

# Jeremiah 51:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD.

## Analysis

**In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD.** This verse reveals God's sovereign orchestration of Babylon's final feast, turning their celebration into death. **In their heat** translates *be-ḥummam* (בְּחֻמָּם), meaning in their excitement, passion, or heated state—possibly referring to drunken enthusiasm or the heat of revelry. The irony is profound: God Himself 'makes' their feast and drunkenness, using their indulgence as the means of judgment.

**I will make their feasts** shows divine sovereignty even over enemy actions—God doesn't cause their sin but uses their chosen behavior to accomplish His purposes. **I will make them drunken** employs *wə-hiškartim* (וְהִשְׁכַּרְתִּים), the causative form meaning to cause inebriation. This connects to Jeremiah's earlier prophecy of the 'cup of fury' that nations must drink (Jeremiah 25:15-17, 27, 51:7). **That they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep** uses bitter irony: their joyful celebration (*ya'aložu*, יֵגְלוּ) transitions seamlessly into eternal sleep (*šenat 'olam*, שְׁנַת עוֹלָם)—death. **And not wake** (*welo yaqitsu*, וְלֹא יִקְצוּ) declares the finality of judgment—no resurrection, no second chance.

This fulfilled literally in Belshazzar's feast (Daniel 5), where drunken celebration ended with conquest and death. It also echoes the broader biblical theme of God giving people over to their chosen sins as judgment (Romans 1:24-28).

## Historical Context

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Daniel 5 provides the historical narrative fulfilling this prophecy. On the night of October 12, 539 BC, King Belshazzar held a feast for a thousand nobles, drinking wine from Jerusalem's temple vessels in drunken sacrilege. During this revelry, Cyrus's forces entered the city through the diverted Euphrates River. The Babylonians were so intoxicated and distracted they didn't realize their city had fallen until it was too late. Belshazzar was killed that very night (Daniel 5:30). The 'perpetual sleep' came upon Babylon's leadership literally—many died, the empire ended, and Babylon never recovered its former glory. Ancient historians confirm the feast and the surprise conquest. The prophecy demonstrates God's sovereignty: He used Babylon's own chosen sin (drunken idolatry) as the occasion of their destruction. This principle recurs throughout Scripture—God judges people through the very sins they embrace (Judges 1:6-7, Esther 7:10, Galatians 6:7).

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's making their feast and drunkenness demonstrate His sovereignty even over human sinful choices?
2. What does 'perpetual sleep' teach about the finality of divine judgment when the appointed time arrives?
3. How does Daniel 5's historical fulfillment of this prophecy strengthen confidence in God's control over history and His ability to accomplish His word?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּחֶמֶם ׀	אֶשׁ יֵת	אֶת	מִשְׁתֵּיהֶם ׀	וְהִשְׁכַּרְתִּים		
In their heat	I will make	H853	their feasts	and I will make them drunken		
H2527	H7896		H4960	H7937		
לֹא יִצוּ	וְלֹא יִשְׁנוּ	וְלֹא יִשְׁנוּ	וְלֹא יִשְׁנוּ	וְלֹא יִשְׁנוּ	וְלֹא יִשְׁנוּ	וְלֹא יִצוּ
H4616	that they may rejoice	and sleep	sleep	a perpetual	H3808	and not wake
	H5937	H3462	H8142	H5769		H6974
נֶאֱמַר	יְהוָה:					
saith	the LORD					
H5002	H3068					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 51:57** (References Lord): And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

**Jeremiah 25:27** (References Lord): Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

**Nahum 3:11** (Parallel theme): Thou also shalt be drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy.

**Nahum 1:10** (Parallel theme): For while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.