

~PRISON (629)

.. Figurative Use

- A place of confinement for one being held for trial or for one found guilty of lawbreaking. Various original-language expressions referring to a prison, or jail, have the following meanings, house of roundness.
- So Joseph's master took him and gave him over to the **prison house**, the place where the prisoners of the king were kept under arrest, and he continued there in the **prison house**. (**Genesis 39:20**) Footnote
- House of the cistern
- And it came about that at midnight Yehowah struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the **prison hole**, and every firstborn of beast. (**Exodus 12:29**) Footnote
- House of detention,
- And you must say; This is what the king has said; Put this fellow in the **house of detention** and feed him with a reduced allowance of bread and a reduced allowance of water until I come in peace. (**1 Kings 22:27**)
- House of custody
- If you are upright, let one of your brothers be kept bound in your house of custody, but the rest of you go, take cereals for the famine in your houses. (**Genesis 42:19**)
- And the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded, after which the king of Babylon bound him with copper fetters and brought him to Babylon and put him in the house of custody until the day of his death. (**Jeremiah 52:11**)
- House of the **prisoners** or those bound,
- So the Philistines grabbed hold of him and bored his eyes out and

brought him down to Gaza and bound him with two fetters of copper, and he came to be a grinder in the **prison house**. (**Judges 16:21**)

- For he has gone forth from the **prison house** itself to become king, although in the kingship of this one he had been born as one of little means. (**Ecclesiastes 4:14**)
- **House of the stocks,**
- However, Asa became offended at the seer and put him in the **house of the stocks**, because he was in a rage at him over this. And Asa began to crush some others of the people at that same time. (**2 Chronicles 16:10**)
- **Place of bonds,**
- But John, having heard in **jail** about the works of the Christ, sent by means of his own disciples. (**Matthew 11:2**)
- **Place of guarding,**
- And he sent and had John beheaded in the **prison**. (**Matthew 14:10**)
- **Place of custody or observation,**
- And they laid hands upon the apostles and put them in the **public place of custody**. (**Acts of Apostles 5:18**)
- Among various ancient peoples, including the Egyptians, Philistines, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians, **imprisonment** was a form of legal punishment.
- So Joseph's master took him and gave him over to the **prison** house, the place where the prisoners of the king were kept under arrest, and he continued there in the **prison house**. (**Genesis 39:20**)
- And it came about that because their heart was merry, they began to say; Call Samson that he may offer us some amusement. So they called Samson out of the **prison** house that he might make sport before them, and they proceeded to stand him between the pillars. (**Judges 16:25**)

- However, the king of Assyria got to find conspiracy in Hoshea's case, in that he had sent messengers to So the king of Egypt and did not bring the tribute up to the king of Assyria as in former years. Hence the king of Assyria shut him up and kept him bound in the house of detention. (**2 Kings 17:4**)
- And as for everyone that does not become a doer of the Law of your God and the Law of the king, let judgment be promptly executed upon him, whether for death or for banishment, or for money fine or for imprisonment. (**Ezra 7:26**)
- At length it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin the king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, that Evil-merodach the king of Babylon, in the year of his becoming king, raised up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah and proceeded to bring him forth from the **prison** house. (**Jeremiah 52:31**)
- And he began to speak with him good things and to put his throne higher than the thrones of the other kings that were with him in Babylon. (**Jeremiah 52:32**)
- And he took off his **prison** garments, and he ate bread before him constantly all the days of his life. (**Jeremiah 52:33**)
- **Prisoners** might be bound with fetters and forced to work at hard labor, such as grinding.
- So the Philistines grabbed hold of him and bored his eyes out and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with two fetters of copper, and he came to be a grinder in the **prison house**. (**Judges 16:21**)
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- He sent ahead of them a man who was sold to be a slave, Joseph. (**Psalms 105:17**)
- With fetters they afflicted his feet, into irons his soul came.

(Psalms 105:18)

- And the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded, after which the king of Babylon bound him with copper fetters and brought him to Babylon and put him in the house of custody until the day of his death. **(Jeremiah 52:11)**
- In Egypt, a **trusted prisoner**, as was Joseph, might be placed in charge of other inmates and assigned to wait upon those who had held prominent positions before their confinement.
- However, Yehowah continued with Joseph and kept extending loving-kindness to him and granting him to find favor in the eyes of the chief officer of the **prison house**. **(Genesis 39:21)**
- Then the chief of the bodyguard assigned Joseph to be with them that he might wait upon them, and they continued in **jail** for some days. **(Genesis 40:4)**
- **Prisons** date back at least to the **18th Century B.C.E**, for it was then that Joseph was wrongly confined to the jail that was connected to the **house of the chief of the bodyguard**.
- So Joseph's master took him and gave him over to the **prison** house, the place where the **prisoners** of the king were kept under arrest, and he continued there in the **prison house**. **(Genesis 39:20)**
- So he committed them to the jail of the house of the chief of the bodyguard, to the **prison house**, the place where Joseph was a prisoner. **(Genesis 40:3)**
- Pharaoh was indignant at his servants. So he committed me to the **jail** of the **house** of the chief of the bodyguard, both me and the chief of the bakers. **(Genesis 41:10)**
- This Egyptian jail apparently had a dungeon, or hole shaped like a **cistern**, where some **prisoners** were kept.
- For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing at all for which they should put me in the **prison** hole. **(Genesis 40:15)**
- And Pharaoh proceeded to send and to call Joseph, that they

- might bring him quickly from the **prison hole**. Hence he shaved and changed his mantles and went in to Pharaoh. (**Genesis 41:14**)
- And they will certainly be gathered with a gathering as of **prisoners** into the pit, and be shut up in the dungeon, and after an abundance of days they will be given attention. (**Isaiah 24:22**)
 - The Mosaic Law did not provide for **prisons** as a form of punishment. Since justice was to be executed swiftly
 - At this Achan answered Joshua and said; For a fact I, I have sinned against Yehowah the God of Israel, and this way and that way I have done. (**Joshua 7:20**)
 - At once Joshua sent messengers, and they went running to the tent, and, look! It was hidden in his tent with the money underneath it. (**Joshua 7:22**)
 - So they took them from the midst of the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the sons of Israel and poured them out before Yehowah. (**Joshua 7:23**)
 - Joshua, and all Israel with him, now took Achan the son of Zerah and the silver and the official garment and the bar of gold and his sons and his daughters and his bull and his ass and his flock and his tent and everything that was his and they brought them up to the low plain of Achor. (**Joshua 7:24**)
 - Then Joshua said; Why have you brought ostracism upon us? Yehowah will bring ostracism upon you on this day. With that all Israel went pelting him with stones, after which they burned them with fire. Thus they stoned them with stones. (**Joshua 7:25**)
 - Only in cases requiring divine clarification do we read in the Pentateuch of individuals being committed into custody.
 - Then they committed him into custody till there should be a distinct declaration to them according to the saying of Yehowah. (**Leviticus 24:12**)
 - So they committed him into custody, because it had not been distinctly stated what should be done to him. (**Numbers 15:34**)

- Eventually, however, places of imprisonment came to be used by the Israelites. The prophet Jeremiah, for example, was held in the **house of fetters**, in the house of Jehonathan. This place of confinement had vaulted rooms, perhaps **dungeon cells**. Conditions were so bad there that Jeremiah feared for his life.
- And the princes began to get indignant at Jeremiah, and they struck him and put him into the **house of fetters**, in the house of Jehonathan the secretary, for this was what they had made the **house of detention**. (Jeremiah 37:15)
- When Jeremiah came into the **house of the cistern** and into the vaulted rooms, then Jeremiah continued dwelling there many days. (Jeremiah 37:16)
- And King Zedekiah proceeded to send and take him, and the king began asking him questions in his house in a place of concealment. And he went on to say; Does there exist a word from Yehowah? To this Jeremiah said; There does exist! And he said further; Into the hand of the king of Babylon you will be given! (Jeremiah 37:17)
- Then Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah; In what way have I sinned against you and against your servants and against this people, so that you men have put me into the house of detention? (Jeremiah 37:18)
- Where, now, are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying; The king of Babylon will not come against you men and against this land? (Jeremiah 37:19)
- And now listen, please, O my lord the king. May my request for favor, please, fall before you, and do not send me back to the house of Jehonathan the secretary, that I may not die there. (Jeremiah 37:20)
- Subsequently he was transferred to the Courtyard of the Guard, where he got a daily allowance of bread, could receive visitors, and was able to conduct business transactions.
- And at that time the military forces of the king of Babylon were laying siege to Jerusalem, and as for Jeremiah the prophet, he happened to be under restraint in the Courtyard of the Guard

that is in the house of the king of Judah. (**Jeremiah 32:2**)

- In time Hanamel the son of my paternal uncle came in to me, according to the word of Yehowah, into the Courtyard of the Guard, and proceeded to say to me; Buy, please, the field of mine that is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin, for the right of hereditary possession is yours, and the repurchasing power is yours. Buy it for yourself. At that I knew that it had been the word of Yehowah. (**Jeremiah 32:8**)
- And I then gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah the son of Mahseiah before the eyes of Hanamel the son of my paternal uncle and before the eyes of the witnesses, those writing in the deed of purchase, before the eyes of all the Jews who were sitting in the Courtyard of the Guard. (**Jeremiah 32:12**)
- Accordingly King Zedekiah commanded, and they then put Jeremiah in custody in the Courtyard of the Guard, and there was a giving of a round loaf of bread to him daily from the street of the bakers, until all the bread was exhausted from the city. And Jeremiah continued dwelling in the Courtyard of the Guard. (**Jeremiah 37:21**)
- And you must say; This is what the king has said; Put this fellow in the house of detention and feed him with a reduced allowance of bread and a reduced allowance of water until I come in peace. (**1 Kings 22:27**)
- However, Asa became offended at the seer and put him in the house of the stocks, because he was in a rage at him over this. And Asa began to crush some others of the people at that same time. (**2 Chronicles 16:10**)
- Yes, others received their trial by mockings and scourgings, indeed, more than that, by bonds and **prisons**. (**Hebrews 11:36**)
- In the **First Century C.E.**, according to Roman custom, the **jailers** or **guards** were held personally accountable for **prisoners**.
- Herod made diligent search for him and, when not finding him, he examined the guards and commanded them to be led off to punishment, and he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent some time there. (**Acts of Apostles 12:19**)

- Therefore, the jailer in Philippi, believing that his **prisoners** had escaped, was ready to commit suicide.
- The **jailer**, being awakened out of sleep and seeing the **prison** doors were open, drew his sword and was about to do away with himself, imagining that the prisoners had escaped. (**Acts of Apostles 16:27**)
- For security measures guards were often stationed at **prison** doors, and prisoners might have their feet put in stocks or have their hands chained to those guarding them.
- Saying; The **jail** we found locked with all security and the guards standing at the doors, but on opening up we found no one inside. (**Acts of Apostles 5:23**)
- Now when Herod was about to produce him, that night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers, and guards before the door were keeping the **prison**. (**Acts of Apostles 12:6**)
- But, look! Yehowah's angel stood by, and a light shone in the **prison** cell. Striking Peter on the side, he roused him, saying; Rise quickly! And his chains fell off his hands. (**Acts of Apostles 12:7**)
- The angel said to him; Gird yourself and bind your sandals on. He did so. Finally he said to him; Put your outer garment on and keep following me. (**Acts of Apostles 12:8**)
- And he went out and kept following him, but he did not know that what was happening through the angel was real. In fact, he supposed he was seeing a vision. (**Acts of Apostles 12:9**)
- Going through the first sentinel guard and the second they got to the iron gate leading into the city, and this opened to them of its own accord. And after they went out they advanced down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. (**Acts of Apostles 12:10**)
- And the crowd rose up together against them, and the civil magistrates, after tearing the outer garments off them, gave the command to beat them with rods. (**Acts of Apostles 16:22**)

- After they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into **prison**, ordering the jailer to keep them securely. (**Acts of Apostles 16:23**)
- Because he got such an order, he threw them into the inner **prison** and made their feet fast in the stocks. (**Acts of Apostles 16:24**)
- Some **prisoners** were allowed visitors.
- Naked, and you clothed me. I fell sick and you looked after me. I was in **prison** and you came to me. (**Matthew 25:36**)
- I shall give you a thorough hearing, he said, when your accusers arrive also. And he commanded that he be kept under guard in the praetorian palace of Herod. (**Acts of Apostles 23:35**)
- And he ordered the army officer that the man be kept and have some relaxation of custody, and that he forbid no one of his people to wait upon him. (**Acts of Apostles 24:23**)
- But, when two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and because Felix desired to gain favor with the Jews, he left Paul bound. (**Acts of Apostles 24:27**)
- When, finally, we entered into Rome, Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier guarding him. (**Acts of Apostles 28:16**)
- However, three days later he called together those who were the principal men of the Jews. When they had assembled, he proceeded to say to them; Men, brothers, although I had done nothing contrary to the people or the customs of our forefathers, I was delivered over as a **prisoner** from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. (**Acts of Apostles 28:17**)
- And these, after making an examination, were desirous of releasing me, as there was no cause for death in me. (**Acts of Apostles 28:18**)
- But when the Jews kept speaking against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, but not as though I had anything of which to accuse my nation. (**Acts of Apostles 28:19**)

- Really on this account I entreated to see and speak to you, for because of the hope of Israel this chain I have around me. ([Acts of Apostles 28:20](#))
- They said to him; Neither have we received letters concerning you from Judea, nor has anyone of the brothers that has arrived reported or spoken anything wicked about you. ([Acts of Apostles 28:21](#))
- But we think it proper to hear from you what your thoughts are, for truly as regards this sect it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against. ([Acts of Apostles 28:22](#))
- They now arranged for a day with him, and they came in greater numbers to him in his lodging place. And he explained the matter to them by bearing thorough witness concerning the kingdom of God and by using persuasion with them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. ([Acts of Apostles 28:23](#))
- And some began to believe the things said. Others would not believe. ([Acts of Apostles 28:24](#))
- So, because they were at disagreement with one another, they began to depart, while Paul made this one comment; The Holy Spirit aptly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your forefathers. ([Acts of Apostles 28:25](#))
- Saying; Go to this people and say; By hearing, you will hear but by no means understand, and, looking, you will look but by no means see. ([Acts of Apostles 28:26](#))
- For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes, that they should never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn back, and I should heal them. ([Acts of Apostles 28:27](#))
- Therefore let it be known to you that this, the means by which God saves, has been sent out to the nations, they will certainly listen to it. ([Acts of Apostles 28:28](#))
- So he remained for an entire two years in his own hired house, and he would kindly receive all those who came in to him. ([Acts](#)

of Apostles 28:30)

- Preaching the kingdom of God to them and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest freeness of speech, without hindrance. (**Acts of Apostles 28:31**)

See Also BOND

See Also JAILER

- As foretold by Christ Jesus, many of his followers experienced **imprisonment**.
- But before all these things people will lay their hands upon you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and **prisons**, you being haled before kings and governor's for the sake of my name. (**Luke 21:12**)
- Which, in fact, I did in Jerusalem, and many of the holy ones I locked up in **prisons**, as I had received authority from the chief priests, and when they were to be executed, I cast my vote against them. (**Acts of Apostles 26:10**)
- Greet Andronicus and Junias my relatives and my fellow captives, who are men of note among the apostles and who have been in union with Christ longer than I have. (**Romans 16:7**)
- Aristarchus my fellow captive sends you his greetings, and so does Mark the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received commands to welcome him if ever he comes to you. (**Colossians 4:10**)
- For you both expressed sympathy for those in **prison** and joyfully took the plundering of your belongings, knowing you yourselves have a better and an abiding possession. (**Hebrews 10:34**)
- Keep in mind those in **prison bonds** as though you have been bound with them, and those being ill-treated, since you yourselves also are still in a body. (**Hebrews 13:3**)
- The apostle John, in exile on the isle of Patmos, wrote that **imprisonment** would continue to be a form of persecution of Christians.
- Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer. Look! The Devil will keep on throwing some of you into **prison** that you may

be fully put to the test, and that you may have tribulation ten days. Prove yourself faithful even to death, and I will give you the crown of life. (**Revelation 2:10**)

·· **Figurative Use**

- In a figurative sense, **prison** can refer to a land of exile, as was Babylon, or to a state of spiritual bondage or confinement.
- I myself, Yehowah, have called you in righteousness, and I proceeded to take hold of your hand. And I shall safeguard you and give you as a covenant of the people, as a light of the nations. (**Isaiah 42:6**)
- For you to open the blind eyes, to bring forth out of the dungeon the **prisoner**, out of the house of detention those sitting in darkness. (**Isaiah 42:7**)
- Go forth, you people, out of Babylon! Run away from the Chaldeans. Tell forth even with the sound of a joyful cry, cause this to be heard. Make it to go forth to the extremity of the earth. say; Yehowah has repurchased his servant Jacob. (**Isaiah 48:20**)
- And now Yehowah, the One forming me from the belly as a servant belonging to him, has said for me to bring back Jacob to him, in order, that to him Israel itself may be gathered. And I shall be glorified in the eyes of Yehowah, and my own God will have become my strength. (**Isaiah 49:5**)
- This is what Yehowah has said; In a time of goodwill I have answered you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you, and I kept safeguarding you that I might give you as a covenant for the people, to rehabilitate the land, to bring about the repossessing of the desolated hereditary possessions. (**Isaiah 49:8**)
- To say to the **prisoners**; Come out! To those who are in the darkness, Reveal yourselves! By the ways they will pasture, and on all beaten paths their pasturing will be. (**Isaiah 49:9**)
- The spirit of the Sovereign Lord Yehowah is upon me, for the reason that Yehowah has anointed me to tell Good News to the meek ones. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to

proclaim liberty to those taken captive and the wide opening of the eyes even to the **prisoners**. (**Isaiah 61:1**)

- Having come to know this, Jesus withdrew from there. Many also followed him, and he cured them all. (**Matthew 12:15**)
- But he strictly charged them not to make him manifest. (**Matthew 12:16**)
- That there might be fulfilled what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, who said. (**Matthew 12:17**)
- Look! My servant whom I chose, my beloved, whom my soul approved! I will put my spirit upon him, and what justice is he will make clear to the nations. (**Matthew 12:18**)
- He will not wrangle, nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the broad ways. (**Matthew 12:19**)
- No bruised reed will he crush, and no smoldering flaxen wick will he extinguish, until he sends out justice with success. (**Matthew 12:20**)
- Indeed, in his name nations will hope. (**Matthew 12:21**)
- So the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, and he opened the scroll and found the place where it was written. (**Luke 4:17**)
- Yehowah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare Good News to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away with a release. (**Luke 4:18**)
- To preach Yehowah's acceptable year. (**Luke 4:19**)
- With that he rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed upon him. (**Luke 4:20**)
- Then he started to say to them; Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled. (**Luke 4:21**)
- Working together with him, we also entreat you not to accept the

undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose. (2 Corinthians 6:1)

- For he says; In an acceptable time I heard you, and in a day of salvation I helped you. Look! Now is the especially acceptable time. Look! Now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)
- Though the spirit creatures who were disobedient in Noah's day do not have physical bodies that can be held by material restraints, they have been limited in their activities and are in a state of dense darkness with reference to Yehowah God, as if in a **prison**.
- In this state also he went his way and preached to the spirits in **prison**. (1 Peter 3:19)
- And the angels that did not keep their original position but forsook their own proper dwelling place he has reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day. (Jude 1:6)
- Also, the abyss in which Satan will be shut up for a thousand years is a **prison**, a place of deathlike restraint or confinement.
- And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the **abyss** and a **great chain in his hand**. (Revelation 20:1)
- And he seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and **bound him for a thousand years**. (Revelation 20:2)
- And he hurled him into the **abyss** and **shut it and sealed it over him**, that he might not mislead the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After these things he must be let loose for a little while. (Revelation 20:3)
- Now as soon as the thousand years have been ended, Satan will be **let loose out of his prison**. (Revelation 20:7)

See Also TARTARUS