

Numbers 24:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

Analysis

Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive—The adversative **nevertheless** (אֲמָ כִּי ki im, 'but surely') contrasts verse 21's apparent security with prophesied destruction. The verb **wasted** (לָבַעַר leva'er, burned/consumed) predicts gradual decline before **Asshur** (Assyria, אַשּׁוּר) finally carries them captive.

This prophecy, fulfilled during Assyrian conquests (8th-7th centuries BC), demonstrates that even groups allied with Israel weren't exempt from judgment when surrounding nations fell. The phrase **until Asshur** (עַד־מָה אַשּׁוּר ad-mah Ashur) connects Kenite fate to broader Near Eastern upheavals under Assyrian imperialism. No human alliance provides ultimate security—only covenant relationship with Yahweh ensures survival through history's upheavals (Psalm 46:1-3).

Historical Context

Assyrian Empire dominated the ancient Near East from 911-609 BC, conquering Northern Israel (722 BC) and threatening Judah. Marginalized groups like Kenites, despite Israelite affiliation, were swept up in these conquests. Archaeological evidence confirms widespread Assyrian deportation policies affecting entire regions.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the Kenites' eventual captivity despite strong fortifications challenge faith in material security?
2. What does the prophecy's long timeframe ('until Asshur') teach about God's patience and certainty of prophetic fulfillment?
3. How can believers maintain security in God while living amid world systems destined for judgment?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אִם	יְהִי הָ	לְךָ עָר	קִין	עַד	מֵה	אֲשׁוּר
H3588	shall	H1961	be wasted	Nevertheless the Kenite	H5704	H4100	until Asshur
	H518		H1197	H7014			H804
תִּשָּׂאֲךָ:							
shall carry thee away captive							
H7617							