

## ~HEN 2 (48)

[Greek, *or'nis*]

- In the **Hebrew Scriptures** there is no apparent reference to the domestic chicken, *Gallus domesticus*, but in the **Christian Greek Scriptures** Jesus Christ referred to the **hen** gathering her chicks under her protective wings in his simile concerning his desire to gather unresponsive Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her, how often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a **hen** gathers her chicks together under her wings! But you people did not want it. (**Matthew 23:37**)
- Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her, how often I wanted to gather your children together in the manner that a **hen** gathers her brood of chicks under her wings, but you people did not want it! (**Luke 13:34**)
- The **Greek** word there used *or'nis* is generic and **hence** may refer to any bird, wild or domesticated. But in **Attic Greek** it usually meant a **hen**, since this was the most common and useful of the domestic fowl. Jesus reference to a son asking his father for an egg
- Indeed, which father is there among you who, if his son asks for a fish, will perhaps hand him a serpent instead of a fish? (**Luke 11:11**)
- Or if he also asks for an egg, will hand him a scorpion? (**Luke 11:12**)
- Indicates that the domestic **hen** was common in Palestine at that time. From the **Greek** *or'nis* **genitive**, *or'ni-thos*, comes the **English** word ornithology, the branch of zoology that deals with birds.

## See Also COCK

- Certain rabbinic laws forbade the eating of eggs laid on the Sabbath day, since it was held that this constituted work on the part of

the **hen**, some, however, allowed the eating of the eggs if the **hen** was one kept for eating and not for laying. [Babylonian Talmud, Bezah 2a, b]

- The Bible, however, contains no such rules.