

Jeremiah 32:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.

Analysis

The king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem (צָר, tsar—to bind, besiege, cause distress). The military term conveys more than tactical encirclement—it's covenantal language for divine judgment (Deuteronomy 28:52-53). God weaponizes Babylon against His own people.

Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison (חֲצָר הַמַּטְכָּה, chatsar hamattarah—the guard courtyard). Jeremiah's imprisonment for prophesying Jerusalem's fall (v. 3-5) creates dramatic irony: God's faithful spokesman is imprisoned while the rebellious king remains 'free' yet doomed. The prophet's suffering validates his message—he experiences in microcosm the city's coming captivity. Like Joseph, Daniel, and ultimately Christ, the righteous suffer unjustly under God's sovereign plan.

Historical Context

The 'court of the prison' (distinct from the dungeon, 38:6) was a walled area within the royal palace complex where Jeremiah had limited freedom. Zedekiah's vacillation—imprisoning yet consulting Jeremiah (v. 3-5, 37:17-21)—reflects his weak character and the prophetic-political tension of the period.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why does faithfulness to God's word sometimes result in imprisonment rather than deliverance?
2. How does Jeremiah's suffering foreshadow Christ's rejection by the religious establishment?
3. What does Zedekiah's fear of both God's prophet and Babylonian power reveal about attempting to serve two masters?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵל	יְהוָה	לְמֶלֶךְ	לְבַב	צָר	עַל	יְרוּשָׁלַם
H227	army	For then the king	of Babylon's	besieged	H5921	Jerusalem
	H2428		H894	H6696		H3389

וְיִרְמְיָהוּ	הַנָּבִיא	הָהוּא	כָּלֹא	בְּחֹצֵר	הַמִּטְכָּה	אֶשְׁרָה
and Jeremiah	the prophet	H1961	was shut up	in the court	of the prison	H834
H3414	H5030		H3607	H2691	H4307	

בֵּית	לְמֶלֶךְ	יְהוּדָה:
house	For then the king	of Judah's
H1004	H4428	H3063

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 37:21 (Kingdom): Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

Nehemiah 3:25 (Kingdom): Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh.

Jeremiah 33:1 (Parallel theme): Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

Jeremiah 38:6 (Parallel theme): Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

Jeremiah 32:8 (Parallel theme): So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.