

# Jeremiah 26:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt;

## Analysis

**And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death** (וַיַּבְקַשׁ פָּמָלָךְ בְּמִתָּתוֹ) —the verb **בָּקַשׁ** (baqash, 'seek') with **מוֹת** (mut, 'to kill') indicates deliberate intent to execute. **But when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt**—unlike Jeremiah who stood firm, Urijah fled (נִסָּה, nas). This isn't condemned; it's human.

The text doesn't criticize Urijah's fear (ירא, yare) or flight. Even true prophets experience terror before tyranny. Jesus instructed disciples to flee persecution (Matthew 10:23). David fled from Saul. Flight isn't failure when confronting murderous power. What matters is that Urijah had already delivered God's message faithfully. The contrast with Jeremiah (who remained) shows different callings—some prophets stay and face lions; others flee and still get caught. Both are faithful.

## Historical Context

Egypt was traditional refuge for those fleeing Judean kings—Jeroboam fled there from Solomon (1 Kings 11:40), and later Jewish refugees would settle there (Jeremiah 43-44). Egypt and Judah had complex political relationships; Egypt

couldn't refuse extradition requests from Judean kings without damaging alliances. The distance (200+ miles) shows Urijah's desperation.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How do you respond to the reality that faithfulness sometimes includes fear and flight?
2. What determines when to stand firm versus when to flee persecution?
3. How does Urijah's fear make him relatable rather than diminish his prophetic integrity?

## Interlinear Text

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יְכָל גָּבֹעַ יְהִי בְּמִתְּחִילָה  
with all his mighty men  
H3605 H3605

heard the king And when Jehoiakim H3605 with all his mighty men H3605

H8085 H4428 H3079

בְּמִתְּחִילָה וְבְמִתְּחִילָה  
to put him to death  
H4191

and all the princes his words sought the king to put him to death H4191

H8269 H853 H1697 H1245 H4428

מִצְרַיִם וְיָבָא יָבָא וְיָשַׁם  
into Egypt  
H4714

heard but when Urijah it he was afraid and fled and went into Egypt H4714

H8085 H223 H3372 H1272 H935

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 10:23** (Parallel theme): But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

**Jeremiah 36:26** (Kingdom): But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

**Matthew 14:5** (Parallel theme): And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

**2 Chronicles 16:10** (Parallel theme): Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.

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