comforted them? Why do you think that?

↑ Despite their challenges, what should they have learned about God from His response to them? What can we learn?

MEMORIZE

Write Jeremiah 42:6 in a journal each day this week and read it aloud 2–3 times. If you’d like, you can decorate the margins with doodles related to the verse.

PRAY

Be honest and tell God about any fears you have or challenges you’re facing. Thank Him that He is all-powerful and will provide everything you need to walk in His good plans.

day 2

JEREMIAH 42:13-18

DWELL

God warned His people about making life choices based on their fears. He promised them protection from Babylon if they would stay in Judah, and that they would not have safety if they fled to Egypt. Life is scary—there are so many parts of life that make the mind anxious. But if we're not careful, our fears of our problems on earth can become stronger than our faith in the God of heaven. God has no problems, only plans. He knows how to protect and lead His people through any situation, in any location, in any time period. When the world feels dangerous, following closely after God's will is the safest place we can be.

↓ How can fear help us? How can fear harm us?

→ What are some fears you have that might be holding you back from fully obeying God? How can you turn that fear over to Him?

MEMORIZE

Write Jeremiah 42:6 on a note card and post it somewhere you'll see it regularly, or save it as the lock screen on your phone. Say it aloud 2–3 times whenever you see it.

PRAY

Be honest and tell God about any fears you have. Declare your trust that He is good, and commit to obeying His good plans, no matter the cost.

day 3

JEREMIAH 42:19-22

DWELL

The whole “seeking God's counsel” bit was actually a charade by the people: they had their minds made up long before they ever asked God for guidance. Basically, they were hoping God would bless whatever they decided to do. But God is not required to bless what we do—we are called to do what He blesses. Loving obedience to Him results in loving blessings from Him. We don't obey to be blessed, but because we love Him and trust in His goodness. His guidance always leads to His goodness.

↑ What are some reasons God warns us about rejecting His will for us?

↻ What are some ways we can prepare our hearts in prayer to fully submit to God's plans for us?

MEMORIZE

Every time you wash your hands today, say as much of Jeremiah 42:6 aloud as you can remember.

PRAY

In prayer to God, confess for any ways you've resisted His will, and receive His ready and loving forgiveness. Declare your trust in Him as your good heavenly Father, and commit to obey His plan by His power in you.

day 4

PROVERBS 3:5-12

DWELL

There is sin and brokenness in everyone's life; even the "holiest" folks we know have plenty of flaws, whether we see it or not. We're so used to seeing these weaknesses in the world around us that we can start to think God must have some of these weaknesses, too. We might start to believe that the only person we can trust is ourselves. But God has no sin, weakness, or flaw. When we trust in His goodness and His guidance, it only produces goodness in our lives. His discipline and correction in our lives comes from His delight in us—He loves us and wants us to grow! His path never leads to evil. The wholeness we long for is only found in knowing God and walking in His will.



What are some of the blessings we enjoy when we trust in the Lord with all of our heart?



Why shouldn't we trust in our own understanding? What should we do instead?

MEMORIZE

Ask 2–3 people today if you can practice reciting Jeremiah 42:6 for them.

PRAY

Tell God about your trust in His goodness and perfection. Ask Him to help you rely on the truth of His Word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit today.

day 5

JOHN 15:4-11

DWELL

"You can do nothing without me." These can seem like strange words from Jesus because obviously people can and often do lots of things without His guidance. But what Jesus is talking about is living in a way that brings God glory, and we can't bring God glory without God's guidance. When we live in close relationship with Jesus, He guides us into words and works that bring God glory. Living for God's glory is anything but boring or depressing! Living in close relationship with Jesus brings us the kind of peace and joy we all spend our lives looking for.



What are some reasons Jesus tells His disciples to "remain" in Him? How can we help one another to do this?



What are some ways you can grow closer in your relationship with Jesus today and throughout this week?

MEMORIZE

Write out each of the words of Jeremiah 42:6 on note cards or scraps of paper, and mix them up. See if you can put them in the correct order from memory.

PRAY

Ask the Lord to teach you how to remain close to Him throughout the day. Ask Him for guidance on how to live for God's glory today.