

Ezekiel 28:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.

Analysis

Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. The *hineni* (הִנֵּנִי, "behold") formula arrests attention: God Himself acts. **Strangers** (zarim, זָרִים) are foreign invaders—specifically Babylon, though unnamed here. *Aritsim* (ערִיצִים, "the terrible") means ruthless, violent, tyrannical—Babylon's armies were infamous for brutality.

They shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom—the poetic justice is exquisite. Tyre's prince claimed god-like wisdom (v. 3: 'thou art wiser than Daniel'); now swords violate that vaunted wisdom's achievements. *Yophi chokhmah* (יָפִי חָכָמָה, "beauty of wisdom") refers to Tyre's commercial empire, architectural splendor, and cultural achievements—all products of human ingenuity. **Defile thy brightness** (challelu yiphatekha, חַלְלוּ יִפְתַּחֲךָ) uses the verb for profaning sacred things—what Tyre held sacred (its glory and splendor) will be desecrated. Pride in human achievement becomes the very target of divine judgment. The passage teaches that autonomous human wisdom, divorced from God's revelation, ultimately produces monuments that God's judgment demolishes.

Historical Context

Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon besieged Tyre for thirteen years (585-572 BC), one of antiquity's longest sieges. While the island fortress held out and negotiated

terms rather than suffering complete destruction, Tyre's mainland suburbs were destroyed, its economic supremacy broken, and its political independence ended. The prophecy was fulfilled progressively: Babylon damaged Tyre; later Alexander the Great (332 BC) built a causeway to the island and destroyed it completely, fulfilling Ezekiel 26:12 ('lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water'). Tyre's wisdom—its maritime expertise, commercial networks, and defensive strategies—couldn't prevent judgment. The city's 'brightness' (yiphah) referred to its splendor, fame, and glory radiating throughout the Mediterranean. Archaeological remains confirm Tyre's magnificence: purple dye factories, luxury goods, and evidence of extensive trade. Yet all this human achievement couldn't save a city whose ruler claimed divine status (v. 2: 'I am a God').

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's judgment against 'the beauty of wisdom' challenge contemporary faith in human achievement, technology, and progress?
2. In what areas of your life have you trusted your own wisdom and competence rather than submitting to God's sovereignty?

Interlinear Text

לְכָא
לְכָא |

H3651

H2005

מִבְּאָה
Behold therefore I will bring

H935

עַל יְבָשָׂה
strangers

H5921

H2114

עַל יְבָשָׂה
upon thee the terrible

עַל כָּלִים
of the nations

H1471

וְהַבְּרִיאָה
and they shall draw

H7324

עַל מִרְבּוֹתָם
their swords

H5921

H6184

H2719

עַל יְבָשָׂה
against the beauty

עַל כְּנָמָת בָּהָר
of thy wisdom

H2451

וְהַלְלָה
and they shall defile

H2490

עַל פְּנַתְּחָה
thy brightness

H3314

H3308

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 31:12 (Parallel theme): And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

Ezekiel 32:12 (Word): By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall, the terrible of the nations, all of them: and they shall spoil the pomp of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be destroyed.

Ezekiel 30:11 (Word): He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain.