

Isaiah 9:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Analysis

The judgment comes from all directions: 'Syrians before' (east) and 'Philistines behind' (west), indicating comprehensive encirclement. 'They shall devour Israel with open mouth' depicts ravenous enemies consuming the nation. The phrase 'For all this' introduces a refrain (repeated in verses 13, 17, 21, 10:4) emphasizing persistent rebellion. 'His anger is not turned away' indicates God's wrath continues unabated. 'His hand is stretched out still' portrays ongoing, active judgment. Despite escalating discipline, the people remain impenitent, necessitating further judgment.

Historical Context

Fulfilled as Israel faced simultaneous threats from multiple enemies. Syria attacked from the northeast, Philistines raided from the southwest, and ultimately Assyria invaded from the north. Historical records confirm Israel suffered these multi-front attacks during its final decades (750-722 BC). The repeated refrain emphasizes God's patience in sending progressive judgments, hoping for repentance, yet ultimately bringing complete destruction when impenitence persisted.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's 'stretched out hand' represent both His judgment and His appeal for repentance?
2. What does persistent impenitence despite escalating judgment reveal about the human heart?
3. How can we recognize when God is disciplining us and respond appropriately before judgment intensifies?

Interlinear Text

אֲרָם	מִלְּפָנָיו	וּפְלִשְׁתִּים	מֵאַחֲרָיו	וַיֹּאכְלוּ	אֹתָם
The Syrians	before	and the Philistines	behind	and they shall devour	
H758	H6924	H6430	H268	H398	H853
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּכָל	פִּה	בְּכָל	זֹאת	לֹא
Israel		with open mouth			is not turned away
H3478	H3605	H6310	H3605	H2063	H3808
אֵפֶי	וְעוֹד	יָדוֹ	נִטְוֶה:		
For all this his anger		but his hand	is stretched out still		
H639	H5750	H3027	H5186		

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 5:25 (Parallel theme): Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

2 Chronicles 28:18 (Parallel theme): The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shochu with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.

Psalms 79:7 (Parallel theme): For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.

2 Kings 16:6 (Parallel theme): At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.

Isaiah 9:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is an hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Isaiah 9:21 (Parallel theme): Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Isaiah 10:4 (Parallel theme): Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

Jeremiah 10:25 (Parallel theme): Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.