

Zechariah 7:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

Analysis

But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not—(וַיַּעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל-הַגּוֹן) the verb pizar depicts violent dispersion, fulfilling covenant curses in Deuteronomy 28:64. The whirlwind (sa'ar) suggests sudden, devastating force—the Babylonian invasion came swiftly after prolonged warnings. Exile wasn't to familiar cultures but to **nations whom they knew not**, maximizing alienation and suffering.

Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned—Judah became uninhabited wasteland during the seventy-year exile. **For they laid the pleasant land desolate**—(וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶרֶץ-חֶמְדָה לְשָׁפֹה) eretz chemdah means 'desirable land,' the Promised Land itself. Ironically, Israel's sin made God's gift a curse. This demonstrates that covenant blessings require covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

Fulfilled in 586 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and deported the population to Babylon. Archaeological evidence confirms extensive depopulation of Judah during the exilic period (586-538 BC). The land lay desolate until Persian king Cyrus allowed Jewish return in 538 BC.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How might privilege and blessing become curses when we're unfaithful stewards of God's gifts?
2. What does Israel's experience teach about the difference between God's patience and God's permission for consequences?
3. In what ways can spiritual complacency today lead to the desolation of what was once fruitful in our lives?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר בְּגָוִים כָּל עַל אֶסְעָר מ

But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations

H5590

H5921

H3605

בְּגָוִים

אֲשֶׁר

H834

H1471

אֲשֶׁר בְּגָוִים כָּל עַל אֶסְעָר מ

H3808 whom they knew

H3045

land

H776

desolate

H8047

after

H310

אֲשֶׁר בְּגָוִים כָּל עַל אֶסְעָר מ

them that no man passed through nor returned for they laid the pleasant

H5674

H7725

H7760

H776

H2532

לְשִׁמְמָה:

was desolate

H8074

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 28:33 (Parallel theme): The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway:

Jeremiah 23:19 (Parallel theme): Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked.

Deuteronomy 28:64 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

Deuteronomy 4:27 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

Zechariah 2:6 (Parallel theme): Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.

Zephaniah 3:6 (Parallel theme): I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.