

Jeremiah 50:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.

Analysis

Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about—God commands the Medo-Persian coalition to arrange for battle, surrounding the city. Arak (אַרַךְ, put in array) is military terminology for organizing troops strategically. The divine commander orders the siege that will bring His judgment.

All ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD—the archers (likely referring to the famed Persian bowmen) are commanded to unlimited assault. 'Spare no arrows' emphasizes total warfare, holding nothing back. The justification is theological: **she hath sinned against the LORD**. The Hebrew chata (חָטָא, sinned) means to miss the mark, to transgress covenant or moral law. Though Babylon never knew Yahweh's covenant, they sinned against His moral order and against His people. God holds all nations accountable to His righteousness (Amos 1-2). This demonstrates that divine judgment falls not only on covenant-breakers but on all who violate God's justice and oppress His people.

Historical Context

The Medo-Persian army under Cyrus besieged Babylon in 539 BC. Herodotus and the Cyrus Cylinder describe the conquest. Persian archery was legendary—their arrow volleys were so dense they 'darkened the sun' according to Greek historians. Yet the conquest was achieved not only by military might but by diverting the

Euphrates River to enter under the walls. Daniel 5 records that Babylon fell during Belshazzar's feast—they were confident in their defenses, but God had decreed their time was finished.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does God's command to 'spare no arrows' against Babylon demonstrate that He takes sin seriously, especially oppression of His people?
2. What does it mean that even pagan nations who don't know God's covenant can still 'sin against the LORD' and face judgment?
3. How should the certainty of God's judgment on oppressive powers comfort those who currently suffer under injustice?

Interlinear Text

עָרַכְוּ	עַל	בְּבָלֹן	סָבִיב	כָּל	דֵּי רִכִּי		
Put yourselves in array	H5921	against Babylon	round about	H3605	all ye that bend		
H6186		H894	H5439		H1869		
קֶשֶׁת	יָדֹוּ	אֶל יָהּ	תַּחְמֹל וְ	אֶל	חֵץ	כִּי	
the bow	shoot	H413	H408	at her spare	H413	no arrows	H3588
H7198	H3034		H2550		H2671		
לִיהוָה	חַטָּאָה:						
against the LORD	for she hath sinned						
H3068	H2398						

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 50:29 (References Lord): Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

Habakkuk 2:17 (Parallel theme): For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

Jeremiah 50:42 (References Babylon): They shall hold the bow and the lance: they are cruel, and will not shew mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:9 (References Babylon): For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.

Jeremiah 50:7 (Sin): All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.

Habakkuk 2:8 (Parallel theme): Because thou hast spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil thee; because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.