

Jeremiah 15:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.

Analysis

This verse specifies judgment's forms: 'And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.' Four destinies await: death (by disease), sword (military violence), famine (siege starvation), and captivity (exile). The rhetorical question 'where shall we go?' receives devastating answer—every direction leads to judgment. The repetitive structure emphasizes inevitability: those destined for each fate will receive it. No escape exists.

Historical Context

This fourfold judgment appears throughout Jeremiah (14:12, 21:7-9, 24:10, 27:8, 13, 29:17-18, 32:24, 36, 34:17, 38:2, 42:17, 22, 44:13). The Babylonian siege produced exactly these conditions: disease from crowded, unsanitary conditions; death in combat; starvation during the siege; and exile for survivors. Archaeological and ancient Near Eastern records confirm these as standard siege warfare outcomes.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does the comprehensive listing of judgment forms (death, sword, famine, captivity) indicate about escape possibilities?
2. How does this verse's certainty contrast with false prophets' promises of peace?

Interlinear Text

כִּי יִהְיֶה הַ	אָמַר	אָנֹכִי אֶל יָדְךָ	
H1961	H3588	And it shall come to pass if they say	H413 H575
	H559		
נֵצַח אֶלֶּיךָ	אָמַר	אָנֹכִי אֶל יָדְךָ	אֶלֶּיךָ
unto thee Whither shall we go forth	And it shall come to pass if they say		H413
H3318	H559		
כֹּה	אָמַר	אֶשְׁרָה יְהוָה	לִמּוֹת
H3541	And it shall come to pass if they say	the LORD	Such as are for death
	H559	H3068	H4194
לִמּוֹת	וְאֶשְׁרָה	לְחַרְבִּי	
Such as are for death	and such as are for the sword		
H4194	H834	H2719	
לְחַרְבִּי	וְאֶשְׁרָה	לְרָעָה בִּ	
and such as are for the sword	and such as are for the famine		
H2719	H834	H7458	
לְרָעָה בִּ	וְאֶשְׁרָה	לְשִׁבְיָי	
and such as are for the famine	and such as are for the captivity		
H7458	H834	H7628	
לְשִׁבְיָי			
and such as are for the captivity			
H7628			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 43:11 (Word): And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword.

Zechariah 11:9 (Parallel theme): Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another.

Revelation 13:10 (Word): He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Ezekiel 5:2 (Word): Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

Isaiah 24:18 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

Jeremiah 14:12 (Word): When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

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.

Amos 5:19 (Parallel theme): As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.

Daniel 9:12 (Word): And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.