

Jeremiah 1:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

Analysis

This verse extends Jeremiah's ministry timeline through multiple kings: Josiah, Jehoiakim, and ending in Zedekiah's eleventh year when Jerusalem fell to Babylon (586 BC). The phrase 'unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah' marks the terminus of Jeremiah's prophetic career in Judah—forty-one years of largely rejected ministry witnessing national collapse. The expression 'unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month' refers to Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, with the fifth month (Ab, July-August) being when fires consumed the city (2 Kings 25:8-10). This temporal framework reveals Jeremiah as a prophet of judgment who lived to see his warnings fulfilled—a tragic vindication. His longevity as a prophet (longer than most) meant enduring decades of opposition, persecution, and rejection, yet remaining faithful to his calling. The mention of multiple kings emphasizes that the problem wasn't one bad ruler but systemic covenant unfaithfulness.

Historical Context

Jeremiah witnessed five kings after Josiah: Jehoahaz (three months, 609 BC), Jehoiakim (609-598 BC), Jehoiachin (three months, 598/597 BC), and Zedekiah (597-586 BC). Each received prophetic warning; all failed to heed. Jehoiakim was particularly antagonistic, burning Jeremiah's scroll (Jeremiah 36) and murdering

the prophet Uriah (Jeremiah 26:20-23). Zedekiah, though less hostile, lacked courage to follow Jeremiah's counsel. The Babylonian invasions came in waves: 605 BC (Daniel taken), 597 BC (Ezekiel and 10,000 exiled), and 586 BC (Jerusalem destroyed). Archaeological evidence from sites like Lachish (destruction layer, ostraca mentioning the crisis) and Jerusalem (burnt debris, arrowheads, Babylonian siege ramp remnants) confirms the devastation Jeremiah witnessed. After Jerusalem fell, Jeremiah was taken to Egypt by fleeing remnant (Jeremiah 43), where tradition says he was stoned to death.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does Jeremiah's forty-year ministry of rejected prophecy teach about faithfulness to God's calling regardless of visible results or response?
2. How should knowing that Jeremiah witnessed the fulfillment of his warnings shape our understanding of God's patience and the certainty of His word?

Interlinear Text

מִלְּבָנָה וְאֶשְׁתְּהָרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יְהוּדָה יְהוֹיָקִים בֶּן
H1961 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king
H3117 H3079 H1121 H2977 H4428

לְצִדְקָהִי הָרָה עַד תִּמְמָה עַשְׂתָּה יְהוּדָה שָׁנָה הָשָׁרָה
of Judah unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah
H3063 H5704 H8552 H6249 H8141 H6667

בְּחַדְשָׁה יְרֹשָׁלָם גָּל וְתַּחַת מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה
the son of Josiah king of Judah captive of Jerusalem month
H1121 H2977 H4428 H3063 H5704 H1540 H3389 H2320

בְּחַמְשָׁה
in the fifth

H2549

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 39:2 (Parallel theme): And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up.

2 Kings 23:34 (Kingdom): And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.

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