



[Jeremiah 43:11](#)

(11) And when he comes, he shall strike the land of Egypt. And whoever *is* for death *shall go* to death; and whoever *is* for captivity, *shall go* into captivity; and whoever *is* for the sword, to the sword.

A Faithful Version

In Jeremiah 43, the prophet Jeremiah provides an excellent example of the level of control [God](#) maintains in an *apparently* chaotic situation. The context is the prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar will conquer Egypt.

[Nebuchadnezzar] will defeat Egypt. He will bring death to those who are supposed to die. He will capture those who are supposed to be captured. He will kill in battle those who are supposed to be killed in battle. ([Jeremiah 43:11](#), *God's Word Translation*)

Other translations use verbals such as *doomed* or *destined*, as “those who are destined to die,” or “those doomed for captivity.” In the thick of battle, with confusion everywhere, God will remain in control. He knows *precisely* whom He wants to live and whom He wants to die. Nebuchadnezzar did not have that knowledge; his generals did not; and certainly, his foot soldiers did not. If they had known it, they could not reliably have implemented God's will in the heat of battle.

God, though, knew His plans for each individual and controlled the situation precisely to bring about His planned end. That is why God can be so specific in [Ezekiel 5:1-2](#), using the fraction “one-third.” God will maintain control to ensure that one-third will be burned in the fire, another third scattered in the wind, and so on.

A second witness of this concept, using similar rhetoric, appears at [Jeremiah 15:2](#):

And when they ask you, “Where shall we go?” you shall say to them, “Thus

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says the Lord:

Those who are for pestilence, to pestilence,
and those who are for the sword, to the sword;
those who are for famine, to famine,
and those who are for captivity, to captivity.”
(*English Standard Version*)

An echo of this concept of control sounds in Christ's words, recorded at [Revelation 13:10](#):

If anyone is to be taken captive,
to captivity he goes;

if anyone is to be slain with the sword,
with the sword must he be slain. [ESV]

Interestingly, this verse ends with a call for patience and [faith](#) during extremely rough times: “Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.” The horrific events of the Day of the Lord might well cause God's elect to question His level of control—perhaps even His beneficence. This will be a year requiring consummate faith and patience on the part of God's people. They must truly know that God's actions during that Day will not be chaotic or haphazard in any way, but highly orchestrated by Him.

— Charles Whitaker

To learn more, see:
[What a Difference a Day Makes](#)

Related Topics:
[God's Control](#)
[God's Sovereignty](#)

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