

Jeremiah 26:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying,

Analysis

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word from the LORD—this historical marker identifies the precise timing: 609 BC, when Jehoiakim ascended after Pharaoh Necho deposed his brother Jehoahaz. The Hebrew reshit (רִאשִׁית, beginning) indicates the opening phase of Jehoiakim's eleven-year reign (609-598 BC). Jehoiakim was an ungodly king who reversed his father Josiah's reforms, oppressed the poor, built his palace through injustice, and burned Jeremiah's scroll (Jeremiah 22:13-19, 36:20-26).

The timing is significant: Josiah had died at Megiddo opposing Egypt, the nation was in turmoil, and Jehoiakim ruled as Egypt's vassal. Into this crisis, God sent Jeremiah with a temple sermon (detailed in chapter 7) calling for genuine repentance. This chapter focuses not on the sermon's content but its consequences—the religious establishment's violent opposition to God's word. The phrase **came this word from the LORD** establishes divine origin; Jeremiah didn't choose this confrontational message but delivered what God commanded. This introduces a narrative about the cost of faithful prophetic ministry.

Historical Context

Jehoiakim's reign began traumatically. His father Josiah, Judah's greatest reformer since David, had been killed opposing Pharaoh Necho's march to Carchemish. The people made Josiah's son Jehoahaz king, but after three months Egypt deposed him and installed Jehoiakim, who paid heavy tribute to Egypt. This political subjugation

coincided with spiritual regression. Jehoiakim reversed Josiah's reforms, reintroduced idolatry, and trusted in the temple's inviolability rather than covenant faithfulness. The temple sermon (Jeremiah 7, 26) challenged this false security, warning that the temple would become like Shiloh—destroyed—if the people didn't repent. This confrontation with religious authorities anticipated Jesus' temple cleansing and predictions of its destruction, which also provoked murderous opposition (Mark 11:15-18, 14:57-58).

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does the timing "in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign" reveal about God's mercy in sending prophetic warning before final judgment?
2. How did Jehoiakim's reversal of Josiah's reforms demonstrate that institutional religion without heart transformation is worthless?
3. In what ways does Jeremiah's experience warn that faithful biblical proclamation may provoke violent opposition from religious leaders?

Interlinear Text

בְּרִאָשׁ	יְה	מֶלֶךְ	וְת	יְהוִיָּקִים	בֶּן	יְהוֹיָה	לְךָ
In the beginning	of the reign	of Jehoiakim	the son	of Josiah	king		
H7225	H4468	H3079	H1121	H2977	H4428		
הָיָה	יְהוָה	ר	הָיָה	מִתְּבִרְאָה	הָיָה	לִאמְרָה	
of Judah	H1961	came this word	H1697	H2088	H853	from the LORD	saying
H3063						H3068	H559

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 27:1 (Kingdom): In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

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