

Jeremiah 24:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

Analysis

The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD—this vision came after Nebuchadnezzar had deported King Jeconiah (also called Jehoiachin) and Judah's leadership in 597 BC. The Hebrew *ra'ah* (רָאָה, to see/show) indicates divine revelation, not ordinary sight. Figs (*te'enim*, תְּעִנִּים) were a covenant blessing symbol (Deuteronomy 8:8), making their condition in this vision particularly significant.

After that Nebuchadnezzar... had carried away captive Jeconiah—the historical marker identifies this vision's precise context: the first deportation (2 Kings 24:10-16). The exiles included **the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths**—Babylon's strategic removal of leadership and skilled workers left Jerusalem weakened. This deportation preceded Jerusalem's final destruction by eleven years, creating two distinct groups: those already in exile and those remaining in Jerusalem. The vision of two fig baskets represents these two communities and reveals God's unexpected verdict on which group represented hope for the future.

Historical Context

This vision occurred around 597 BC, shortly after Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and deported King Jehoiachin after only three months of reign. The Babylonians took approximately 10,000 captives, including the royal family, nobles, warriors, craftsmen, and smiths (2 Kings 24:14-16). Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, was installed as a puppet king over the depleted population remaining in Jerusalem. Those left in Jerusalem considered themselves the righteous remnant, blessed to remain in the land while the exiles suffered divine punishment. Ezekiel encountered this arrogant attitude among Jerusalem's residents (Ezekiel 11:15). Jeremiah's vision radically reversed this assumption, declaring the exiles to be God's "good figs" destined for restoration, while those in Jerusalem were "bad figs" facing destruction.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's identification of the exiles as "good figs" challenge human assumptions about who represents God's faithful remnant?
2. What does the setting "before the temple" reveal about where God reveals His purposes, even when the temple itself would soon be destroyed?
3. In what ways might experiencing judgment and exile actually position people for greater blessing than those who avoid immediate consequences?

