

Daniel 5:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Analysis

Daniel interprets PERES (singular of UPHARSIN): 'Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.' The wordplay on PERES is brilliant—the root means both 'divided' and contains consonants of 'Persia' (Paras). God pronounces judgment while naming the executors. The passive voice 'is given' indicates divine agency—God actively transfers the kingdom. The specific identification of 'Medes and Persians' shows this isn't merely prediction of defeat but revelation of God's sovereign plan. He doesn't merely foresee Babylon's fall; He ordains it and assigns the successor empire.

Historical Context

The Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC, fulfilling this prophecy. Historical sources (Cyrus Cylinder, Nabonidus Chronicle, Greek historians) document the conquest. The Medes and Persians had formed alliance under Cyrus, combining to defeat Babylon. God's specification of the conquering power demonstrates prophetic precision—this wasn't vague prediction but specific revelation. Archaeological evidence confirms the Persian policy of religious tolerance, allowing Jewish exiles to return and rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 1), fulfilling other prophecies.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's specification of the successor empire demonstrate that He not only knows but controls the rise and fall of kingdoms?
2. What does the immediate fulfillment teach about taking God's prophetic word seriously rather than dismissing it as distant or irrelevant?

Interlinear Text

פְּרִיסָת	פְּרִיסָת	מַלְכוּתָךְ	וַיְהִיבָת	לְמַדֵּי	וּפָרְסִים:
PERES	PERES	Thy kingdom	and given	to the Medes	and Persians
H6537	H6537	H4437	H3052	H4076	H6540

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it.

Daniel 6:28 (Kingdom): So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Isaiah 21:2 (Parallel theme): A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

Daniel 5:31 (Kingdom): And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

Daniel 9:1 (Kingdom): In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

