

Ezekiel 22:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Analysis

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, This prophetic formula (vayehi debar-YHWH elai lemor, וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֲלֵי) introduces a new oracle—the furnace metaphor (verses 18-22). The repetition of this phrase throughout Ezekiel emphasizes that every word carries divine authority. Ezekiel never speaks from his own imagination but only as God's commissioned messenger.

The verse serves as a hinge between the catalog of sins (verses 1-16) and the extended metallurgical metaphor that follows. God's word is not exhausted by one indictment; layer upon layer of revelation exposes Jerusalem's corruption and announces judgment. Each fresh prophetic utterance adds weight to the covenant lawsuit against the rebellious city.

Historical Context

Dated to approximately 591-590 BC, these oracles came during the brief respite between Babylon's first conquest (597 BC) and final destruction (586 BC). During this interval, false prophets proclaimed peace and swift restoration (Jeremiah 28). Against this backdrop, Ezekiel's repeated 'word of the LORD' formulas authenticated his message as genuine prophecy deserving obedience.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between human opinions about God and 'the word of the LORD' in your spiritual life?
2. What attitude should characterize our response when we recognize Scripture as divine speech?

Interlinear Text

וְיֹאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאַמְرָה:

H1961 **And the word** of the LORD H413 **came unto me saying**
H1697 H3068 H559

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