

Jeremiah 49:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them.

Analysis

Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD (לִזְכֹּן שְׁמִיעוּ עֲצַת־יְהוָה, lakhen shim'u atzat-YHWH)—The imperative shim'u demands attention to divine deliberation. Atzah (counsel) appears in divine council contexts (see Jeremiah 23:18, 22), revealing that God's judgments proceed from sovereign deliberation, not capricious wrath. **His purposes against the inhabitants of Teman** (מַחְשְׁבוֹתָיו, machsh'votav)—divine 'thoughts' are effective purposes, not mere intentions.

Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out (צִעִירֵי הָצֹאן, tse'irei hatson)—Even the weakest soldiers will drag away Edom's mighty warriors. This humiliating reversal—shepherd boys defeating warrior-shepherds—emphasizes total defeat. Teman, synonymous with Edom and famous for wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7), will learn that wisdom apart from God's fear is folly. Their desolate habitations testify that human cunning cannot forestall divine decree.

Historical Context

Teman was a district and city in Edom, renowned for wisdom traditions (Obadiah 8-9). Eliphaz, Job's 'wise' friend who was later rebuked by God, was a Temanite

(Job 2:11). This ironic detail suggests Edom's celebrated wisdom was ultimately insufficient.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does God's 'counsel' reveal about the intentionality and justice of His judgments?
2. How does the promise that 'the least' will triumph deconstruct worldly measures of strength and capability?
3. In what ways might human wisdom become foolishness when divorced from the fear of the Lord?

Interlinear Text

לְכֹן	שְׁמַע וְ	עֲצַת	יְהוָה	אֲשֶׁר	יַעַץ	אֵל
H3651	Therefore hear	the counsel	of the LORD	H834	that he hath taken	H413
	H8085	H6098	H3068		H3289	
אֶדֹם	וּמִן	הַשְּׁבוּתָיו	אֲשֶׁר	חָשַׁב	אֵל	
against Edom	and his purposes		H834	that he hath purposed	H413	
H123	H4284			H2803		
יֹשְׁבֵי	תֵימָן	אֵם	לֹא	יִסְחָבוּם	צְעִיר	
against the inhabitants	of Teman	H518	H3808	shall draw them out	Surely the least	
H3427	H8487			H5498	H6810	
הַצֹּאֵן	אֵם	לֹא	יִשְׁיֵם	עֲלֵיהֶם	נֹהֵם:	
of the flock	H518	H3808	desolate	H5921	surely he shall make their habitations	
H6629			H8074		H5116	

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 50:45 (References Lord): Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.

Jeremiah 49:7 (References Lord): Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; Is wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished?

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