

Deuteronomy 32:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:

Analysis

I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men—God contemplates Israel's complete eradication. The Hebrew amarti af'eihem (אָמַרְתִּי אֲפָאֵהֶם, 'I said, I would scatter them') uses pa'ah, meaning to blow away, disperse to the corners—total diaspora, not just exile. The second phrase ashbitah me-enosh zikhram (אֲשֶׁבֶתָה מֵאָנוֹשׁ זִיכְרָם) 'I, אֲשֶׁבֶתָה מֵאָנוֹשׁ זִיכְרָם would make cease from mankind their remembrance') threatens obliteration from human memory—extinction, not merely defeat.

This represents God's righteous justice against covenant treachery—Israel deserved annihilation for whoring after false gods. Yet verse 27 immediately reveals why God restrains this deserved judgment. The tension between divine justice (demanding Israel's destruction) and covenant faithfulness (preserving a remnant) pervades prophetic literature. God's threat is genuine—sin merits total judgment—but His mercy triumphs through remnant preservation. Paul grapples with this tension in Romans 9-11, concluding that God has not rejected His people (11:1) and 'all Israel will be saved' (11:26). Christ ultimately bears the scattering and obliteration Israel deserved, making remembrance of God's people eternal.

Historical Context

This threatened scattering fulfills partially in multiple dispersions: Assyrian exile (722 BC) of northern Israel, Babylonian captivity (586 BC) of Judah, and Roman diaspora (AD 70-135) following Jerusalem's destruction. Yet God never allowed

complete obliteration—a faithful remnant always remained, preserving covenant identity. The post-AD 70 Jewish diaspora scattered Jews globally for nearly two millennia, yet Israel's remembrance persisted through Torah, tradition, and ultimately modern Israel's 1948 re-establishment. This demonstrates that while God's judgment is severe, His covenant faithfulness ultimately prevails. The preservation of Jewish identity despite centuries of persecution, pogroms, and the Holocaust testifies to God's restraining hand preventing total extinction.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's contemplation of Israel's total destruction emphasize the gravity of covenant unfaithfulness?
2. What does the preservation of a Jewish remnant throughout history teach about God's covenant faithfulness despite human failure?

Interlinear Text

אֶתְּנָאָתִי	אַפְאִיכָּה	אַשְׁבֵּתְּ יִתְהַ	מִןְּנָאָנָּה וְשָׁ
I said	I would scatter them into corners	of them to cease	from among men
H559	H6284	H7673	H582

זְכָרָם:

I would make the remembrance

H2143

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 28:64 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt

serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org