

# Ezekiel 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.

## Analysis

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**The sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.** This verse presents the comprehensive inescapability of covenant curse, drawing directly from Levitical warnings. Every location and every circumstance becomes a place of judgment—there is no refuge apart from repentance.

The sword is without refers to external military threat—Babylonian forces surrounding the city. Pestilence and famine within indicates internal breakdown—siege conditions producing disease and starvation. This echoes Leviticus 26:25 curse: I will bring a sword upon you... and I will send the pestilence among you. Deuteronomy 28:21-22 warned of disease and blight as covenant curses.

He that is in the field shall die with the sword addresses those who flee or remain outside city walls—they face the Babylonian army. He that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him shows those who seek refuge in Jerusalem fare no better—they face slow death by starvation and disease during the siege. The repetition emphasizes totality: there is no safe location.

From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates that when God executes covenant curse, human wisdom and planning cannot provide escape. The verse also points forward to the greater judgment from which only Christ provides refuge. Believers

are reminded that true safety is found not in location or circumstances but in covenant faithfulness.

## Historical Context

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This describes the 586 BC Babylonian siege of Jerusalem with historical precision. Nebuchadnezzar forces surrounded the city, cutting off supply lines (2 Kings 25:1-2). The siege lasted approximately 18 months, during which conditions inside deteriorated catastrophically.

Archaeological evidence from the City of David excavations shows arrowheads and destruction layers from this period, confirming intense military action. Jeremiah 52:6 records that famine in the city was severe with no food for the people. Lamentations provides graphic eyewitness testimony of starvation conditions, including cannibalism (Lamentations 2:20, 4:10).

Those who attempted to flee the city were captured or killed by Babylonian forces surrounding it. King Zedekiah's own escape attempt ended in capture near Jericho (2 Kings 25:4-7). Meanwhile, those who remained in Jerusalem hoping walls would protect them faced equally terrible fate through famine and disease outbreak inevitable in siege conditions.

The historical reality validated Ezekiel prophecy exactly, demonstrating that true prophetic word from God will certainly come to pass regardless of human disbelief.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does the inescapability of this judgment point to the seriousness of covenant violation?
2. What does it mean that location provides no refuge when God executes judgment?
3. How should this passage shape our understanding of where true security is found?
4. In what ways does Christ provide the refuge that Jerusalem walls could not?
5. What does this teach about the foolishness of relying on human defenses while ignoring God?

## Interlinear Text

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בֶּחַרְבַּ	בְּחַ וְ	וְדָבָר	וְרָעָב	מִבֵּית	אֲשֶׁר
The sword	is without	and pestilence	and the famine	within	
H2719	H2351	H1698	H7458	H1004	H834
בַּשָּׂדֶה	בֶּחַרְבַּ	וְיָמוּת	וְאֲשֶׁר	בְּעִיר	
he that is in the field	The sword	shall die		and he that is in the city	
H7704	H2719	H4191	H834	H5892	
וְרָעָב	וְדָבָר	יֹאכְלֶנּוּ:			
and the famine	and pestilence	shall devour			
H7458	H1698	H398			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 14:18** (Word): If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not.

**Ezekiel 5:12** (Word): A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

**Lamentations 1:20** (Word): Behold, O LORD; for I am in distress: my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.

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