

Isaiah 13:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

Analysis

Chapter 13 begins oracles against nations, starting with Babylon. 'The burden of Babylon' introduces a prophetic message of judgment. Isaiah receives this vision 'which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see' during Babylon's rise, predicting its fall—remarkable since Babylon hadn't yet conquered Judah. This demonstrates prophetic insight into future events and God's sovereignty over all nations, not just Israel. Babylon, despite becoming God's judgment instrument against Judah, would itself face divine judgment for pride and cruelty.

Historical Context

Written c. 700 BC when Assyria, not Babylon, dominated. Yet Isaiah foresaw Babylon's rise and fall. Babylon conquered Jerusalem (586 BC), then fell to Persia (539 BC)—fulfilling this prophecy. The precision demonstrates divine inspiration—God revealed Babylon's judgment before its empire even existed. This burden against Babylon prefigures judgment on all God-opposing empires throughout history, culminating in Revelation's 'Babylon the Great.'

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's judgment on Babylon demonstrate His sovereignty over all nations?
2. What does advance prophecy of Babylon's fall teach about God's comprehensive control of history?
3. How do judgments on historical Babylon prefigure judgment on all God-opposing powers?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁאָלָה	בְּבָבִלְוָן	רָאָשׁוֹן	בְּנֵי הָעָם	יִשְׁאָלָה	בְּנֵי	אַמֹּזִים
The burden	of Babylon	H834	did see	which Isaiah	the son	of Amoz
H4853	H894		H2372	H3470	H1121	H531

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 1:1 (Parallel theme): The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Daniel 5:6 (Parallel theme): Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

Daniel 5:28 (Parallel theme): PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Isaiah 14:28 (Parallel theme): In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.

Isaiah 13:19 (References Babylon): And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Isaiah 15:1 (Parallel theme): The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence;

