

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* (עֵיט צָבוּעַ) 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

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|---------------|-------|------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| הֶעָיִט | צֶבֶעַ | נַחֲלָתִי | לִי | הֶעָיִט | סָבִיב | | |
| bird | is unto me as a speckled | Mine heritage | H0 | bird | round about | | |
| H5861 | H6641 | H5159 | | H5861 | H5439 | | |
| יְהוָה | לָכֵן | אָסַפּוּ | כָּל | חַיֵּי הַשָּׂדֵה | יָבוֹאוּ | לֶאֱכֹלָהּ: | |
| H5921 | H1980 | ye assemble | H3605 | all the beasts | of the field | come | to devour |
| | H622 | | H2416 | H7704 | H857 | H402 | |

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 carcasses 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.