

Ezekiel 7:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they shall pollute it.

Analysis

They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity. This comprehensive indictment of wealth demonstrates material prosperity utter worthlessness in delivering from divine judgment—a theme appearing throughout Scripture (Proverbs 11:4, Zephaniah 1:18, James 5:1-3).

They shall cast their silver in the streets shows former treasures becoming worthless refuse. In siege conditions with no food available, precious metals cannot purchase survival. Their gold shall be removed may indicate Babylonian looting or religious purification from tainted wealth. The repetition—their silver and their gold—emphasizes that all material wealth fails equally.

Shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD provides theological interpretation. No amount of wealth can purchase redemption from God judgment (Psalm 49:7-8). They shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels shows wealth inability to meet either spiritual needs (soul satisfaction) or physical survival (filling bowels during famine).

Because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity reveals the root issue. Wealth had become idol, leading to oppression, injustice, and false security. From Reformed

perspective, prosperity without godliness produces spiritual death. This anticipates Jesus teaching about impossibility of serving God and mammon (Matthew 6:24) and Paul warning that love of money is root of evil (1 Timothy 6:10).

Historical Context

During Babylon 586 BC siege, precious metals indeed became worthless for immediate survival. When famine gripped Jerusalem, no silver could purchase non-existent food. Archaeological evidence from this period shows the dramatic economic collapse during siege conditions.

2 Kings 25:13-17 records Babylon looting temple and palace treasures. Individual wealth provided no protection from deportation or death. Jeremiah 39:10 notes ironically that poorest people owning nothing were left in land while wealthy were exiled—wealth became liability rather than asset.

The phrase stumblingblock of their iniquity indicates wealth had led to covenant violation. Pre-exilic prophets condemned exploitation, unjust economic practices, and trust in riches rather than God (Isaiah 5:8, Amos 2:6-7, 8:4-6, Micah 2:1-2). Wealthy classes used prosperity oppressively and grew complacent in covenant unfaithfulness.

This warning proved devastatingly accurate. Lamentations 4:1-2 laments: How is the gold become dim... The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers. The treasures they trusted proved utterly unable to save.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does wealth worthlessness in judgment teach about where genuine security is found?
2. How does material prosperity become stumblingblock leading to spiritual destruction?
3. In what ways does love of money root all kinds of evil in human hearts?
4. What is relationship between economic injustice and divine judgment throughout Scripture?
5. How does Christ provide redemption that silver and gold cannot purchase (1 Peter 1:18-19)?

Interlinear Text

וְנָתַתִּי יוֹ	בְּיָד	הַזָּרִים	לְבַיַּז	וּלְרָשָׁעִים י
And I will give	it into the hands	of the strangers	for a prey	and to the wicked
H5414	H3027	H2114	H957	H7563
הָאָרֶץ	לְשָׁלַל	וַיִּלְלִימוּ:		
of the earth	for a spoil	and they shall pollute		
H776	H7998	H2490		

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 24:13 (Parallel theme): And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.