

Jeremiah 37:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people.

Analysis

Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people—the phrase *lahaliq misham* (לְהַלִּיךְ מִשָּׁם, to separate himself/divide/receive a portion) has been interpreted various ways: receiving family inheritance, conducting property transactions (related to his field purchase in 32:6-15), or simply withdrawing for personal business. The Hebrew *halaq* (חָלַק) can mean divide, share, or receive a portion, often used for inheritance distribution.

The specificity of **the land of Benjamin** indicates Jeremiah's hometown region—Anathoth, a priestly city about three miles northeast of Jerusalem (1:1). The timing during Babylon's withdrawal made travel possible. Jeremiah's action was entirely innocent—handling legitimate family business—yet would be grotesquely misinterpreted as desertion.

This teaches that even innocent actions can be twisted by hostile audiences. Jesus experienced similar false accusations (Matthew 26:59-61; John 10:33). The righteous should act with integrity regardless of how actions might be misconstrued, trusting vindication to God (1 Peter 2:12, 3:16). Jeremiah's clear conscience enabled him to declare 'It is false' when accused (v. 14).

Historical Context

Anathoth in Benjamin territory was Jeremiah's family home, assigned to priests descended from Aaron (Joshua 21:18). His relatives there had previously threatened his life for prophesying (11:21-23), making this journey potentially dangerous even apart from the false arrest. The reference to separating himself 'in the midst of the people' may indicate dividing family property or receiving his inheritance portion while travel was possible. Alternatively, it may simply mean he went to be among his kinsmen during the siege's temporary lifting.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How should we respond when innocent actions are maliciously misinterpreted?
2. What does Jeremiah's attempt to handle family business teach about maintaining normal responsibilities despite extraordinary ministry demands?
3. Why is it important to act with integrity even when we know our actions might be misunderstood?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּצֵא	יִרְמְיָהוּ	מִיֶּרֶשָׁלַיִם	לָלֶכֶת	אֶרֶץ	בְּנֵימִן
went forth	Then Jeremiah	out of Jerusalem	H1980	into the land	of Benjamin
H3318	H3414	H3389		H776	H1144
לְהִלָּךְ	מִשָּׁם	בֵּית וְ	הָעָם:		
to separate	H8033	himself thence in the midst	of the people		
H2505		H8432	H5971		

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 1:1 (Parallel theme): The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

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