

## **A Lesson in Obedience**

Jeremiah 35

by Don Falkos

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The Lord told Jeremiah, "Invite the Recabites to the Temple. Take them into one of the side rooms, and offer them some wine."

Jeremiah went to the encampment of the Recabite clan and invited representatives of each family to the Temple. He took them into one of side rooms, set cups and pitchers of wine in front of them, and said, "Have a drink." They declined, "We don't drink wine – not us, not our wives, not our sons or daughters – none of us."

Over two hundred years earlier, the family patriarch had commanded, "No one in this family is ever to drink alcohol. Don't build houses or plant crops or vineyards. Keep to a nomadic life, living in tents. Then you will live a long time in this land where you are not citizens." Ever since, every one of the Recabites had abided by these instructions. But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded, they were afraid and moved to Jerusalem.

To the people of Judah, the Lord said, "Come, look at the Recabites, and learn a lesson in obedience. They do not drink wine because their father of long ago told them not to. Yet time and time again I have spoken to you. Time and time again I have sent prophets to encourage you, 'Turn from your evil ways; live as you should; stop worshiping idols; then you will live in peace in the land I have given you.' The Recabites have obeyed their ancestor completely, but you have refused to listen to me. And so you will now experience all the disasters I have warned you about, while the Recabites may rest assured they will always have descendants to serve me."