

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

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

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 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

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

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

אֵשׁ רַמְבָּה תִּתְבַּעַת בְּתַתְבַּעַת בְּתַתְבַּעַת

The sword is without and pestilence and the famine within H834

H2719

H2351

H1698

H7458

H1004

בְּעֵדָה בְּעֵדָה בְּעֵדָה

he that is in the field The sword shall die and he that is in the city

H7704

H2719

H4191

H834

H5892

וְאֶכְלָה: בְּעֵדָה בְּעֵדָה

and the famine and pestilence shall devour

H7458

H1698

H398

Additional Cross-References

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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