

Isaiah 19:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.

Analysis

'The LORD hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.' God actively sends confusion—a 'perverse spirit' (ruach ivim—spirit of distortions/perversity). This isn't mere human error but divine judgment causing intellectual and moral confusion. The simile of a drunk staggering in vomit vividly depicts complete disorientation and degradation. Egypt stumbles in 'every work'—comprehensive failure across all domains. This demonstrates a terrifying judgment: God can judicially harden hearts and confuse minds (Romans 1:24, 26, 28—'God gave them over'). When nations persistently reject truth, God may confirm them in delusion as judgment. Reformed theology recognizes God's sovereignty extends to judicial hardening—not causing initial sin, but giving rebels over to sin's consequences, including confused thinking.

Historical Context

Egyptian decision-making during this period was indeed as if drunk—inconsistent alliances, contradictory policies, failed military campaigns, civil wars. Leaders couldn't effectively analyze situations or execute coherent strategies. This wasn't merely incompetence but appeared as divinely-induced confusion. Historically, nations persistently rejecting divine truth do experience increasing confusion—losing ability to think clearly about fundamental realities. Modern parallels include civilizations descending into moral and intellectual confusion after rejecting

Christian foundations—unable to define basic categories, making catastrophically bad policy decisions. The vomit imagery emphasizes degradation—not noble failure but shameful collapse. Egypt's proud civilization reduced to disgusting confusion validated this harsh prophetic image.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does God sending a perverse spirit teach about judicial hardening as judgment?
2. How does the drunkard imagery illustrate complete moral and intellectual disorientation?
3. What modern examples demonstrate nations descending into confusion after rejecting truth?

Interlinear Text

אָתָּה כְּהַפְעָעָה וְתַּעֲשֵׂה יְהִי הָרָקָב הַמִּשְׁרָךְ רַקְעַת רַקְעַת מִסְרָךְ הַמִּשְׁרָךְ רַקְעַת
The LORD hath mingled in the midst spirit a perverse man staggereth H853
H3068 H4537 H7130 H7307 H5773 H8582

כְּהַפְעָעָה וְתַּעֲשֵׂה מִשְׁרָךְ יְהִי בְּכָל מִשְׁרָךְ הַמִּשְׁרָךְ וְתַּעֲשֵׂה
thereof and they have caused Egypt in every work man staggereth H8582
H4714 H3605 H4639

שָׁכְרָת בְּקִיאָה
thereof as a drunken in his vomit
H7910 H6892

Additional Cross-References

2 Thessalonians 2:11 (Parallel theme): And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

Job 12:25 (Parallel theme): They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

Jeremiah 25:27 (References Lord): Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

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