

Jeremiah 20:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon.

Analysis

This verse expands the prophecy's scope from Pashur personally to all Jerusalem. The phrase 'all the strength of this city' (kol-yegia, כֹּל-יְגִיָּעַ) refers to the wealth, resources, and labor accumulated in Jerusalem—everything built, created, and stored. 'All the labours thereof' emphasizes the work invested in the city's prosperity. 'All the precious things' (kol-yiqar, כֹּל-יִקָּר) includes treasures, valuables, and items of worth. 'All the treasures of the kings of Judah' specifies the royal wealth accumulated over generations. The fourfold 'all' (kol) emphasizes totality—complete loss, nothing spared. The phrase 'give into the hand of their enemies' uses the covenant curse language from Deuteronomy 28:25, 48. The verbs that follow—'spoil' (bazaz, בָּזַז, plunder), 'take' (laqach, לָקַח, capture), 'carry' (bo, בָּאוּ, bring/transport)—describe systematic conquest and deportation. This prophecy was fulfilled precisely when Babylon looted Jerusalem's temple and palace treasuries (2 Kings 24:13, 25:13-17). The verse demonstrates that accumulating wealth, building strong cities, and trusting in material prosperity provides no security when God's judgment comes. Only covenant faithfulness offers true security.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern conquest typically involved three stages exactly as described here: military defeat, plundering of valuables, and deportation of survivors. Archaeological evidence from Jerusalem's destruction layers (circa 586 BC) confirms extensive burning and looting. The Babylonian Chronicles record Nebuchadnezzar's conquest and deportation of Judah's leadership and wealth. Jewish historical sources (Josephus, rabbinic literature) describe how Babylon systematically emptied Jerusalem's treasuries, taking even the temple's sacred vessels. These items appeared later in Babylon (Daniel 5:2-3) and some were eventually returned under Cyrus (Ezra 1:7-11). The economic devastation was comprehensive—Judah remained impoverished throughout the exile period. This historical fulfillment vindicated Jeremiah's prophecy and demonstrated the futility of trusting in material security while ignoring covenant obligations. As Jesus later taught, earthly treasures are temporary and vulnerable (Matthew 6:19-20); only treasures in heaven—faithfulness to God—endure.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the loss of "all" Jerusalem's wealth and labor challenge any assumption that material prosperity indicates God's blessing or provides security?
2. What does this comprehensive judgment teach about the consequences of covenant unfaithfulness even when externally everything appears strong and prosperous?
3. In what ways does Babylon's plundering of Jerusalem's treasures illustrate Jesus' teaching about storing up treasures in heaven rather than on earth?

Interlinear Text

אֶתֵּן	אֶת	כָּל	חֹסֶן	הָעִיר	הַזֶּאת	אֶתֵּן
Moreover I will deliver	H853	H3605	all the strength	of this city	H2063	H853
H5414			H2633	H5892		
כָּל	יְגִיעַ הַ	אֶתֵּן	כָּל	יִקְרָהּ	וְאֵת	
H3605	and all the labours	H853	H3605	thereof and all the precious things	H853	
	H3018			H3366		
כָּל	אוֹצֵר וְ	מַלְכֵי י	יְהוּדָה	אֶתֵּן		
H3605	thereof and all the treasures	of the kings	of Judah	Moreover I will deliver		
	H214	H4428	H3063	H5414		
בְּיָד	אֹיְבֵיהֶם	וְגִזְזוֹם	וְלָקְחוּ	וְהִבִּיאוּ		
into the hand	of their enemies	which shall spoil	them and take	them and carry		
H3027	H341	H962	H3947	H935		
בְּבָבֶלָה:						
them to Babylon						
H894						

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 15:13 (Parallel theme): Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

Ezekiel 22:25 (Parallel theme): There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

Jeremiah 17:3 (Parallel theme): O my mountain in the field, I will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders.

Lamentations 1:10 (Parallel theme): The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things: for she hath seen that the heathen entered into her

sanctuary, whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

2 Chronicles 36:10 (Kingdom): And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

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