

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 (בִּימִינוֹ הָיָה קֶסֶם יְרוּשָׁלַם, biymino hayah qesem Yerushalaim)—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 קֶסֶם (qesem, divination). Ironically, God directs the pagan king's occult practices to execute divine judgment.

To appoint captains (לָשׂוּם קָרִים, lasum karim), **to open the mouth in the slaughter** (לִפְתֹּחַ-פֶּה בְּרֵצָח, lifto'akh-peh b'retzakh)—military language for siege preparation. **Battering rams** (קָרִים, 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

Psalms 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

בְּיָמִינוּ	הִנֵּה הוּא	הַקֶּסֶם	יְרוּשָׁלַם	לֵשׁ וָם	
At his right hand	H1961	was the divination	for Jerusalem	to appoint	
H3225		H7081	H3389	H7760	
כָּרִים	לִפְתּוֹ	פֶּה	בְּרֹצֶחַ	לְהָרִים	קוֹל
battering rams	to open	the mouth	in the slaughter	to lift up	the voice
H3733	H6605	H6310	H7524	H7311	H6963
בְּתֹרוֹעַ	לֵשׁ וָם	כָּרִים	עַל	שְׁעַר יָם	לְשַׁפֵּךְ
with shouting	to appoint	battering rams	H5921	against the gates	to cast
H8643	H7760	H3733		H8179	H8210
הַ	לְבָנוֹת	דִּיקָה			
a mount	and to build	a fort			
H5550	H1129	H1785			

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.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org