

Jeremiah 39:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

Analysis

Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes (עֵינָיו צִדְקִיָּהוּ עָוָר, *einei tzidqiyyahu iwwer*)—After forcing Zedekiah to witness his sons' execution, Nebuchadnezzar blinded him, making that horror his final visual memory. This fulfilled Ezekiel's prophecy: 'he shall not see it with his eyes' (Ezekiel 12:13)—Zedekiah would go to Babylon but never see it. The verb *iwwer* (עָוָר) means to gouge out, blind.

And bound him with chains (נְחֻשַׁיִּים, *nechushayyim*)—Bronze fetters, dual form suggesting double chains or shackles on both hands and feet. The king who refused to see God's truth through Jeremiah now literally cannot see. He who would not be bound by covenant is bound by bronze. He who rejected prophetic light ends in physical and spiritual darkness—a terrifying picture of judgment.

Historical Context

Blinding was a common punishment for rebel vassal kings in the ancient Near East, serving multiple purposes: preventing future military leadership, creating a living warning to others, and inflicting maximum humiliation on royal captives. Archaeological evidence includes Assyrian reliefs depicting the blinding of captured kings. The bronze chains indicate Zedekiah's status as a high-value prisoner rather than execution.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Zedekiah's physical blindness picture the spiritual blindness that led to his downfall?
2. What 'chains' result from refusing to walk in God's liberating truth?
3. How does Jesus open the eyes of the blind (literally and spiritually) and proclaim freedom to captives (Luke 4:18)?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵת	עֵינָיו	צִדְקִיָּהוּ	וַיֹּצֵא	וַאֲסָרָהוּ	בְּחֻשָׁתִּים
H853	eyes	Zedekiah's	Moreover he put out	and bound	him with chains
	H5869	H6667	H5786	H631	H5178
לָבִיא	אֶת־	בָּבֶלְיָהּ:			
to carry	H853	him to Babylon			
H935		H894			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 12:13 (References Babylon): My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

Jeremiah 52:11 (References Babylon): Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

2 Kings 25:7 (References Babylon): And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

Judges 16:21 (Parallel theme): But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

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