

Ezekiel 31:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

Analysis

I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall—When Assyria fell, גוֹיִם (gôyim, 'nations') הִרְעִשְׁתִּי (hir'ashtî, 'I made shake/quake'). The verb רָעַשׁ (rā'ash, 'to quake') describes earthquake-like trembling—fear and instability.

When I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit—בְּהוֹרִדִי אֹתוֹ (bēhōrîdî 'ōtô shē'ôlāh, 'when I brought him down to Sheol'). God actively casts down proud empires. **And all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth**—Previously fallen great nations ('trees of Eden,' 'choice of Lebanon') are 'comforted' (נִחְמָו, niḥmû) by Assyria joining them in Sheol. Misery loves company; fallen empires find grim comfort in others' descent. This dark humor underscores that all human glory ends identically: death, Sheol, insignificance.

Historical Context

Assyria's fall (612 BC) did destabilize the ancient Near East. Babylon and Egypt rushed to fill the power vacuum, leading to conflicts including the battles of Carchemish (605 BC) and Jerusalem's destruction (586 BC). Nations 'shook' as the

geopolitical order collapsed. Ezekiel, writing in the 580s BC, draws on recent memory to warn Egypt: you will join Assyria in Sheol, shocking nations as she did.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does nations 'shaking' at empires' falls teach about geopolitical interconnection?
2. How is fallen empires being 'comforted' by others' falls darkly ironic?
3. What does all great nations ending in Sheol teach about ultimate values?

Interlinear Text

מֶקֶץ וּלְ	מִפֹּלְתּוֹ	הָרַעַ שְׁתִּי	גּוֹ'ם	י וְרָדִי	
at the sound	of his fall	to shake	I made the nations	when I cast him down	
H6963	H4658	H7493	H1471	H3381	
אֶת וְ	שָׂא וּלְהָ	אֶת	י וְרָדִי	ב וְרָ	וְנִחַם וְ
H853	to hell	H854	when I cast him down	into the pit	shall be comforted
	H7585		H3381	H953	H5162
בְּאֶרֶץ	תַּחְתִּית	כָּל	עֲצֵי	עֵדֶן	מִבְּחַר ר
of the earth	in the nether parts	H3605	and all the trees	of Eden	the choice
H776	H8482		H6086	H5731	H4005
וְטוֹב	לְבָנוֹן וְ	כָּל	שֶׁתִּי	מַיִם:	
and best	of Lebanon	H3605	all that drink	water	
H2896	H3844		H8354	H4325	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 14:15 (Parallel theme): Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Isaiah 14:8 (Parallel theme): Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

Ezekiel 26:15 (Creation): Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

Ezekiel 27:28 (Parallel theme): The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

Ezekiel 31:9 (Creation): I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

Habakkuk 2:17 (Creation): For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Haggai 2:7 (Parallel theme): And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.