

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 (לְכָן שְׁמַעַו אֶצְתִּיחָזָה) — 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** (מְקֻשְׁבֹתָיו, *machsh'votav*) — divine 'thoughts' are effective purposes, not mere intentions.

Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out (צְעִירֵי הַצָּאָן, *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

אֶל יְמֻנָּה שָׁמְעָה | עַצְתִּי הָיָה רָאשׁ רַבָּה אֲלָמָּה |
H3651 Therefore hear H8085 H6098 H3068 H834 H3289 H413

אֲלָמָּה וְמִחְשְׁבָוֹתָה יְהִי אֶתְמוֹד וְמִתְּשִׁיבָה |
against Edom and his purposes H123 H4284 H834 H2803 H413

אֲלָמָּה תִּמְמָה לְזַהֲם אֶתְמַבְּדָלָה | אֲלָמָּה יְסַבְּבָם אֲלָמָּה צְבִיבָם |
against the inhabitants of Teman H3427 H8487 H518 H3808 H5498 H6810

אֲלָמָּה יְשַׁׁמְּרָה לְאָמֵן בְּזַעַם אֲלָמָּה נְזַעַם |
of the flock H6629 H518 H3808 desolate H8074 H5921 surely he shall make their habitations 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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