

Lamentations 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up.

Analysis

The metaphor shifts to a yoke: "The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand" (niskad ol pesha'ai be-yado yishtargu, (נִשְׁקָד עַל פְּשָׁעֵי בְּ יָדוֹ יִשְׁתַּרְגּוּ). God Himself fastens the yoke of sin's consequences upon His people. The verb sakar (שָׁקַר) means to weave together or intertwine—sins are woven into an inescapable burden. This illustrates how sins accumulate and compound. Individual transgressions weave together into systemic bondage. The yoke "is come up upon my neck" (alu al-tsavari)—the burden crushes. "He hath made my strength to fall" (hikshal kochi) shows the yoke's effect: total exhaustion. The closing phrase is chilling: "the Lord hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise" (netnani Adonai bi-yedei lo-ukhal kum). God actively delivers His people to enemies. This isn't Satan's victory over God but God using enemy nations as instruments of judgment.

Historical Context

The yoke metaphor was familiar in ancient Near Eastern contexts—both for animal labor and for subjugation. Conquered peoples were said to be under the yoke of their conquerors. Jeremiah 27-28 uses yoke symbolism extensively: Jeremiah wore a wooden yoke to symbolize Babylon's dominion, which false prophet Hananiah broke, claiming God would break Babylon's yoke. God responded by making an

iron yoke—heavier and unbreakable (Jeremiah 28:13-14). The phrase 'delivered me into their hands' was literally fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar captured Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:6-7) and the city (Jeremiah 39:1-10). God explicitly states in Jeremiah 21:7, 'I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah...into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.' Divine sovereignty over even enemy actions is absolute.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the image of sins being 'woven together' into a yoke help us understand how patterns of sin create bondage?
2. What does it mean that God Himself binds this yoke, and how does this relate to the principle that sin carries inherent consequences?
3. How does Jesus's invitation 'Take my yoke upon you' (Matthew 11:29) offer liberation from the crushing yoke of transgression?

Interlinear Text

נִשְׁתַּחַד עַל פְּשָׁע בַּיּוֹם יְשַׁתְּ רָגָד
is bound The yoke of my transgressions by his hand they are wretched

H8244 H5923 H6588 H3027 H8276

עַל כַּח יְלִכְתָּא כַּאֲרִי כַּחֲלִיל
and come up upon my neck to fall he hath made my strength

H5927 H5921 H6677 H3782 H3581

בַּיּוֹם לֹא אָמַת אָמַת לֹא תִּתְּפַנְּנִי
from whom I am not able to rise up

H3201 H6965

H5414 H136 H3027 H3808

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 47:6 (Parallel theme): I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

Deuteronomy 28:48 (References Lord): Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

Proverbs 5:22 (Sin): His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

Jeremiah 28:14 (References Lord): For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also.

Ezekiel 25:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, therefore I will deliver thee to the men of the east for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee: they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

Ezekiel 25:7 (References Lord): Behold, therefore I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; and I will cut thee off from the people, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.