

Jeremiah 38:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.

Analysis

Jeremiah privately counsels Zedekiah to obey God's word for his own welfare and life. The condition is clear: obedience brings preservation, disobedience brings destruction. Zedekiah's problem wasn't lack of information but lack of faith to act on revealed truth. Many know God's will but fear consequences of obedience more than consequences of disobedience.

Historical Context

This is Jeremiah's final counsel to Zedekiah. The king's refusal to heed it sealed his fate - he was captured, witnessed his sons' execution, then was blinded and exiled.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What truths from God's word do you struggle to act on due to fear?
2. How does Zedekiah's fate warn against knowing God's will but failing to obey?

Interlinear Text

לֹא יָרְכִּי הוּא אַתָּה
H3808 H5414

שָׁמַע תְּאַלְּמָר
H4994 H8085

אַל יְבַדֵּל בְּקָר
H413 H1696

I beseech thee the voice of the LORD
H6963 H3068

H834

H589

which I speak
H413

לְבָבְךָ וְלִבְנָשׁוֹן
H0 H2421

unto thee so it shall be well
H3190 H5315

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:27 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

Isaiah 55:3 (Parallel theme): Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Jeremiah 26:13 (References Lord): Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

2 Chronicles 20:20 (References Lord): And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

Acts 26:29 (Parallel theme): And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

