

Jeremiah 32:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying,
Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD,
Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of
Babylon, and he shall take it;

Analysis

Wherefore dost thou prophesy (תֵּדַע אַתָּה נִבְּבָה, maddua attah nibba)—Zedekiah's question drips with irony. He imprisons Jeremiah for prophesying doom, yet cannot silence him. The confrontation echoes Ahab versus Micaiah (1 Kings 22): rulers reject unwelcome truth.

Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon—The prophetic hinneh (behold!) demands attention to the unthinkable: YHWH Himself gives Jerusalem (His own dwelling place!) to pagans. This is covenant lawsuit language (rib): God enforces the Deuteronomic curses (Deuteronomy 28:49-52). Yet Jeremiah's imprisonment for speaking God's word highlights a central biblical tension—God's sovereignty versus human responsibility. Zedekiah cannot change the outcome, yet is culpable for rejecting the prophetic warning.

Historical Context

Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon despite Jeremiah's repeated warnings (Jeremiah 27-28), swayed by false prophets promising deliverance. His imprisonment of Jeremiah represents the establishment's attempt to suppress inconvenient truth—a pattern repeated throughout Scripture (Acts 4:1-3, 5:17-18).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Why do people often 'shoot the messenger' when confronted with unwelcome truth from God's word?
2. How does Zedekiah's resistance to God's revealed will illustrate the doctrine of human depravity?
3. What modern 'false prophets' promise peace and prosperity while ignoring God's conditions for blessing?

Interlinear Text

מִדּוֹעַ אָמַר יְהוָה אֶל־זְדֹקִי מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה כִּלְאָה אָשָׁר
H4069 H559 H3063 H4428 H6667 H3607 H834

יְהוָה אָמַר כִּי אָמַר יְהוָה אָמַר
the LORD Thus saith Thus saith Thus saith Wherefore dost thou prophesy
H3068 H559 H3541 H5012 H859

מֶלֶךְ בְּ יָד בְּ אֶת בְּ עַיר בְּ נַצְרָן נָתַת־
king into the hand to the city the I will give
H4428 H3027 H2063 H5892 H853 H5414 H2005

בְּ לִלְכָה בְּ לִלְכָה
and he shall take of Babylon
H3920 H894

