

Jeremiah 16:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.

Analysis

God gives Jeremiah unusual command: 'Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place.' This prohibition against marriage and family is unique among prophets and served symbolic purpose. The reason follows in subsequent verses: children born in Judah will face horrors of siege and conquest. Jeremiah's celibacy symbolized the futility of normal life pursuits in the face of coming judgment. This dramatic prophetic sign-act demonstrated that circumstances were so dire that ordinary blessings (marriage, children) should be suspended. It illustrated that judgment was imminent and comprehensive.

Historical Context

Marriage and children were highly valued in ancient Israel; celibacy was exceptional and countercultural. Jeremiah's unmarried state would have prompted questions, creating opportunities to explain coming judgment.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do prophetic sign-acts communicate truth in ways words alone cannot?
2. What does suspension of normal life pursuits teach about the urgency of eschatological awareness?
3. How should awareness of coming judgment affect present life decisions and priorities?

Interlinear Text

לֹא תִّקְרַב כְּלָבֵב לְבָבְךָ

H3808 Thou shalt not take H0 thee a wife H3808 H1961 H0

H3947 H802

בְּנֵי יִם וּבְנֵי זֹת בְּפָלָק וּמִזְרָח:

neither shalt thou have sons or daughters in this place H2088

H1121 H1323 H4725

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