

Jeremiah 19:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet:

Analysis

God explains the symbolic act: "Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet." Just as the pottery jar was irreparably shattered, so Jerusalem will be irrecoverably broken. The comparison to Tophet is devastating—the city will become like the detested child-sacrifice site, associated with abomination and judgment. What was meant to be God's holy city becomes synonymous with the place of His fierce wrath.

The comprehensive nature of judgment appears in "this place" and "the inhabitants thereof"—both the physical city and its population face destruction. Geography and people together suffer covenant curses. This total judgment reflects total covenant violation. Half-measures and partial reforms proved insufficient; only complete devastation remains when complete apostasy persists.

This verse warns that no place, regardless of past sanctity or privilege, stands immune to judgment if covenant obligations are violated. The temple's presence didn't protect Jerusalem (Jer 7:4, 26:6), nor did Davidic promises guarantee the city's preservation absent faithfulness. Christ's prophecy of Jerusalem's coming destruction in AD 70 (Luke 19:41-44, 21:20-24) echoes these themes—religious privilege without genuine faith brings judgment. Only the New Jerusalem, founded on Christ's perfect obedience, endures forever (Rev 21:2-4).

Historical Context

Babylon's destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC fulfilled this prophecy literally. The city walls were broken down, the temple burned, houses demolished, and population deported (2 Kgs 25:8-12). The once-glorious city David captured and Solomon beautified became ruins comparable to the detested Tophet. Archaeological excavations reveal extensive burn layers and destruction throughout Jerusalem from this period, confirming the prophetic word's accuracy and the judgment's totality.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does comparison to Tophet emphasize the complete reversal of Jerusalem's intended purpose?
2. What does it mean that no religious heritage or past privilege exempts anyone from judgment for persistent unfaithfulness?
3. How does Christ's establishment of the New Jerusalem provide hope beyond earthly Jerusalem's judgment?

Interlinear Text

כֵּן	אֶעֱשֶׂה ה	לַמָּקוֹם	הַזֶּה	נֹאֵם	יְהוָה
H3651	Thus will I do	unto this place	H2088	saith	the LORD
	H6213	H4725		H5002	H3068
וּלְיוֹשְׁבֵי יו	וְלֵיתָ ת	אֶת	הַעִיר	הַזֶּה	כְּתוּפֶת:
and to the inhabitants	thereof and even make	H853	this city	H2063	as Tophet
H3427	H5414		H5892		H8612

