

Ezekiel 5:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.

Analysis

So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it. The chapter concludes by summarizing all judgment forms: famine (economic collapse), evil beasts (wild animals invading depopulated areas, Leviticus 26:22), bereavement (loss of children), pestilence (disease), blood (violence/war), and sword (military conquest). This comprehensive catalog exhausts punishment categories—nothing is left out. The accumulation emphasizes total devastation from every possible source.

"Evil beasts" (chayyah raah, חַיָּה רָעָה) represents creation's curse reversal. God originally commissioned humans to subdue creation (Genesis 1:28); covenant violation reverses this, making wild animals dominant and humans prey. "They shall bereave thee" (veshikkelukh, וְשִׁכְלֶךָ) specifically means making childless—the ultimate generational tragedy, cutting off future hope. Combined with pestilence and bloodshed, these judgments assault human life from all angles.

The closing formula "I the LORD have spoken it" appears for the third time in this chapter (verses 13, 15, 17), emphasizing absolute certainty. God's word guarantees fulfillment; what He decrees must occur. For judgment, this is terrifying; for promises, it's comforting. The same God who faithfully executed judgment threats

will faithfully fulfill restoration promises (Ezekiel 36-37). This drives us to Christ, who bore every curse (Galatians 3:13) so believers inherit every blessing (Ephesians 1:3).

Historical Context

Each judgment element found historical fulfillment. Famine during the siege killed thousands. When the city fell and population scattered, wild animals indeed reclaimed previously inhabited areas (Isaiah 13:21-22 describes this pattern). Disease spread through weakened, starving populations. Blood and sword characterized Babylon's conquest—mass executions and violent slaughter (2 Kings 25:7, 18-21).

The bereavement was particularly tragic. Many children starved during siege; others were killed when the city fell; surviving children were often separated from parents during deportation. The trauma of losing children—whether to death, slavery, or exile—devastated the generation that experienced Jerusalem's fall. Lamentations repeatedly laments dead children and broken families (1:5, 16; 2:11-12, 19-20; 4:4, 10; 5:11-14).

The comprehensive nature of these judgments fulfilled covenant curses warned centuries earlier (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). God's faithfulness to His word—both blessings for obedience and curses for rebellion—was vindicated. The severity taught that God's threats aren't empty rhetoric but certain realities requiring serious response. This historical lesson remains relevant: God's character guarantees He will do what He promises, whether judgment or salvation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the comprehensive catalog of judgments (six different forms) reveal sin's pervasive destructive effects?
2. What does the inclusion of 'evil beasts' teach about creation's relationship to human covenant faithfulness?
3. In what ways does Christ bearing all these curses (Galatians 3:13) provide assurance of believers' safety from judgment?

Interlinear Text

וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי י	עַ לִּיכֶם	רָעָב	וְתִי ה	רָעָה	וְשִׁכַּל וְ
So will I send	H5921	upon you famine	beasts	and evil	and they shall bereave
H7971		H7458	H2416	H7451	H7921
וְדָר	וְדָם	יַעֲבֹר	בְּ וְ	וְחֶרֶב	
thee and pestilence	and blood	shall pass through	H0	the sword	
H1698	H1818	H5674		H2719	
אֲבִי יא	אֲנִי י	יְהוָה ה	דְּבַרְתִּי		
thee and I will bring	H5921	H589	upon thee I the LORD	have spoken	
H935			H3068	H1696	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 38:22 (Blood): And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Deuteronomy 32:24 (Parallel theme): They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

Ezekiel 14:15 (Parallel theme): If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts:

Ezekiel 14:21 (Word): 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?

Ezekiel 33:27 (Word): Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence.

Leviticus 26:22 (Parallel theme): I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.

2 Kings 17:25 (References Lord): And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.