

Jeremiah 37:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Jeremiah, It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

Analysis

Then said Jeremiah, It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans—Jeremiah's response is unequivocal. The Hebrew sheker (שָׁקֵר, false/lie) flatly denies the accusation. Eineni nofel (אֵינֶנִּי נֹפֵל, I fall not away) uses the emphatic negative construction—'I am absolutely not deserting.' His clear conscience enabled bold denial. The prophet distinguished sharply between his theological message (Judah must submit to Babylon's God-ordained judgment) and personal treason.

But he hearkened not to him—the refusal to hear truth parallels Jerusalem's persistent rejection of prophetic warnings. The Hebrew lo shama (לֹא שָׁמָע, did not hearken) indicates willful refusal, not mere failure to understand. Irijah chose to disbelieve Jeremiah regardless of evidence. **So Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes**—the arrest proceeded despite denial, showing how predetermined hostility distorts justice. The sarim (שָׂרִים, princes/officials) were Jerusalem's ruling elite who consistently opposed Jeremiah (26:10-11; 36:12; 38:4).

This previews Jesus' trials before hostile authorities who determined His guilt before hearing evidence (Matthew 26:59-60; Mark 14:55-56). False accusations and predetermined verdicts characterize worldly justice opposed to God's truth. Yet both Jeremiah and Jesus maintained clear conscience and uncompromising witness despite unjust treatment (1 Peter 2:21-23).

Historical Context

Jeremiah's arrest occurred during the final 18 months before Jerusalem's fall. The princes mentioned here were the same officials who later urged his execution (38:4) and who burned Jeremiah's scroll containing God's word (36:23). Their hostility was longstanding and ideological—Jeremiah's message contradicted their political program of Egyptian alliance and resistance to Babylon. They could not tolerate a voice declaring that resistance was futile and submission to Babylon was God's will. The prophet's arrest on false charges enabled them to silence his message without directly challenging divine authority.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How should we respond when falsely accused, knowing that truth may not convince predetermined opponents?
2. What distinguishes maintaining clear conscience from needing to be vindicated by others?
3. Why do hostile authorities often refuse to hear truth even when clearly presented?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	בִּירְמְיָהוּ הוּא	שֶׁ קֶר	אֵין נִי	נָפַל	עַל	הַכַּשְׂדִּים
Then said	Jeremiah	It is false	H369	I fall not away	H5921	to the Chaldeans
H559	H3414	H8267		H5307		H3778
וְלֹא	שָׁמַע	אֶל יוֹ	וַיִּתֵּן שׁ	יְרֵמְיָה		בִּירְמְיָהוּ הוּא
H3808	But he hearkened	H413	took	not to him so Irijah		Jeremiah
	H8085		H8610	H3376		H3414
וַיָּבֵא הוּא	אֶל	הַשָּׂרִים:				
and brought	H413	him to the princes				
H935		H8269				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 27:12 (Parallel theme): Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.