

Jeremiah 28:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

Analysis

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon—Hananiah uses the proper prophetic formula (koh amar YHWH tseva'ot, כה אמר יְהוָה צְבָאֹת) and God's covenant title 'God of Israel,' lending his false message maximum authority. The claim 'I have broken' uses the Hebrew perfect tense, presenting future hope as accomplished fact—a rhetorical technique suggesting certainty. **The yoke** (motah, מֶתֶה) directly contradicts Jeremiah's symbolic wooden yoke in chapter 27, representing Babylonian domination.

Hananiah's prophecy is masterfully crafted false hope. He doesn't deny Babylon's current power but claims God has already broken it, making liberation imminent. This sounds theologically sound—'God of hosts' emphasizes divine power over earthly armies; 'God of Israel' invokes covenant promises of protection. The message resonates with genuine theology (God does deliver His people) but misapplies it to the current situation. This is the danger of false prophecy: not obvious heresy but biblical truth wrongly applied. True, God would eventually break Babylon's yoke (after seventy years, Jeremiah 29:10). Hananiah's error wasn't denying God's ability but misrepresenting His timing and method.

Historical Context

In 594 BC, Babylon's 'yoke' was recent and resented. The 597 BC deportation had stripped Jerusalem of leadership and wealth. Many refugees in Babylon and

citizens in Jerusalem expected quick reversal, viewing exile as temporary setback rather than divine judgment. Hananiah's message aligned with this popular theology: God's covenant with David guaranteed Jerusalem's security; the temple's presence ensured divine protection; righteous King Josiah's reforms (622 BC) had restored favor. Prophets like Hananiah reasoned that God would vindicate His people against pagan oppressors. This theology had worked during Hezekiah's day when Assyria besieged Jerusalem but God miraculously delivered (2 Kings 19). Hananiah assumed the same pattern would repeat. He failed to recognize that this time, God wasn't defending Jerusalem from Babylon—He was using Babylon to judge Jerusalem.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How can biblically sound theology be misapplied to produce false prophecy, and how do we guard against this?
2. What is the difference between faith that trusts God's promises and presumption that misapplies them?
3. Why is the timing of God's deliverance as important as the certainty of it?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	רֹאֶה	אָמֵן	לְאָמֵן	לְאָמֵן	יֹשְׁבָא	לְאָמֵן	רֹאֶה	כִּי
H3541	Thus speaketh	the LORD	of hosts	the God	of Israel	Thus speaketh		
H559		H3068	H6635	H430	H3478			H559
I have broken	the yoke	of the king	of Babylon					
H7665	H853	H5923	H4428	H894				

