

Jeremiah 25:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

Analysis

And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. The phrase **kol-malkē haṣṣāpōn** (כל-מלךי הַשְׁׁשָׁח) encompasses kingdoms from Babylon north through Anatolia. The phrase **kol mamlēkōt hā'ārēš 'āsher 'al-pēnē hā'ādāmā** (כל ממלכות הארץ אשר על-פני הארץ) represents universal scope—every nation without exception.

The climactic phrase **ûmelek Shēshak yištēh 'ahārēhem** (ומלך שֵׁשָׁך יִשְׂתֵּה אֲחָרֵיכֶם), and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them) uses an Atbash cipher (Hebrew alphabet reversal) where Sheshach (שֵׁשָׁך) = Babel/Babylon (בָּבֶל). Babylon administers the cup to all nations but must finally drink it himself. This ironic reversal demonstrates poetic justice—the instrument of judgment faces judgment. The pattern recurs: Assyria judged, then judged; Babylon judged, then judged; Rome executed God's judgment on Jerusalem (AD 70) but itself fell. Only God's kingdom endures forever (Daniel 2:44).

Historical Context

The phrase 'all kingdoms of the world' reflects an ancient Near Eastern perspective where the known world meant the Fertile Crescent and surrounding territories. Yet the principle is truly universal—all human kingdoms are temporary,

all face judgment. The Atbash cipher for Babylon appears also in Jeremiah 51:41, creating coded prophecy during a time when openly predicting Babylon's fall could be dangerous. When Babylon fell to Persia (539 BC), the prophecy was fulfilled—the judge was judged.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the phrase 'all kingdoms of the world' establish God's absolute sovereignty over human history and political power?
2. What does the ironic reversal—Babylon administering judgment but then facing it—teach about the temporary nature of all human empires?
3. How should the certainty that every earthly kingdom will fall shape Christian political engagement and where we place ultimate allegiance?

Interlinear Text

אִישׁ וּפְרַחְקִים בְּקָרְבֵּי יְמֵי הַצָּפֹן וְלֹא כָּל אֵת תְּאַלֵּה

H853 H3605

And all the kings

H4428

בְּקָרְבֵּי יְמֵי הַצָּפֹן וְ

H6828

and near

H7138

אֲשֶׁר בְּקָרְבֵּי יְמֵי הַצָּפֹן וְ

H7350

far

H376

עַל אֲשֶׁר בְּקָרְבֵּי יְמֵי הַצָּפֹן וְ

אֲלֵיכֶם אֶחָת יְהוָה

H413 **with another**

H251

H853 H3605

בְּמְלָכָה וְ

and all the kingdoms

H4467

עַל אֲשֶׁר בְּקָרְבֵּי יְמֵי הַצָּפֹן וְ

H834

H5921

H776

פָּנָיו

which are upon the face

H6440

בְּאָדָם הָ

H127

וְלֹא כָּל אֵת תְּאַלֵּה

H4428

שִׁשְׁתָּה

H8347

וְשִׁשְׁתָּה הָ

H8354

אַחֲרִיכֶם:

after

H310

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 51:41 (Parallel theme): How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

Jeremiah 25:9 (Kingdom): Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.