

Jeremiah 12:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour.

Analysis

This verse adds another image: 'Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her.' The Hebrew *ayit tzavu'a* (עַיִט צָבָע) means 'hyena bird' or 'speckled bird of prey'—Israel's distinctiveness makes her target for other predators. 'Come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour.' God summons wild beasts (*chayath hasadeh*) to consume His people. The predator-prey imagery continues: Israel as conspicuous prey surrounded by enemies, God calling enemies to attack. This isn't divine cruelty but covenant curse fulfillment (Deuteronomy 28:26).

Historical Context

The 'speckled bird' may reference Israel's distinctive appearance attracting hostile attention from surrounding nations. Or it may indicate Israel's mixed, syncretistic religion making them neither acceptable to God nor fully pagan. Either way, other 'birds' (nations) attack, and 'beasts' (enemies) devour. The Babylonian Empire gathered vassal forces from multiple nations for the Judean campaign.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What makes Israel a 'speckled bird' attracting attack from surrounding nations?
2. How does God summoning enemies to devour His people reflect covenant curse fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

בָּעֵד	צָבֵעַ	נִצְלָתִי	לִ	בָּבִיבָּעֵד	צָבֵעַ	נִצְלָתִי	לִ	בָּבִיבָּעֵד
bird	is unto me as a speckled	Mine heritage		bird	round about			
H5861	H6641	H5159	H0	H5861	H5439			
לְכָאָסְפֵּנְ	כָּל	חַיִּת	בָּשָׂדֶה	הַתְּזִבְּנָה	לְאַכְלָהָ			
H5921	H1980	H3605	H2416	H7704	H857			
ye assemble	all the beasts	of the field	come	to devour				
H622								

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 56:9 (Parallel theme): All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.

Jeremiah 7:33 (Parallel theme): And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away.

2 Kings 24:2 (Parallel theme): And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.