

Ezekiel 21:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to appoint battering rams against the gates, to cast a mount, and to build a fort.

Analysis

At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem (בִּימִינֵו כִּיה קְסֵם יְרוּשָׁלָם) —the right hand position indicates divine favor in pagan divination. Nebuchadnezzar, standing at the crossroads deciding whether to attack Ammon or Jerusalem, casts lots using קְסֵם (qesem, divination). Ironically, God directs the pagan king's occult practices to execute divine judgment.

To appoint captains (לְשׁוּם כָּרִים), **to open the mouth in the slaughter** (לְפַתַּח-פֶּה בְּרַצְחָה) —military language for siege preparation. **Battering rams** (כָּרִים, karim) were massive wooden beams capped with bronze ram heads, used to breach city walls. God's sovereignty extends even to pagan divination—He can direct arrows, idols, and livers (21:21) to accomplish His purposes.

Historical Context

In 588 BC, Nebuchadnezzar reached the fork where roads led to Jerusalem or Rabbah (Ammon's capital). Ancient Near Eastern kings used belomancy (arrow divination), teraphim (household idols), and hepatoscopy (liver reading) to make military decisions. God manipulated these practices to direct Babylon against covenant-breaking Jerusalem.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty over pagan divination demonstrate His control over all human systems and powers?
2. What modern equivalents of divination do people consult instead of seeking God's will?

Interlinear Text

בִּימִין זֶה	בְּקַרְבָּם	יְרוּשָׁלָם	לְשׁוֹם
At his right hand	was the divination	for Jerusalem	to appoint
H3225	H1961	H7081	H3389
H7760			
כָּרִים	לִפְתָּח	פֶּה	בְּקַרְבָּם
battering rams	to open	the mouth	in the slaughter
H3733	H6605	H6310	H7524
H6963			
בְּתִרְוּשׁ הַ	לְשׁוֹם	כָּרִים	עַל
with shouting	to appoint	battering rams	שַׁעַר יְמִין
H8643	H7760	H3733	H5921
H8210			
סַלֵּל הַ	לִבְנָה וְתַּ	זִיקָה	שְׁפָרָן
a mount	and to build	a fort	against the gates
H5550	H1129	H1785	H8179
H8210			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 4:2 (Parallel theme): And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

Ezekiel 26:9 (Parallel theme): And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

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