

Isaiah 33:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpiller: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them.

Analysis

And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpiller (אָסֶף)—your spoil (שָׁלָל, shalakhem) will be gathered like the gathering (אָסֶף) of the caterpillar (חַסִּיל, chasil). **As the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them** (שָׁקַק בָּו)—like the running (שָׁקַק) of locusts (שׂוֹקָק, shaqqaq, to run, rush) of geveh (גֵּבָה, locusts).

After scattering the Assyrian army (v. 3), Judeans plunder the abandoned camp—like locusts stripping a field. The caterpillar (חַסִּיל, chasil) and locust (גֵּבָה, geveh) imagery pictures thorough, swift gleaning. Joel 1-2 uses locust plagues as judgment metaphor. Here, Judah swarms over Assyrian spoil like locusts. Second Kings doesn't record this detail, but Isaiah 37:36 mentions 185,000 corpses—their equipment, supplies, and wealth would be massive. God transforms Judah from besieged victims to plunderers.

Historical Context

Ancient warfare involved plundering defeated enemies. When Assyrians fled, they abandoned siege equipment, weapons, provisions, treasures. Hezekiah had paid enormous tribute (2 Kings 18:14-16), impoverishing Judah. Now Judeans recover far more than was extorted. Exodus 12:35-36 shows similar pattern—Israelites

plundered Egyptians at the Exodus. God enriches His people through enemy wealth (Proverbs 13:22, 'the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just').

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God sometimes transform loss into gain by giving you the 'spoils' of defeated enemies?
2. What does the locust imagery teach about the thoroughness and speed of God's provision after deliverance?
3. When have you experienced recovery that exceeded what was previously lost?

Interlinear Text

וְאַפֵּן	שְׁלַחַם	אֲסֵף	בְּחִסּוּל
shall be gathered	And your spoil	like the gathering	of the caterpillar
H622	H7998	H625	H2625
בָּזֵבֶץ	שְׁלַחַם	בָּזֵבֶץ	בָּזֵבֶץ
as the running to and fro	of locusts	shall he run	H0
H4944	H1357	H8264	

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org