

Jeremiah 6:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

Analysis

God appoints watchmen (prophets) with the responsibility to sound the alarm ('hearken to the sound of the trumpet'). These watchmen give warning of approaching danger. However, the people's response is defiant: 'We will not hearken.' This demonstrates that the problem is not lack of warning but willful rejection of the warning. The watchman motif appears throughout Ezekiel 3 and 33, emphasizing the prophet's responsibility to warn and the people's accountability for their response. Reformed theology affirms that God's warnings through His word and ministers remove any excuse for unpreparedness when judgment comes.

Historical Context

Jeremiah and other prophets faithfully warned Judah for decades about coming Babylonian judgment. The people's rejection of these warnings left them without excuse when destruction came.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What is the responsibility of spiritual watchmen in the church today?
2. How should God's people respond when warned about spiritual danger?
3. What accountability do individuals bear when they reject clear warnings from Scripture and faithful preaching?

Interlinear Text

וְהִקְמַתִּי	עֲלֵיכֶם	צִפּוֹת	יָמָם	וְלֹא	נִקְשִׁיב:
Also I set	H5921	watchmen	H6822	We will not hearken	H7181
H6965					H6963
שׁוֹפָר	וַיֹּאמְרוּ	לֹא	נִקְשִׁיב:		
of the trumpet	But they said	H3808	We will not hearken		
H7782	H559		H7181		

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 25:4 (Parallel theme): And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

Isaiah 58:1 (Parallel theme): Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Isaiah 21:11 (Parallel theme): The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

Zechariah 7:11 (Parallel theme): But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

Isaiah 56:10 (Parallel theme): His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

Habakkuk 2:1 (Parallel theme): I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

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