

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, עָלִיָּגִיא) 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, עָלִיָּקָר) 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, בּוּא, 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

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| אַתָּה | אַתְּ | כָּל | כָּל | חַסִּין | רַבָּע | בְּזַעַט |
| Moreover I will deliver | | H853 | H3605 | all the strength | of this city | H2063 |
| H5414 | | | | H2633 | H5892 | H853 |
| כָּל | כָּל | אַתְּ | יִגְיַע | הַ | יַקְבִּחַ | תְּ |
| H3605 | and all the labours | H853 | H3605 | thereof and all the precious things | H3366 | H853 |
| H3018 | | | | | | |
| כָּל | אַזְכָּר | וְתִּ | מֶלֶךְ | יְהוּדָה | אַתָּה | |
| H3605 | thereof and all the treasures | H214 | of the kings | of Judah | Moreover I will deliver | |
| | | | H4428 | H3063 | H5414 | |
| בְּ יָד | אָבִיבָה | מִ | וְבָזָזוּם | וְלֹקֶחֶת | וְלֹקֶחֶת | וְלֹקֶחֶת |
| into the hand | of their enemies | | which shall spoil | them and take | them and carry | |
| H3027 | H341 | | H962 | H3947 | H935 | |
| בְּבָבֶלְהָ | | | | | | |
| 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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