

Isaiah 25:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

Analysis

Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee (על-ך יכבדך עם-עוז) al-ken yekhabducha am-az)—The Hebrew עז (az, strong) indicates powerful, mighty nations. Their worship isn't voluntary but compelled by witnessing God's judgments. 耸立 (kavad, glorify) means to give weight, honor, acknowledge importance. Even enemy nations must acknowledge YHWH's supremacy when they see His mighty acts.

The city of the terrible nations shall fear thee (קָרְנַת גּוֹיִם עֲרִיצִים יִרְאֹעַ) qiryat goyim aritsim yira'ukha)—The Hebrew עֲרִיצִים (aritsim, terrible/ruthless ones) are violent, tyrannical oppressors. Yet they **shall fear thee** (יראוּך, yira'ukha)—experience reverent terror before God's superior power. This isn't loving worship but forced acknowledgment of the King's sovereignty.

This verse distinguishes willing worship (remnant's praise in 24:14-15) from coerced acknowledgment. All will ultimately recognize God's authority—some joyfully, others terrified.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern theology held that military victory proved which god was stronger. When Assyria conquered nations, they claimed Ashur's superiority. Isaiah reverses this: YHWH uses even pagan empires as His instruments (10:5), then judges them for their pride (10:12-19). Eventually, these 'strong people' must

acknowledge Israel's God as supreme. This foreshadows Philippians 2:10-11: 'every knee shall bow...every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord'—some in salvation, others in judgment. History records pagan rulers acknowledging YHWH: Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:34-37), Cyrus (Ezra 1:2-3), even unwillingly admitting His power.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What's the difference between forced acknowledgment of God's power (fear) and genuine worship from the heart (love)?
2. How does God's ability to make even 'terrible nations' fear Him comfort those suffering under oppressive powers?
3. What does it mean that all people will eventually 'glorify' or 'fear' God, whether willingly or unwillingly?

Interlinear Text

עַל	לְקַרְבֵּן	תְּ	גָּדוֹלָה
H5921	H3651		
glorify	people	Therefore shall the strong	thee the city
H3513	H5971	H5794	H7151
עָרֵץ יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה	עָרֵץ יְמִינָה	nations
of the terrible	shall fear		
H6184	H3372		H1471

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 14:16 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zechariah 14:9 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org