

Jeremiah 28:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet,
Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou
makest this people to trust in a lie.

Analysis

Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie (שְׁמַעֲנָא חַנְנְיָה לֹא־שָׁלַחְךָ יְהוָה וְאַתָּה הַבְּטַחְתָּ אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה עַל־שָׁקֶר, sh'ma-na chananyah lo-sh'lachakha YHWH v'attah hivtachta et-ha'am hazzeh al-shaquer)—the direct accusation is devastating: **The LORD hath not sent thee** (לֹא־שָׁלַחְךָ יְהוָה). The verb שָׁלַח (shalach, 'send') was fundamental to prophetic authority. Hananiah claimed divine commission; Jeremiah exposes him as unauthorized. Worse, **thou makest this people to trust in a lie** (הַבְּטַחְתָּ...עַל־שָׁקֶר, hivtachta...al-shaquer)—the verb בָּטַח (batach, 'trust') indicates misplaced confidence. Hananiah didn't merely err; he actively caused others to trust falsehood (שָׁקֶר, sheqer).

The indictment distinguishes individual error from leading others astray. Teachers bear greater accountability (James 3:1) because their lies multiply through followers. Hananiah's false prophecy didn't just affect him; it encouraged national rebellion against Babylon, bringing catastrophic consequences. False teachers don't merely believe wrongly; they propagate destructive trust in lies, making others spiritual casualties. This explains severe judgment in verse 16.

Historical Context

Hananiah's false prophecy likely influenced Zedekiah's eventual rebellion against Babylon (589 BC), contributing to Jerusalem's destruction. False prophets created

political pressure for nationalist policies that proved suicidal. Jeremiah's opposition to court prophets made him appear treasonous, though he sought Judah's true welfare. The conflict between prophetic factions wasn't merely theological but had devastating political consequences.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does teaching falsehood make you accountable for others' misplaced trust?
2. What distinguishes personal theological error from publicly leading others into lies?
3. In what ways might false teaching today create catastrophic consequences beyond mere incorrect belief?

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 13:22 (Parallel theme): Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:

1 Kings 22:23 (Prophecy): Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.

Jeremiah 20:6 (Parallel theme): And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies.

Jeremiah 28:11 (Prophecy): And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

Zechariah 13:3 (Prophecy): And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.