

# Jeremiah 51:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and  
against him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine: and spare  
ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host.

## Analysis

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**Against him that bendeth let the archer bend his bow**—God commands the invaders to show no mercy to Babylon's warriors. The repetition of 'bend' (darak, דָּרַךְ, to tread, bend the bow) emphasizes aggressive combat. **And against him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine**—the siryon (סִרְיוֹן, coat of mail, scale armor) represents military preparedness, but even Babylon's best-equipped soldiers cannot withstand God's judgment.

**And spare ye not her young men; destroy ye utterly all her host**—the command for complete military annihilation echoes the herem (חֵרֶם, devoted to destruction) applied to Canaanite cities. God's instrument of judgment (Babylon) becomes the object of judgment. The 'young men' (bachurim, בָּחוּרִים) and 'host' (tsava, צָבָא, army) represent Babylon's military might, which will be comprehensively destroyed.

## Historical Context

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Babylon's army, famous for conquering the known world, suffered decisive defeat. When Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC, resistance was minimal. The Nabonidus Chronicle records that 'the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle.' Subsequent Babylonian revolts (522 BC, 484 BC) were crushed by Persian forces. Xerxes I particularly devastated Babylon after the 484 BC revolt,

destroying its fortifications and military capacity. The mighty army that terrorized nations was indeed 'utterly destroyed.'

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. What does God's command to 'spare not' teach about the severity and completeness of divine judgment?
2. How does the destruction of Babylon's military might demonstrate that physical strength and weapons are powerless against God's purposes?
3. What does this verse teach about the accountability of military forces that serve unjust empires?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶל H413	הַדִּירָה H1869	הַדִּירָה H1869	הַדִּירָה H1869
Against him that bendeth	Against him that bendeth	Against him that bendeth	Against him that bendeth
וְקִשְׁתּוֹ H7198	וְאֵל H408	וְיָתֵעַ לְ H5927	וְאֵל H413
his bow	and against him that lifteth himself up	in his brigandine	
וְתַחְמְלוֹ H2550	אֶל H413	בְּחַרְיָהּ H970	כָּל H3605
and spare	ye not her young men	destroy ye utterly	all her host
			H6635

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 50:14** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Jeremiah 46:4** (Parallel theme): Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines.

**Jeremiah 50:21** (Parallel theme): Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded thee.

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