

Jeremiah 27:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

Analysis

But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him—The Hebrew phrase havi' et-tsavvaro be'ol (הָבִי'א אֶת-צַוָּרֹוֹ בַּעַל, bring their neck into the yoke) pictures voluntary submission, like an ox accepting the yoke for plowing. What appeared as shameful capitulation was actually wisdom and obedience to God's ordained purposes. **Serve him** (וַעֲבַדְהוּ, va'avduhu) uses the same verb for religious service to God—suggesting that serving Babylon in this context was serving God's purposes.

Those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein—The reward for submission was preservation: remaining in the land, agricultural continuity (till it, va-avaduhah, וַעֲבַדְהָ, and dwelling securely. God promises **I will let remain** (vehinakhti oto, וְהִנַּחֲתִי אוֹתוֹ, I will leave it/cause it to rest), using language of rest and security. This passage reveals the counterintuitive nature of God's wisdom: sometimes surrender is victory, submission is freedom, and losing life is finding it. Jesus taught the same paradox: whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Christ's sake will find it (Matthew 16:25). Humble submission to God's ordained circumstances, even painful ones, leads to preservation and blessing.

Historical Context

This prophecy was tested when Zedekiah rebelled (588 BC) and Jerusalem was destroyed. However, Jeremiah himself demonstrated the principle: he remained in the land after Jerusalem's fall (Jeremiah 40:1-6), living under Babylonian-appointed governor Gedaliah. The 'people of the land' who were not deported continued agricultural life under Babylon's authority (2 Kings 25:12). Conversely, those who fled to Egypt against Jeremiah's counsel (Jeremiah 42-44) suffered the judgment they sought to avoid. The principle proved true beyond Judah: nations that submitted to Babylon's hegemony survived; those that resisted were devastated. This wasn't divine favoritism toward Babylon but recognition that God had ordained Babylon's temporary dominance for His purposes.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. When has God called you to 'bring your neck under the yoke' of difficult circumstances rather than fight them?
2. How does this passage challenge the cultural assumption that resistance is always noble and submission is always cowardly?
3. What is the difference between submitting to God's ordained purposes and passively accepting evil?

Interlinear Text

וְהָגוּ יְיָ	אֲשֶׁר	יָבִיא	אֶת	צַוְאָרֹו	בְּעַל	מֶלֶךְ
But the nations	H834	that bring	H853	their neck	under the yoke	of the king
H1471		H935		H6677	H5923	H4428
לְבָבָהּ	וְעָבְדָהּ	וְהִנֵּחֵת יִי	עַל	אֲדָמָתוֹ	נְאֻם	
of Babylon	and serve	him those will I let remain still	H5921	in their own land	saith	
H894	H5647	H3240		H127	H5002	
יְהוָה	וְעָבְדָהּ	וְיָשֵׁב	בָּהּ:			
the LORD	and serve	it and dwell	H0			
H3068	H5647	H3427				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 27:8 (Kingdom): And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

Jeremiah 21:9 (Parallel theme): He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey.

Jeremiah 27:2 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck,

Jeremiah 38:2 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live.

Jeremiah 27:12 (Kingdom): I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.

