

# Ezekiel 39:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.

## Analysis

**Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves**—This macabre invitation summons carrion birds and scavengers to God's eschatological banquet. The Hebrew *qavu* (קָבְּצוּ, "assemble") is typically used for gathering God's people for worship or judgment (Isaiah 43:9, Joel 3:11), ironically applied here to vultures and beasts consuming the wicked.

**My sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you** uses *zivchi* (זִבְחִי), the term for covenant sacrifices. This inverts sacrificial imagery: rather than Israel offering sacrifices to God, God offers the slain armies as sacrifice to scavengers. The phrase **a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel** (*zevach gadol al-harei Yisrael*, זֶבַח גָּדוֹל עַל-הָרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) echoes Zephaniah 1:7-8 and Revelation 19:17-18, depicting judgment as sacrificial feast where God's enemies become the offering.

## Historical Context

This imagery inverts ancient Near Eastern victory celebrations where conquerors feasted after battle. Here, birds and beasts feast while Gog's armies become the meal. The motif appears in Jeremiah 7:33 and 34:20 as covenant curse for

disobedience—bodies becoming food for birds signified utter defeat and divine rejection.

Ezekiel prophesied this during Babylonian exile when Israel seemed powerless. The vision of God preparing a sacrificial feast from their enemies' corpses reversed their humiliation. This eschatological imagery influenced Revelation 19:17-21, where an angel summons birds to "the supper of the great God" to consume the beast's armies. For Reformed theology, this prefigures final judgment where Christ defeats all opposition to His kingdom.

## **Related Passages**

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## **Study Questions**

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1. How does the inversion of sacrificial imagery (enemies becoming the sacrifice) demonstrate the totality of God's judgment?
2. What does this "anti-feast" reveal about the destiny of those who persistently oppose God's covenant purposes?

## Interlinear Text

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אָמַר	יְהוָה ה'	אֲדֹנָי י	אָמַר	כֹּה	אֲדָם	בֶּן	וְאַתָּה ה'
Speak	GOD	the Lord	Speak	H3541	of man	And thou son	H859
H559	H3069	H136	H559		H120	H1121	
הַשָּׂדֶה ה'	חַי ת	וְלֹכֵל ל	כָּנָף י	כָּל	לְצַפּ ור		
of the field	and to every beast	H3605	unto every feathered	H3605	fowl		
H7704	H2416		H3671		H6833		
זָבַח עַל	מִסָּבִיב יב	הָאֶסְפּ ו	וְבֹאוּ א	הִקְבְּצוּ ו			
sacrifice	yourselves on every side	gather	yourselves and come	Assemble			
H5921	H5439	H622	H935	H6908			
עַל ל	גָּדוֹל ו	זָבַח	לָכֶם	זָבַח	אֲנִי י	אֲשֶׁר ר	
H5921	for you even a great	sacrifice	H0	that I do sacrifice	H589	H834	
	H1419	H2077		H2076			
דָּם:	וּשְׂתֵי יָתֵם	בָּשָׂר ר	וְאֹכְלֵת מ	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	הָרִי י		
blood	and drink	flesh	that ye may eat	of Israel	upon the mountains		
H1818	H8354	H1320	H398	H3478	H2022		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Zephaniah 1:7** (Sacrifice): Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

**Isaiah 34:6** (Blood): The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

**Jeremiah 12:9** (Parallel theme): Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour.

**Ezekiel 39:4** (References Israel): Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured.

**Isaiah 56:9** (Parallel theme): All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.

**Isaiah 18:6** (Parallel theme): They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

**Jeremiah 46:10** (Blood): For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.