

Deuteronomy 32:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

Analysis

I will heap mischiefs upon them—aspeh 'alēmô rā'ôt (אָסֶף הָעֵלִים רָא'וֹת), literally 'I will gather evils upon them.' The verb sāphah means to gather, collect, or heap up, suggesting accumulated judgments, not a single disaster. **I will spend mine arrows upon them**—hiṣṣay 'ākalleh-bām (חִשֵּׁי אֲכַלֵּה-בָּם), using the verb kālāh (to complete, finish, exhaust), depicts God using all His arrows of judgment.

The military imagery anticipates verses 24-25, which detail specific judgments: famine, plague, wild beasts, sword, and terror. This is covenant curse fulfillment (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28), where God Himself becomes Israel's enemy, using creation and nations as instruments of discipline.

Historical Context

The 'heaped mischiefs' and 'spent arrows' describe Israel's history: Egyptian bondage, Assyrian captivity, Babylonian exile, Greek persecution (Antiochus IV Epiphanes), Roman destruction (AD 70), and centuries of diaspora. Yet Romans 11:28-29 insists God's gifts and calling are irrevocable—judgment is disciplinary, preparing for restoration.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do accumulated judgments ('heaped mischiefs') demonstrate both God's patience (giving opportunity for repentance) and His justice?
2. What comfort is found in knowing God's covenant discipline, however severe, serves redemptive purposes rather than vindictive destruction?

Interlinear Text

בָּם: אָכְלָה אֶסְפָּה עַל יְמֹן בָּעֵז וְתַּעֲשֵׂה
I will heap mischiefs upon them I will spend
H5595 H5921 H7451 H2671 H3615 H0

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 5:16 (Parallel theme): When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread:

Deuteronomy 28:15 (Parallel theme): But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

Ezekiel 14:21 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?

Leviticus 26:24 (Parallel theme): Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

Lamentations 3:13 (Parallel theme): He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.

