

Isaiah 47:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

Analysis

The sarcastic challenge 'Stand now with thine enchantments' invites Babylon to test her occult powers against God's judgment. The mocking 'if so be thou shalt be able to profit' questions whether sorceries ever provided real benefit, or only illusion. This exposes all false religion's impotence before the true God - when crisis comes, idols cannot help (Jeremiah 2:28).

Historical Context

Babylon's fall happened during a festival when defenses were lowered. No amount of divination predicted or prevented Cyrus's entry. The inability of Babylonian wise men to interpret Belshazzar's handwriting (Daniel 5) symbolized this bankruptcy.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'enchantments' (habits, securities, relationships) do you stand in that cannot actually help when trials come?

2. How does the impotence of Babylon's wisdom in crisis expose the futility of trusting anything but God?

Interlinear Text

כִּשְׁפֵּן יְרֵא עַמְּדֵי	וּבְרֵב בָּרֶבֶת יְרֵא	בְּמִצְבָּבֵב יְרֵא	נָא אֵם אַתְּ
Stand H4994	now with thine enchantments	and with the multitude	of thy sorceries
H5975	H2267	H7230	H3785
בְּאַשְׁר רָבָבֵב יְרֵא יְמִינְךָ אֵם אַתְּ	תְּמִימָנְךָ אֵם אַתְּ	מִבְּעָמְךָ אֵם אַתְּ	בְּאַשְׁר רָבָבֵב יְרֵא
wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth	if so be thou shalt be able	if so be thou mayest prevail	to profit
H834	H3021	H5271	H194
H3201			H194
		H6206	

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 2:28 (Parallel theme): But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

Nahum 3:4 (Parallel theme): Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.