

Psalm 102:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

Analysis

The pelican (qa'ath) and owl (kos) were ceremonially unclean birds (Lev 11:17-18) inhabiting desolate places, symbolizing the psalmist's isolation and uncleanness. The wilderness (midbar) location emphasizes complete separation from community and normal life. This imagery anticipates Christ's experience in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11) and His bearing of our uncleanness on the cross. For believers, such seasons of isolation can be preparatory, as God meets His people in the wilderness (Hosea 2:14).

Historical Context

Pelicans and owls inhabit ruins and desolate areas. Ancient Israelites would have understood these birds as symbols of desolation and abandonment, often associated with divine judgment (Isa 34:11, Zeph 2:14).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How has God used seasons of isolation in your life to deepen your dependence on Him?
2. What does Christ's wilderness experience teach about spiritual warfare during times of solitude?

Interlinear Text

I am like	a pelican	of the wilderness	לְקַנְאָתָּה מִצְבֵּה רָאשָׁה	חַבְבָּותָה	בְּכָל-יְמִינֵי	בְּכָל-יְמִינֵי
H1819	H6893	H4057	H1961	I am like an owl	בְּכָל-יְמִינֵי	בְּכָל-יְמִינֵי

Additional Cross-References

Zephaniah 2:14 (Parallel theme): And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar work.

Revelation 18:2 (Parallel theme): And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

Isaiah 38:14 (Parallel theme): Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me.