

Jeremiah 39:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

Analysis

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison (בַּעֲצָרוֹ, ba'atzuro)—The timing marker indicates this oracle (fulfilled in vv. 16-18) was received during imprisonment before the city's fall. The verb atzar (עָצַר) means detained, restrained, confined. Physical confinement never restricts divine communication—God's word (דְּבַר־יְהוָה, devar-YHWH) reaches His servants in dungeons as readily as palaces.

This introduces the prophecy to Ebed-melech (the Ethiopian who rescued Jeremiah from the cistern, 38:7-13), promising his safety because 'you have put your trust in me' (39:18). While chapter 39 records Jerusalem's fall chronologically, this verse flashes back to earlier imprisonment, showing that even then God was arranging protective promises for the faithful. The structure demonstrates that divine word precedes and governs historical events—prophecy before fulfillment, promise before provision.

Historical Context

The 'court of the prison' was a relatively open detention area within the palace complex (contrast the muddy cistern of 38:6), where Jeremiah received a daily bread ration before the siege cut off food supplies (37:21). This was where Zedekiah could secretly consult him (38:14-28) while officially keeping him detained. The flashback structure of verse 15 connects God's word during crisis to His subsequent faithfulness after crisis.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's word coming to Jeremiah 'while shut up' encourage believers facing restriction or confinement?
2. What does the flashback structure teach about God's sovereign awareness and advance preparation even before crises resolve?
3. How does this verse's placement demonstrate that divine promises sustain us through trials before we see their fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

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|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| וְאֵל | יְרֵמְיָהוּ הוּא | הָיָה | דָּבַר | יְהוָה ה | בְּהִיט ו |
| H413 | came unto Jeremiah | H1961 | Now the word | of the LORD | H1961 |
| | H3414 | | H1697 | H3068 | |
| עַצ וְ | בְּחֹצֵר | הַמִּטְכָּה ה | לֵאמֹר: | | |
| while he was shut up | in the court | of the prison | saying | | |
| H6113 | H2691 | H4307 | H559 | | |

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