

Jeremiah 51:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers.

Analysis

Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers—God summons a multinational coalition to execute judgment on Babylon. The "standard" (nes, נס) was a military rallying flag; the trumpet (shophar, שופר) signaled war. This divine call to arms demonstrates God's sovereignty over nations—He orchestrates their military movements to fulfill His purposes.

The kingdoms named—Ararat (Armenia), Minni (Manneans south of Lake Urmia), and Ashchenaz (Scythians)—were northern peoples incorporated into the Median and Persian empires. Their mention shows prophetic precision: these specific peoples would participate in Babylon's conquest under Cyrus. The term "captain" (tipsar, טפסר) is actually an Akkadian loanword meaning "tablet-writer" or "recruiting officer"—someone who musters troops.

The simile "horses...as the rough caterpillers" (yelek samer, ילק סמר) refers to bristling locusts in their most destructive stage. Joel 1-2 uses locust imagery for invading armies; Jeremiah applies it to the Medo-Persian cavalry that would swarm

Babylon. The imagery emphasizes overwhelming numbers and unstoppable advance.

Historical Context

Cyrus the Great unified the Median and Persian kingdoms (550 BCE), incorporating northern territories including Ararat (Urartu/Armenia), Minni (Mannai), and Scythian tribes. His 539 BCE campaign against Babylon was indeed a multinational coalition exactly as prophesied.

The Nabonidus Chronicle and Cyrus Cylinder describe the conquest. Babylon's last king, Nabonidus, had alienated subject peoples through religious policies, and many welcomed Cyrus as liberator. The Persian cavalry was legendary—Herodotus describes their numbers and effectiveness. The prophecy's specific mention of these northern kingdoms, given decades before Babylon's fall, demonstrates divine foreknowledge. Jeremiah couldn't have known through natural means which specific coalition would conquer Babylon—only God knew.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's summoning of specific nations against Babylon demonstrate His sovereignty over international affairs?
2. What does the locust imagery teach about the irresistible nature of divine judgment?
3. How should believers respond knowing God orchestrates world events, including military conflicts, for His purposes?

Interlinear Text

שָׁאוֹן תַּקְעֵעַ בְּאֶרֶץ נֶסֶת שׁוֹפֵט גּוֹיִם
Set ye up a standard in the land blow the trumpet among the nations
H5375 H5251 H776 H8628 H7782 H1471

עַל יְהֹוָה קָדְשָׁךְ עַל יְהֹוָה גּוֹיִם הַשָּׁם יָעוֹן עַל יְהֹוָה
prepare among the nations against her call together
H6942 H5921 H1471 H8085 H5921

עַל יְהֹוָה מַמְלָכָה וְתִּדְבְּרֵה אֶת־אַרְבָּעָתָה אֶת־מִנְנִי אֶת־אַשְׁכְּנָזָה וְתִּמְשְׁלֵךְ עַל יְהֹוָה
against her the kingdoms of Ararat Minni and Ashchenaz appoint
H4467 H780 H4508 H813 H6485 H5921

סְמָרָה כִּילָקָה טְפַפְּתָה רְכַעַלָּה סְמָרָה כִּילָקָה טְפַפְּתָה רְכַעַלָּה
a captain to come up against her cause the horses caterpillars as the rough
H2951 H5927 H5483 H3218 H5569

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 10:3 (Parallel theme): And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

1 Chronicles 1:6 (Parallel theme): And the sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

Genesis 8:4 (Parallel theme): And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

Jeremiah 50:2 (Parallel theme): Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

Jeremiah 25:14 (Kingdom): For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

Jeremiah 51:12 (Parallel theme): Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

Isaiah 18:3 (Parallel theme): All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

Jeremiah 51:14 (Parallel theme): The LORD of hosts hath sworn by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with caterpillers; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.

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