

Going to Egypt

Jeremiah 40:7 – 44:30

2 Kings 25:22-26

by Don Falkos

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Before departing for Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar had appointed Gedaliah as governor of Judah. Gedaliah said to the people, "Don't be afraid of your conquerors. I will intercede with them on your behalf. Enjoy all the land has to offer you; serve the king of Babylon; and all will be well."

One of Gedaliah's advisors warned him of an assassination plot launched by the king of Ammon. Gedaliah didn't believe it. Then one day a band of mercenaries arrived. They assassinated Gedaliah and took a large number of hostages to cover their retreat. But when the men of Judah caught up with them, the hostages turned on their captors and helped to free themselves. Even so, most the mercenaries escaped and went home to Ammon.

The people of Judah feared what the Babylonians would do when they learned of Gedaliah's assassination. They made plans to flee to Egypt, where they assumed they would be safe.

Jeremiah warned them, "The Lord says: Stay here in Judah. Don't be afraid. I am with you and will save you from all the power of Babylon. But if you go to Egypt, what you fear will find you there, and you will never see Judah again." The people refused to listen. They went to Egypt and took the prophet with them.

The Lord told Jeremiah to bury some large rocks near the entrance to Pharaoh's palace and said, "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon will come here to Egypt and set up his throne over these rocks you have hidden. Then the people of Judah now living in this land will reap the reward for their years upon years of idol worship – King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon will kill them all.