

Isaiah 14:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.

Analysis

'Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.' Philistia (Palestina) is warned not to rejoice that their oppressor's 'rod is broken.' The 'rod' may refer to Ahaz, an Assyrian king, or Assyrian power generally. But the warning is: don't celebrate prematurely because something worse is coming. 'Out of the serpent's root' suggests from the same source (Judah or Assyria), worse threat emerges. 'Cockatrice' (adder, viper) and 'fiery flying serpent' use escalating serpent imagery: bad to worse to worst. Don't rejoice when one enemy falls if a greater enemy rises.

Historical Context

Philistia had ongoing conflicts with Judah and Assyria. They may have expected Ahaz's death to weaken Judah, creating opportunity. Or if 'the rod' refers to an Assyrian king who died, they may have expected Assyrian decline. But Isaiah warns: Hezekiah (or a new Assyrian king, or ultimately Babylon) will be worse. Historically, Hezekiah did strike Philistia (2 Kings 18:8), and Assyria under Sennacherib remained powerful. The serpent imagery suggests deadly danger—Philistia's premature rejoicing is foolish. The principle applies broadly: don't celebrate defeat of one problem if worse looms.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. When have you celebrated the end of one difficulty only to face a greater one —and what did this teach about God's sovereignty?
2. How does the serpent imagery (bad to worse) warn against short-sighted political or personal calculations?

Interlinear Text

תִּשְׂמְחֵ י אֵל H408	Rejoice H8055	כָּל שֵׁט not thou whole H6429	כֹּל י רָ H3605	כִּי י H3588	נִשְׁבַּר thee is broken H7665
שֶׁ בָט because the rod H7626	מִיָּד הָ of him that smote H5221	כִּי H3588	מִשֹּׁר הָ root H8328	נִחַשׁ for out of the serpent's H5175	
יֵצֵא shall come forth H3318	אֶפְסָה a cockatrice H6848	וּפְרֵיו and his fruit H6529	שֶׁרָפָה serpent H8314	מְעוֹפֵף: flying H5774	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 11:8 (Parallel theme): And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

Isaiah 30:6 (Parallel theme): The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses,

and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.

2 Chronicles 26:6 (Parallel theme): And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.

Proverbs 24:17 (Parallel theme): Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

Ezekiel 35:15 (Parallel theme): As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 26:2 (Parallel theme): Son of man, because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste:

Joshua 13:3 (Parallel theme): From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites:

Hosea 9:1 (Parallel theme): Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as other people: for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward upon every cornfloor.

2 Kings 18:8 (Parallel theme): He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

2 Chronicles 28:18 (Parallel theme): The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shochu with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.