

Ezekiel 5:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.

Analysis

Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds. The prophecy reaches horrific climax—cannibalism within families, the ultimate collapse of natural order and human society. "Fathers shall eat the sons" reverses the natural parental instinct to protect children, depicting desperation so extreme that basic humanity evaporates. This fulfills covenant curses warned in Leviticus 26:29 and Deuteronomy 28:53-57, where extreme siege conditions drive people to unthinkable acts.

The reciprocal cannibalism ("sons shall eat fathers") emphasizes complete social breakdown. Neither generation spares the other; family bonds dissolve under starvation's pressure. This represents the ultimate consequence of rejecting God—when covenant relationship fractures, all other relationships deteriorate. Sin doesn't just separate us from God; it corrupts every dimension of created order, reducing humans to bestial survival instincts.

"The whole remnant will I scatter into all the winds" adds exile to judgment. Even survivors of siege face dispersion, fulfilling Deuteronomy's curse of scattering among nations (Deuteronomy 28:64). Yet "remnant" language contains hope—though scattered, a remnant remains. God's judgment is severe but not utterly

destructive. He preserves seed for future restoration, demonstrating that even in wrath, God remembers mercy (Habakkuk 3:2). This points toward Christ gathering God's scattered children from every nation (John 11:52; Ephesians 2:11-13).

Historical Context

Lamentations 4:10 confirms this prophecy's literal fulfillment: "The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children; they became their food during the destruction of the daughter of my people." Josephus records similar horrors during Rome's siege of Jerusalem (70 AD), where a woman killed and ate her infant son. These historical accounts validate Ezekiel's prophetic warning and demonstrate sin's degrading consequences.

Ancient Near Eastern siege warfare regularly produced such extremes. Assyrian annals describe cities under siege resorting to cannibalism. The Dead Sea Scrolls and other texts reference these horrors as ultimate covenant curse. For Jerusalem, the holy city housing God's temple, to experience this represented the nadir of fallen humanity—those who should have been light to nations descended below animals in desperation.

The scattering 'into all winds' occurred in multiple stages: Babylon's exiles (597, 586 BC), refugees fleeing to Egypt (Jeremiah 43), and subsequent dispersions. The Jewish diaspora that resulted spread throughout the ancient world, creating communities from Babylon to Rome. This dispersion, though rooted in judgment, providentially positioned Jews to hear the gospel in their own languages at Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11), demonstrating God's redemptive purposes working even through judgment.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

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friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.

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.

Ezekiel 12:14 (Parallel theme): And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

Leviticus 26:29 (Parallel theme): And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

Psalms 44:11 (Parallel theme): Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat; and hast scattered us among the heathen.

Ezekiel 36:19 (Judgment): And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.

Ezekiel 5:2 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them.

Jeremiah 9:16 (Parallel theme): I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

Zechariah 7:14 (Parallel theme): But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.