

Jeremiah 14:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

The vision of devastation continues: '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!' No escape exists: countryside brings death by sword (warfare), city brings death by famine (siege). The final observation about religious leaders: 'yea, the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not.' This likely depicts exile—even spiritual leaders are displaced, wandering in foreign lands. The comprehensive nature of judgment means no location, social class, or profession escapes. The leaders who should have guided the people share their fate.

Historical Context

The Babylonian conquest brought death by warfare in rural areas and by starvation in besieged cities. Afterward, survivors including priests and prophets were exiled to Babylon, fulfilling this prophecy.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the inescapability of judgment (field or city) demonstrate its comprehensive nature?
2. What does the exile of spiritual leaders teach about shared responsibility and consequences?
3. How should leaders' participation in judgment affect their sense of accountability for those they lead?

Interlinear Text

עַד אֵם יַצֵּא אֶתְּנִי הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַנֶּגֶה סַלְלֵי רַבְּנָן
H518 If I go forth into the field H2009 then behold the slain with the sword
H3318 H7704 H2491 H2719

וְאֵם בָּאֵת יָבֹא יְרֵבָה וְהַבָּשָׂר מְלֹאֵי
H518 and if I enter into the city H2009 then behold them that are sick
H935 H5892 H8463

אֶל סָפָר וְכָה וְגַם בְּשַׁבְּעַת גַּם יְהִי אֶתְּנִי
with famine H3588 H1571 yea both the prophet H1571 and the priest go about H413
H7458 H5030 H3548 H5503

וְלֹא יְדַעֵוּ אֲנָשָׁן
into a land H3808 that they know
H776 H3045

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 7:15 (Word): 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.

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.

Jeremiah 8:10 (Prophecy): Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Jeremiah 5:31 (Prophecy): The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

Jeremiah 6:13 (Prophecy): For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Deuteronomy 28:36 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.