

Jeremiah 12:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

Analysis

This verse describes devastation: 'Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.' 'Pastors' (ro'im, shepherds) here means foreign rulers/invaders. 'Vineyard' (kerem) and 'portion' (chelqah) are images for Israel and the promised land. 'Trodden under foot' (bus) indicates trampling, contemptuous destruction. 'Pleasant portion' (chelqath chemdah) becomes 'desolate wilderness' (midbar shemamah). God watches His carefully cultivated vineyard destroyed by brutal invaders—yet He summoned them (v. 9). The grief is genuine though the judgment is just.

Historical Context

Vineyard imagery for Israel appears prominently in Isaiah 5:1-7 and Psalm 80:8-16. Babylon's armies ('many shepherds') systematically devastated Judah's agricultural infrastructure during their campaigns (605-586 BC). Archaeological evidence shows destruction of farms, orchards, and vineyards throughout the land. The 'wilderness' description fits depopulated, abandoned territory during the exile.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does viewing invading armies as 'pastors/shepherds' highlight the irony of destructive leadership?
2. What emotions does God express in watching His 'pleasant vineyard' become wilderness?

Interlinear Text

רֹעִים	רַבִּים	שָׁחַת ו	כִּרְמִי	בָּסָס ו	אֶת	
pastors	Many	have destroyed	my vineyard	they have trodden	H853	
H7462	H7227	H7843	H3754	H947		
חֵלֶק ת	נָתַן ו	אֶת	חֵלֶק ת	חֲמֻדַּתִּי	לְמִדְבָּר	שְׁמָמָה:
my portion	they have made	H853	my portion	my pleasant	wilderness	a desolate
H2513	H5414		H2513	H2532	H4057	H8077

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 63:18 (Parallel theme): The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

Jeremiah 23:1 (Parallel theme): Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 6:3 (Parallel theme): The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

Jeremiah 3:19 (Parallel theme): But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.

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