

Isaiah 14:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.

Analysis

'Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.' The command to howl and cry signals coming disaster. 'Dissolved' (mug) means melted, fainting, losing courage—total demoralization. The threat comes 'from the north'—typical invasion route and standard prophetic language for enemy approach. 'Smoke' may indicate fires from invading army or metaphorically represent destruction. The phrase 'none shall be alone in his appointed times' likely means the invader's ranks remain intact—no stragglers, no gaps—suggesting disciplined, overwhelming force. Philistia faces unified, powerful invasion, with no hope of resistance or escape.

Historical Context

Invasions from the north (Mesopotamian empires) repeatedly devastated the Levant. Philistia, located on the coastal plain, was vulnerable to such invasions. Assyrian and later Babylonian campaigns swept through, destroying cities. The 'smoke' is literal—ancient warfare involved burning cities and fields. The unified, disciplined enemy suggests Assyrian or Babylonian military efficiency. Philistia's city-states did indeed fall to successive empires, eventually losing distinct identity. The warning was validated historically: rejoicing at one enemy's fall is foolish if greater enemies approach.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the image of 'smoke from the north' serve as warning that judgment, once decreed, approaches inexorably?
2. What does Philistia's dissolution despite their rejoicing (v.29) teach about the danger of premature celebration?

Interlinear Text

הִיל יְלִי	שַׁ עַר	זַעֲקִי	עִיר	נִמּוּג	פָּלֶשֶׁת	כָּלָה
Howl	O gate	cry	O city	art dissolved	thou whole Palestina	
H3213	H8179	H2199	H5892	H4127	H6429	H3605
כִּי	מִצָּפוֹן	עָשָׂן	בָּא	וְאֵין	בְּיָדָהּ	
H3588	from the north	a smoke	for there shall come	H369	and none shall be alone	
	H6828	H6227	H935		H909	
בְּמוֹעָדָיו:						
in his appointed times						
H4151						

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 20:1 (Parallel theme): In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

Jeremiah 1:14 (Parallel theme): Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

Isaiah 14:29 (Parallel theme): 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.

Isaiah 13:6 (Parallel theme): Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

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