

Jeremiah 36:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

Analysis

But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them. Having destroyed God's written word (v. 23), Jehoiakim now attempts to silence God's living messengers. The command to **take** (laqach, לקח, meaning seize or arrest) Baruch and Jeremiah carries murderous intent, given that Jehoiakim had already killed the prophet Uriah (26:20-23). The naming of three officials—Jerahmeel, Seraiah, and Shelemiah—emphasizes the official, royal nature of this arrest warrant. "Hammelech" (הַמֶּלֶךְ) means "the king," suggesting Jerahmeel may have been a royal prince.

The stunning reversal comes in five Hebrew words: **but the LORD hid them** (vayyastîrem YHWH, וַיַּסְתִּירֵם יְהוָה). The verb satar (סָתַר) means to hide, conceal, or shelter—divine protection against royal power. Psalm 27:5 uses this same word: "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." The king may destroy scrolls and command arrests, but he cannot override God's sovereign protection of His servants. This verse demonstrates that human authority, however absolute it appears, remains subject to divine authority. God's word can be rewritten (v. 28), and God's prophets can be hidden when their work isn't finished. Jehoiakim's impotent rage cannot frustrate God's purposes.

Historical Context

The pattern of persecuting prophets was well-established in Jehoiakim's reign. He had killed Uriah, son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim, who prophesied similarly to Jeremiah, having him hunted down even in Egypt and executed (26:20-23). Jehoiakim showed no hesitation in murdering God's messengers who threatened his political agenda. The fact that the LORD hid Jeremiah and Baruch demonstrates divine intervention—perhaps through sympathetic officials, secret locations, or supernatural concealment. This wasn't the last time God would preserve Jeremiah; he survived the fall of Jerusalem and continued prophesying afterward. The historical parallel to Elijah being hidden from Ahab (1 Kings 17:3) and Obadiah hiding prophets from Jezebel (1 Kings 18:4) shows God's consistent pattern of protecting His messengers until their appointed work is complete.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does God's hiding of Jeremiah and Baruch teach about His sovereign protection of His servants against seemingly absolute human power?
2. How should this verse encourage believers facing persecution or opposition for faithfully proclaiming God's word?
3. In what ways does Jehoiakim's attempt to silence God's messengers after destroying God's written word illustrate the futility of opposing divine purposes?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּצַו ה	ה מֶלֶךְ	אֶת	יִרְחֵמֶא ל	בֶּן	הַמָּ לֶךְ	וְאֶת
commanded	But the king	H853	Jerahmeel	the son	of Hammelech	H853
H6680	H4428		H3396	H1121	H4429	
שְׂרַיָּה הו	בֶּן	וְאֶת	עֲזַרְיָא ל	שְׁלֵמִיָּה הו	בֶּן	עַבְדֵּי ל
and Seraiah	the son	of Azriel	H853	and Shelemiah	the son	of Abdeel
H8304	H1121	H5837		H8018	H1121	H5655
לָקַח חַת	אֶת	בָּר וְ	הַסֵּפֶר	וְאֵת	יִרְמְיָה הו	הַנָּבִיא יָא
to take	H853	Baruch	the scribe	H853	and Jeremiah	the prophet
H3947		H1263	H5608		H3414	H5030
וַיִּסְתֵּר ׀	יְהוָה:					
hid	but the LORD					
H5641	H3068					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 91:1 (Parallel theme): He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

1 Kings 19:10 (Prophecy): And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1 Kings 17:3 (Parallel theme): Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

1 Kings 19:14 (Prophecy): And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

Isaiah 26:20 (Parallel theme): Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

Acts 12:11 (References Lord): And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

Psalms 27:5 (Parallel theme): For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

Psalms 64:2 (Parallel theme): Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

Psalms 57:1 (Parallel theme): Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Psalms 32:7 (Parallel theme): Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.