

Isaiah 5:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth: and, behold, they shall come with speed swiftly:

Analysis

God's 'lifting up an ensign' (signal) to distant nations and 'hissing' (whistling to summon) them depicts sovereign control over foreign powers used as judgment instruments. The imagery of nations coming 'swiftly' from 'the end of the earth' shows divine orchestration of history—even pagan armies accomplish God's purposes. This anticipates Habakkuk's revelation that God raised Chaldeans for judgment (Habakkuk 1:6) and demonstrates the Reformed conviction of divine providence governing all events.

Historical Context

Assyria and later Babylon functioned as God's rod of anger (Isaiah 10:5), unknowingly serving divine purposes while pursuing their own imperial ambitions.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereign use of ungodly nations for judgment display His comprehensive providence?
2. What modern powers might God be 'whistling' for purposes we don't yet perceive?

Interlinear Text

וְנִשָּׂא	נֵס	לְגוֹיִם	מִרְחֹק	וְנִשֵּׁב	וְ
And he will lift up	an ensign	to the nations	from far	and will hiss	
H5375	H5251	H1471	H7350	H8319	H0
מִקֵּץ הַ	קֶצֶץ הָאֶרֶץ	וְהֵי הַ	מְהֵרָה	לֵ	
unto them from the end	of the earth		with speed	swiftly	
H7097	H776	H2009	H4120	H7031	
וְיָבֹא:					
and behold they shall come					
H935					

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 10:8 (Parallel theme): I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased.

Isaiah 7:18 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

Isaiah 18:3 (Parallel theme): All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

Deuteronomy 28:49 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

Isaiah 11:12 (Parallel theme): And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Malachi 1:11 (Parallel theme): For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org