

Jeremiah 38:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived.

Analysis

Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him—The suspicious officials interrogated the prophet, exactly as Zedekiah feared. Their questioning confirms the political danger surrounding any counsel of surrender. **And he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded**—Jeremiah repeated the cover story verbatim. The phrase according to all these words (כֹּל־) emphasizes exact compliance with Zedekiah's instructions.

So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived—The deception succeeded. The verb shama (עָמַד, "to hear/perceive") appears in the Niphal (passive) stem: the truth was not heard/discovered. Yet this "success" only postponed disaster. Zedekiah's successful concealment of God's ultimatum meant he never had to publicly reject it—he simply ignored it privately, leading to Jerusalem's destruction exactly as prophesied.

Historical Context

This interrogation likely occurred shortly after the private meeting, while Jeremiah was still confined to the court of the guard (38:28). The princes' acceptance of the cover story bought temporary peace but changed nothing substantively—Zedekiah

had already decided against surrender, and these officials supported that decision. Within months, Babylon would breach Jerusalem's walls (39:1-3).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does the princes' acceptance of the cover story reveal about how close Judah came to the truth that might have saved them?
2. How does successful deception sometimes enable continued disobedience by removing pressure to make hard choices?
3. What might have happened if Zedekiah had instead publicly declared God's message through Jeremiah, risking his officials' anger?

Interlinear Text

את וַיָּשָׁלֹךְ וַיְרַתִּי הָאָלֹהִים אֶל הַשָּׁרֵם כָּל יְבָא אֶל

Then came H3605 all the princes H413 unto Jeremiah H3414 and asked H853

בְּאֵלָה בְּדִבָּרִים כָּל לְקָמָן וְאֵל

him and he told H5046 H1992 H3605 them according to all these words H1697 H428

כִּי מִתְּנִיחַ בְּדִבָּרִים שָׁוֹרְשָׁוֹר לְבָנָה אֲשֶׁר

had commanded H6680 H4428 So they left off speaking H2790 H4480 H3588

בְּדִבָּרִים נִשְׁמַע עַל

was not perceived H8085 them according to all these words H1697

