

Deuteronomy 28:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway:

Analysis

The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up. The phrase *am asher lo-yada'ta* (אַשְׁר לֹא יְדַעַת, עם, a nation which thou knowest not) identifies foreign invaders as culturally alien enemies—not neighboring peoples but distant empires like Assyria and Babylon. This intensifies the horror: conquered by strangers whose language and customs Israel didn't understand.

And thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway uses *ratzatz* (רַצֵּץ, crushed/shattered), depicting grinding oppression without relief. **Alway** (kol-hayamim, כל-הַיּוֹםִים, all the days) indicates perpetual subjugation, not temporary setback. Isaiah 1:7 describes this exact scenario: "Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence."

Historical Context

Written circa 1406 BC, this prophecy precisely described the Assyrian invasion (722 BC) that deported the Northern Kingdom, and the Babylonian conquest (586 BC) that exiled Judah. Both empires were distant foreigners who confiscated agricultural produce while crushing Israel under tribute and forced labor.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why does God specifically send unknown foreign nations rather than familiar neighboring enemies?
2. What does perpetual oppression without relief teach about the duration of covenant judgment?

Interlinear Text

אָשָׁר רֹעֵה עַמְּךָ יְאַכֵּל אֶת־מִתְבָּרֶךָ פֶּרֶת
The fruit of thy land and all thy labours not eat up shall a nation H834
H6529 H127 H3605 H3018 H398 H5971

וְאֵת עַתָּה יְדַעַת כִּי־יְדַעַת עַתָּה
H3808 which thou knowest H3045 H1961 H7535 and thou shalt be only oppressed H6231

בָּתִים: כֵּלֶל אֶכְזָר וְזַעַם
and crushed H3605 alway H7533 H3117

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 5:17 (Parallel theme): And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.