

Jeremiah 44:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem?

Analysis

Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers—the interrogative *hăšəkaḥtem* (have you forgotten?) uses the verb *šākaḥ*, implying willful neglect, not mere lapse of memory. This introduces a genealogy of guilt covering five categories: **fathers, kings of Judah, their wives, your own wickedness, wickedness of your wives**. The comprehensive catalog spans generations (fathers), leadership (kings), domestic life (wives), and personal responsibility (your own). The inclusion of **wives** is significant—women apparently led in 'Queen of Heaven' worship (44:15-19, 25).

Which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem recalls the specific geography of their former rebellion. The Hebrew *‘āšû* (they have done/committed) is a perfect tense showing completed historical action with ongoing results. This creates a tragic continuity: what destroyed Judah in Judah is now being repeated in Egypt. Forgetting here isn't cognitive failure but moral refusal to learn from judgment. The question form adds rhetorical force—their behavior proves they've 'forgotten' (ignored) the very lessons God taught through Jerusalem's destruction.

Historical Context

Judah's kings from Manasseh (687-642 BC) through Zedekiah (597-586 BC) largely promoted or tolerated idolatry. Manasseh's reign particularly featured syncretistic worship, child sacrifice, and astral cults (2 Kings 21:1-18). Josiah's reforms (622 BC) proved temporary; his successors reverted to idolatry. The mention of wives reflects women's significant role in domestic religious practices and the 'Queen of Heaven' cult (Jeremiah 7:18, 44:15-25).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does generational sin create patterns that persist despite clear warnings?
2. What role does 'forgetting' (willful neglect of God's past judgments) play in continued disobedience?
3. Why does God hold both leaders and ordinary citizens, men and women, accountable for corporate sin?

Interlinear Text

הֲשַׁכַּחְתֶּם אֶת רָעַת אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם
Have ye forgotten H853 and the wickedness of your fathers H853
H7911 H7451 H1

רָעַת מַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה וְאֵת רָעַת
and the wickedness of the kings of Judah H853 and the wickedness
H7451 H4428 H3063

רָעַת נְשֵׁיכֶם וְאֵת רָעַת וְאֵת רָעַת
of their wives H853 and the wickedness H853 and the wickedness
H802 H7451

נְשֵׁיכֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּאֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה
of their wives H834 which they have committed in the land of Judah
H802 H6213 H776 H3063

וּבְחָצוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם:
and in the streets of Jerusalem
H2351 H3389