

Jeremiah 22:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?

Analysis

Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? (הַעֵצֵב נִבְזָה נִפְּוֹץ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה כִּנְיָהוּ, ha'etsev nivzeh nafuts ha'ish hazeh konyahu). The Hebrew עֵצֵב (etsev, 'idol' or 'vessel') combined with נִבְזָה (nivzeh, 'despised') and נִפְּוֹץ (nafuts, 'shattered/broken') creates a devastating image. **Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure?** (כִּלִּי אֵין חֶפֶץ בּוֹ, k'li ein chefets bo)—pottery with no usefulness, discarded as worthless. **Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed?** The rhetorical questions express shock and demand explanation.

The answer lies in covenant rebellion. What seemed permanent—Davidic dynasty, royal authority, dynastic succession (zera, 'seed')—proves fragile when divorced from faithfulness. Paul uses similar pottery imagery in Romans 9:21-23 regarding vessels of wrath and mercy. The questions force recognition that human glory apart from God is an empty, shattered idol. Even kings are clay pots in the Potter's hands.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kings were often deified or seen as semi-divine representatives. The shocking reversal—from exalted monarch to despised, broken vessel—would have been culturally devastating. The vocabulary of 'casting out' recalls how broken pottery was discarded in garbage heaps outside city walls,

becoming worthless rubble. Jehoiachin's reduction from king to prisoner dramatized this theological reality.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What 'vessels' (roles, achievements, identities) have you made into idols that God may need to shatter?
2. How does this image challenge cultural assumptions about human greatness and legacy?
3. In what ways might you be a 'vessel of honor' rather than a broken, despised idol?

Interlinear Text

כֶּלִי י	אֵם	כְּנִי הוּא	הִזָּה	הֲאִישׁ	נָפַץ וְיָץ	נִבְזָה	הָעֵצָב
is he a vessel	H518	Coniah	H2088	Is this man	broken	a despised	idol
H3627		H3659		H376	H5310	H959	H6089
וְזָרַע וְ	הוּא	הוּטְלוּ	מִדְּוַעַב וְ	חִפְּץ	אֵין		
he and his seed	H1931	and are cast	H4069	wherein is no pleasure	H369		
H2233		H2904	H0	H2656			
יָדְעוּ:	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	הָאֶרֶץ	עַל	וְהִשְׁלַכּוּ		
which they know	H3808	H834	into a land	H5921	wherefore are they cast out		
H3045			H776		H7993		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 31:12 (Parallel theme): I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel.

Hosea 8:8 (Parallel theme): Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure.

Jeremiah 48:38 (Parallel theme): There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the LORD.

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