

Jeremiah 30:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.

Analysis

Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured—divine reversal begins with this 'therefore' (לִכְּ, 'lakhen'). The Hebrew uses poetic justice: devourers devoured (לֹאֲכָלִים/לֹאֲכָלִים, 'akhal'/'akhal'), spoilers spoiled (שֹׁשְׁבִים/שֹׁשְׁבִים, 'shasah'/'shasah'). This lex talionis (law of retaliation) demonstrates God's justice for His covenant people.

While Israel suffered for her sin, Babylon would suffer for her cruelty. History confirms this: Babylon fell to Persia (539 BC), then all Israel's oppressors throughout history faced judgment. Eschatologically, this points to final judgment when all who persecuted God's people face divine retribution (Rev 18-19).

Historical Context

Within 50 years of destroying Jerusalem, Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian. Each empire that oppressed Israel—Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome—eventually crumbled, while Israel survived against all historical odds.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to judge Israel's oppressors bring comfort during persecution?
2. What does this verse teach about God's commitment to covenant justice?
3. How should Christians balance trust in God's justice with the call to love enemies?

Interlinear Text

לְכֹל H3651	כָּל H3605	יֹאכֵל לוֹ H398	יֹאכֵל לוֹ H398	וְכָל H3605
Therefore all		they that devour	Therefore all	they that devour
and all thine adversaries		into captivity		and they that spoil
H6862		H3605	H1980	H7601
לְמַשָּׁסָה H4933	וְכָל H3605	בְּיָדוֹ יְיָ H962	אֶת H5414	לְבָזִי H957
thee shall be a spoil		and all that prey	upon thee will I give	for a prey

Additional Cross-References

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.

Isaiah 33:1 (Parallel theme): Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

Exodus 23:22 (Parallel theme): But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.

Zechariah 2:8 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.

Revelation 13:10 (Parallel theme): He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Isaiah 14:2 (Parallel theme): And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

Psalms 129:5 (Parallel theme): Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

Zechariah 12:2 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.

Joel 3:8 (Parallel theme): And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

Isaiah 54:17 (Parallel theme): No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.