

Jeremiah 50:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls;

Analysis

Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage—Babylon's sin was not merely conquering Judah but rejoicing in Israel's downfall. The Hebrew *samach* (שָׁמַח, glad) and *alaz* (אָלַז, rejoiced) describe exultant, gloating celebration over God's people. Calling Israel **mine heritage** (*nachalah*, נָכָלָה) emphasizes Babylon attacked not merely a nation but Yahweh's covenant possession. God used Babylon as His instrument of judgment (25:9), but their excessive cruelty and arrogant rejoicing made them guilty.

Because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls—vivid agricultural imagery portrays Babylon's arrogant prosperity. The heifer fattened on grain represents self-indulgent luxury gained from plundering nations. *Abah* (אָבָה, grown fat) suggests abundance that produces pride rather than gratitude. Their bellowing like bulls depicts boastful, aggressive power—making loud claims of invincibility. This echoes Isaiah's critique of nations that forgot they were merely God's instruments (Isaiah 10:5-15). Babylon's judgment illustrates that God holds accountable even the powers He uses for discipline.

Historical Context

Written around 594-580 BC, this oracle predicted Babylon's fall—stunning when Babylon was at its zenith under Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon had conquered Jerusalem in 586 BC, destroyed the temple, and exiled God's people. Their

arrogance is documented in Babylonian records boasting of conquests. Yet within decades, the Medo-Persian empire under Cyrus would conquer Babylon (539 BC), fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy. Daniel 5 records Babylon's final night of feasting before its fall—they were indeed 'fat as heifers' celebrating when judgment came.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Babylon's accountability despite being God's instrument of judgment reveal both divine sovereignty and human moral responsibility?
2. What does this passage teach about the danger of rejoicing in others' suffering, even when that suffering is deserved judgment?
3. In what ways might prosperity and power lead to the kind of arrogant 'bellowing' God condemns here?

Interlinear Text

בָּכְרִים	תְּשַׁמְּחִי	כִּי	תְּמֻלֵּז	כִּי	שָׁבֵךְ	כִּי
H3588	Because ye were glad	H8055	H3588	because ye rejoiced	H5937	O ye destroyers
						H8154
נַחֲלָתִי	בְּנֵי	תְּפֵשִׁי	כָּעֵגֶל הָ	דְּשֵׁה	וְתְּצַבֵּל	וְתְּצַבֵּל
of mine heritage	H3588	because ye are grown fat	H6335	as the heifer	H5697	at grass
H5159						H1877
						H6670
כָּאָבָרִים						
as bulls						
H47						

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 47:6 (Parallel theme): I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

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