

Jeremiah 50:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.

Analysis

All that found them have devoured them—Judah's enemies (matsahem, מִצְאָהֶם, those who found them, encountered them) became their predators. The verb 'akal (אָכַל, devoured, consumed) depicts savage, animalistic destruction. Babylon, Edom, Ammon, and others plundered defenseless Judah during exile (Psalm 137:7, Obadiah 11-14).

And their adversaries said, We offend not—the Hebrew lo ne'esham (לוֹא תִּאֱשֹׁם, we are not guilty, we bear no blame) reveals the enemies' theological rationalization. They justified cruelty by claiming divine authorization. **Because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice**—technically true (Judah did sin), but their conclusion was wrong. They assumed God's discipline meant they could attack with impunity, ignoring that God judges those who excessively punish His people (Zechariah 1:15: 'I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction').

Even the LORD, the hope of their fathers—this phrase emphasizes the covenant relationship. The Hebrew miqveh (מִקְבֵּה, hope, expectation) recalls patriarchal faith (Genesis 12:1-3, 26:24, 28:13-15). God remained Israel's hope despite their sin, and would vindicate them by judging their oppressors.

Historical Context

During Judah's exile (586-538 BC), surrounding nations exploited their weakness. Edom seized southern territory (creating lasting bitterness, Obadiah). Ammon and Moab raided settlements. Babylon destroyed cities and enslaved populations. These nations rationalized their cruelty as divine justice—since Judah sinned, God must approve their actions. This parallels how medieval persecutors justified anti-Semitic pogroms or Christian persecution by claiming Jews were 'Christ-killers' deserving punishment. But God's perspective differs: He disciplines His children while punishing those who exceed His mandate or act from malice rather than justice. Isaiah 10:5-15 illustrates this with Assyria—God used them to judge Israel, then judged Assyria for their arrogance and cruelty. The principle stands: God's discipline of His people doesn't authorize others to oppress them.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How might we wrongly justify harsh treatment of others by claiming they 'deserve it' for their sin?
2. What is the difference between God's righteous discipline and human cruelty that exceeds God's mandate?
3. How does recognizing God as 'the hope of their fathers' despite Israel's sin encourage us when we fail?

Interlinear Text

כל	מוֹצָאֵיכֶם	אָכַל וּמִצְרַיִם	אָמֵר 1
H3605	All that found	them have devoured	them and their adversaries
	H4672	H398	said
			H559
אָשָׁר פָּתַח גָּאָשׁ מִלְּאָה	1	מְטָא	יהָה:
אָשָׁר פָּתַח גָּאָשׁ מִלְּאָה		not because they have sinned	against the LORD
H3808	We offend	H8478	H2398
	H816		H3068
גְּיֻה אֶלְקָן הַמִּקְדָּשׁ מִבְּתָרֵיכֶם	יהָה:	אָבּוֹתֵיכֶם	the habitation
the hope		of their fathers	of justice
H5116	H6664	H4723	H1
			H3068

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 2:3 (References Lord): Israel was holiness unto the LORD, and the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 14:8 (Hope): O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?

Jeremiah 31:23 (Righteousness): Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness.

Zechariah 11:5 (References Lord): Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not.

Jeremiah 50:17 (Parallel theme): Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

