

Jeremiah 27:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD—The Hebrew בראשית ממלכת (bereishit mamlekhet, 'in the beginning of the reign') dates this prophecy to Jehoiakim's accession (609 BC), though textual evidence suggests this may be a scribal error for Zedekiah (chapter 27 clearly takes place during Zedekiah's reign, v. 3, 12). The Septuagint and some Hebrew manuscripts read 'Zedekiah,' which fits the chapter's historical context. This demonstrates the complexity of textual transmission while affirming the prophecy's essential message remains unchanged.

The phrase 'came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD' uses הִיא דְבָר־יְהוָה (hayah devar-YHWH, 'the word of the LORD came'), the standard prophetic reception formula emphasizing divine initiative. Jeremiah didn't generate this message from political analysis or personal opinion—it came from Yahweh. This divine origin made the message authoritative and non-negotiable, regardless of political expedience. The prophecy that follows commands symbolic action (wearing yokes) and submission to Babylon, a politically explosive message that many would consider treasonous.

Historical Context

Jehoiakim reigned 609-598 BC after Pharaoh Necho deposed his brother Jehoahaz. Jehoiakim was an Egyptian vassal who later rebelled against Babylon, bringing Nebuchadnezzar's first siege (597 BC). If the text originally read 'Zedekiah' (597-586 BC), this prophecy dates to early in Zedekiah's reign when surrounding nations were plotting rebellion against Babylon (v. 3). Archaeological evidence confirms widespread regional unrest during this period. Jeremiah's counsel to submit to Babylon directly opposed nationalist sentiment and appeared to side with the enemy, making him vulnerable to accusations of treason.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the prophetic formula 'the word of the LORD came' emphasize that true prophecy originates with God rather than human analysis?
2. What does Jeremiah's willingness to deliver politically unpopular messages teach about prioritizing divine authority over human approval?
3. How should we respond when God's word contradicts our national, political, or cultural loyalties?

Interlinear Text

בְּרָאָשׁ יְהֹוָה	מֶמְלָכַת	יְהוֹיָקִים	בֶּן	וְאֹשִׁי הָוֶה	מֶלֶךְ
In the beginning	of the reign	of Jehoiakim	the son	of Josiah	king
H7225	H4467	H3079	H1121	H2977	H4428
יְהֹוָה בְּנֵי הָיָה	בְּזִבְחָר	בְּזִהָה	אֶל	יְרָמִי הָיָה	מְאֹת
of Judah	came this word	H2088	H413	unto Jeremiah	H853
H3063	H1697			H3414	
יְהֹוָה לְאָמֵר:					
from the LORD	saying				
H3068	H559				

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