

# Jeremiah 35:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

## Analysis

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**When Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land**—The Babylonian invasions (605, 597, 586 BC) forced the Rechabites to flee to Jerusalem for refuge. **For fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians**—Military necessity (פַּחַד *pachad*, fear/terror) drove them from tents to the fortified city, yet even this crisis didn't nullify their core vow: they still refused wine, houses, and vineyards.

**So we dwell at Jerusalem** (בִּירוּשָׁלַם יֹשְׁבִים *bi-Yerushalayim yoshvim*)—Their temporary urban residence demonstrates wise flexibility within principled consistency. They didn't interpret Jonadab's command legalistically ('never enter cities') but understood its spirit (maintain dependence on God, reject permanent settlement). This distinguishes biblical obedience from Pharisaic rigidity—the Rechabites bent circumstances without breaking covenant. Even displaced, they remained spiritually nomadic.

## Historical Context

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This occurred circa 605-597 BC when Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns devastated Judah. The 'army of the Syrians' likely refers to Aramean raiders allied with Babylon (2 Kings 24:2). Jerusalem became a refugee center for rural populations

fleeing invasion—the Rechabites among them, maintaining their distinctive identity even in crisis.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How do you distinguish between principled flexibility (like the Rechabites entering Jerusalem) and compromising convictions when facing pressure?
2. What does the Rechabites' crisis-tested faithfulness teach about whether your obedience is circumstantial or covenantal?
3. In what ways do modern 'Babylonian invasions' (job loss, illness, cultural hostility) reveal whether your faith rests on external securities or internal covenant with God?

## Interlinear Text

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יְהוָה	בָּעָל	וְהָיָה	וְכִדְרֵאֲצָר	נְבֻכַדְרֶזְרֶשֶׁר	מֶלֶךְ	בָּבֶל	אֶל
H1961	came up		But it came to pass when	Nebuchadrezzar	king	of Babylon	H413
	H5927			H5019	H4428	H894	

הָאָרֶץ	וְנֵאמְרוּ	וְנֵאמְרוּ	וְנֵאמְרוּ	בִּירוּשָׁלַם	וּמִפְּנֵי
into the land	that we said	Come	Come	at Jerusalem	and for fear
H776	H559	H935	H935	H3389	H6440

יְהוָה	הַכַּשְׂדִּים	וּמִפְּנֵי	יְהוָה	אֲרָם	וְנֵאמְרוּ
of the army	of the Chaldeans	and for fear	of the army	of the Syrians	so we dwell
H2428	H3778	H6440	H2428	H758	H3427

בִּירוּשָׁלַם:  
at Jerusalem  
H3389

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 8:14** (Parallel theme): Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

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