

Isaiah 34:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls.

Analysis

Thorns and nettles overtaking palaces reverses the cultivated garden ideal, recalling Eden's curse (Genesis 3:18). Dragons (jackals) and owls represent desolation and demonic associations in Scripture. The habitation becoming a dwelling for unclean creatures illustrates how sin's consequences include spiritual defilement. This imagery foreshadows Babylon's fall in Revelation 18:2, where demons inhabit the ruined city.

Historical Context

Edomite palaces, once symbols of wealth and power, became archaeological ruins. The transformation from human habitation to wild animal dens was a common ancient Near Eastern curse formula.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does nature reclaiming human civilization illustrate the futility of building without God?
2. What does the inhabitation by unclean creatures teach about spiritual desolation?
3. How should this affect our investment in earthly kingdoms versus God's kingdom?

Interlinear Text

וְעַלְתָּה	אֶרְמַנְתָּה יְפָ	סִירִים	קִמְוָשׁ	וְעַלְתָּה
shall come up	in her palaces	And thorns	nettles	and brambles
H5927	H759	H5518	H7057	H2336
בְּמַבְצָךְ יְפָ	וּפִתְחָה	בְּנֵי הָ	תְּפִיעָה	יְמִינָה
in the fortresses	thereof and it shall be an habitation	H5116	H5116	of dragons
H4013				H8577
לְבָנָה: צָאָר	לְבָנָה: צָאָר			
and a court	for owls	H3284		
H2681	H1323			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 9:11 (Parallel theme): And I will make Jerusalem heaps, and a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.

Jeremiah 10:22 (Parallel theme): Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.

Psalms 44:19 (Parallel theme): Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

Malachi 1:3 (Parallel theme): And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

