

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

The leading men, discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carry the people into Egypt, Jeremiah 43:1-7. Jeremiah, by a type, foretells the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 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 Jeremiah 43:12.

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.

Verse 6

Men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters - See the note on Jeremiah 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.

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.

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 Jeremiah 44:30 (note).

Verse 11

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

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 Jeremiah 44:30 (note).

Verse 13

He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh - בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ (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.