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JEREMIAH 43: 1 When Jeremiah had finished speaking to all the people all the words of the LORD their God, with which the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words,

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The leading men, discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carry the people into Egypt, Jer 43:1-7. Jeremiah, by a type, foretells the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer 43:8-13. This mode of conveying instruction by actions was very expressive, and frequently practiced by the prophets. The image of Nebuchadnezzar arraying himself with Egypt, as a shepherd puts on his garment, is very noble. Egypt at this time contended with Babylon for the empire of the east; yet this mighty kingdom, when God appoints the revolution, shifts its owner with as much ease as a shepherd removes his tent or garment, which the new proprietor has only to spread over him. See Jer 43:12.

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JEREMIAH 43: 2 then spoke Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying to Jeremiah, You speak falsely: the LORD our God has not sent you to say, You shall not go into Egypt to live there;

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Verse 2

Thou speakest falsely - They had no other color for their rebellion than flatly to deny that God had spoken what the prophet related.

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JEREMIAH 43: 3 but Baruch the son of Neriah sets you on against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death, and carry us away captive to Babylon.

JEREMIAH 43: 4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, didn't obey the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.

JEREMIAH 43: 5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, who were returned from all the nations where they had been driven, to live in the land of Judah;

JEREMIAH 43: 6 the men, and the women, and the children, and the king's daughters, and every person who Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan; and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah;

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Verse 6

Men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters - See the note on Jer 41:10 (note). It is truly surprising that the Chaldeans should have left behind any of the royal family of Judah! But,

1. Perhaps they knew not there were any.

2. If they did know, they might think, being children of concubines, they could not inherit. Or,

3. That being females, they were not eligible. And they had taken care to seize all Zedekiah's sons, and slay them before his eyes.

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JEREMIAH 43: 7 and they came into the land of Egypt; for they didn't obey the voice of the LORD: and they came to Tahpanhes.

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Verse 7

Came they even to Tahpanhes - This city was called Daphne by the Greeks, and was situated at the extremity of Lower Egypt, near to Heliopolis. It was called Daphne Pelusiaca. They halted at this place, most probably for the purpose of obtaining the king's permission to penetrate farther into Egypt. It was at this place that, according to St. Jerome, tradition says the faithful Jeremiah was stoned to death by these rebellious wretches; for whose welfare he had watched, prayed, gone through many indignities, and suffered every kind of hardship. And now he sealed the truth of his Divine mission with his blood.

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JEREMIAH 43: 8 Then the LORD's word came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

JEREMIAH 43: 9 Take great stones in your hand, and hide them in mortar in the brick work, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah;

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Verse 9

Take great stones - This discourse seems to have been delivered about a year after the destruction of Jerusalem. They pretended that they dared not stay in Judea for fear of the Chaldeans. The prophet here assures them that Nebuchadnezzar shall come to Egypt, extend his conquests in that kingdom, and place his tent over the very place where these stones were laid up, and destroy them. How these prophecies were fulfilled, see at the end of Jer 44:30 (note).

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JEREMIAH 43: 10 and tell them, Thus says the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne on these stones that I have hidden; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

JEREMIAH 43: 11 He shall come, and shall strike the land of Egypt; such as are for death shall be put to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword.

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Verse 11

Such as are for death to death - See the note on Jer 15:2.

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JEREMIAH 43: 12 I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captive: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd puts on his garment; and he shall go out from there in peace.

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Verse 12

He shall burn them, and carry them away captives - Some of these gods, such as were of wood, he will burn; those of metal he will carry away. Some of them were of gold. See below.

Shall array himself with the land of Egypt - Shall take all its wealth, and all its grandeur; shall take all its spoils.

As a shepherd putteth on his garment - With as much ease, and with as little opposition; and with as full a confidence that it is now his own.

He shall go forth from thence in peace - He shall suffer no interruption, nor endure any disaster in his return from his Egyptian expedition. See the proof of all this in the notes at the end of Jer 44:30 (note).

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JEREMIAH 43: 13 He shall also break the pillars of Beth Shemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of Egypt shall he burn with fire.

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Verse 13

He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh - בית שמש beith shemesh is, literally, the house or temple of the sun; which was worshipped here, and whose images are said to have been of solid gold. These Nebuchadnezzar was to break and carry away; and the houses of the gods - all the temples of Egypt, he was to burn with fire. Beth-shemesh is the same as Heliopolis.