

Isaiah 13:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.

Analysis

God has 'sanctified' (set apart) and 'called' His mighty ones—the Medo-Persian army—for His anger. They are His warriors who rejoice in His highness, though unwittingly. This reveals that God sanctifies even pagan armies for specific purposes. Being 'sanctified' here means set apart for divine use, not moral purification. God can consecrate any instrument for His purposes. This demonstrates comprehensive sovereignty—even God's 'mighty ones' in judgment are His appointed agents.

Historical Context

Medes and Persians, though pagan, were God's 'sanctified' instruments against Babylon. Isaiah 45:1-4 explicitly names Cyrus as God's 'anointed' who doesn't know Him yet fulfills His purposes. These 'mighty ones' executed divine judgment while pursuing their own imperial ambitions. Throughout history, God sets apart nations and leaders for specific roles in His redemptive plan, whether they acknowledge Him or not.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How can God 'sanctify' unbelieving people or nations for His purposes?
2. What does this teach about the difference between being used by God and being saved by God?
3. How should we respond when God uses unlikely or even hostile instruments for His plans?

Interlinear Text

אֲנִי י'	צִוִּיתִי	לְמִקְדָּשׁ י'	גַּם	קָרָאתִי
H589	I have commanded	my sanctified ones	H1571	I have also called
	H6680	H6942		H7121
גְּבוּרָי	לְאַפִּי י'	עֲלֵיזִי י'		גִּאֲוָתִי:
my mighty ones	for mine anger	even them that rejoice		in my highness
H1368	H639	H5947		H1346

Additional Cross-References

Joel 3:11 (Parallel theme): Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.