

Isaiah 49:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh;
and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet
wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour
and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Analysis

And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob. This graphic judgment oracle employs shocking imagery of self-consumption to depict complete destruction of Israel's oppressors. The phrase "feed them...with their own flesh" and "drunken with their own blood" suggests civil war, internal collapse, or self-destructive madness—poetic justice where violence rebounds upon the violent.

The comparison to "sweet wine" ('asis, עֵסִיס, fresh grape juice) creates deliberate irony: what should be celebratory refreshment becomes the means of destruction. This fulfills the lex talionis principle at a national level—oppressors receive measure-for-measure judgment (Matthew 7:2). The purpose clause "all flesh shall know" indicates that God's judgment serves pedagogical and revelatory functions, demonstrating His character to all peoples.

The concluding titles—"Saviour" (moshia, מוֹשִׁיעַ), "Redeemer" (go'el, גֹּאֵל), "mighty One of Jacob" (abir Ya'aqov, אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב)—establish God's covenant faithfulness. From a Reformed perspective, divine judgment against evil vindicates God's justice and protects His people. The cross demonstrates both aspects: Christ endured judgment (the innocent suffered) so oppressors might repent and the oppressed be

delivered. God's redemptive power (go'el suggests kinsman-redeemer) accomplishes what human strength cannot.

Historical Context

Historical fulfillment came through Babylon's fall. After conquering Judah in 586 BCE, internal strife and external threats weakened Babylon. Nabonidus's religious conflicts, economic problems, and Persian military might led to collapse in 539 BCE. Daniel 5 records the empire's last night when Belshazzar's feast ended in conquest—Babylonian blood metaphorically "drunk" in civil collapse.

The "mighty One of Jacob" title appears in Genesis 49:24, connecting messianic promise to this deliverance. Throughout history, empires that persecuted God's people ultimately fell through internal decay: Rome, the Ottoman Empire, Nazi Germany, Soviet Union—all experienced self-destructive collapse. Yet the prophecy points beyond political vindication to final judgment when Christ returns. Revelation 19:15 depicts Christ treading "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God," fulfilling this imagery completely.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's judgment against evil comfort you when facing oppression or injustice?
2. What does it mean that God is your Redeemer (*go'el*), your kinsman who fights for you?
3. How should Christians balance celebrating God's justice while praying for enemies' repentance?

Interlinear Text

וְהִאֲכַלְתִּי י	אֶת	מוֹנֵי יָדָם	אֶת	בָּשָׂר	וְכָל יֵס
And I will feed	H853	them that oppress	H853	and all flesh	as with sweet wine
H398		H3238		H1320	H6071
בְּדָמָם		וְשָׂכָרוּ	וְיָדְעוּ	כָּל	בָּשָׂר
with their own blood		and they shall be drunken	shall know	H3605	and all flesh
H1818		H7937	H3045		H1320
אֲנִי י	יְהוָה	מְוֹשִׁיעַ	וְגֹאֲלִי	אֱלֹהֵי יִרְמְיָהוּ	יֵשַׁקְבֵּן
H589	that I the LORD	am thy Saviour	and thy Redeemer	the mighty One	of Jacob
	H3068	H3467	H1350	H46	H3290

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 9:20 (Parallel theme): And he shall snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied: they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

Revelation 16:6 (Blood): For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

Isaiah 60:16 (Salvation): Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

Isaiah 9:4 (Parallel theme): For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Ezekiel 39:7 (References Lord): So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

Isaiah 43:3 (Salvation): For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

Psalms 9:16 (References Lord): The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

Revelation 14:20 (Blood): And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Revelation 17:6 (Blood): And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Isaiah 45:6 (References Lord): That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

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