

# Deuteronomy 32:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

## Analysis

**I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh**—(אֲשִׁיפֵּר חֵץ מֵדָם וְחֶרְבֵּי תַּאֲכֵל בָּשָׂר) the Hebrew ashkir (make drunk) personifies arrows as becoming intoxicated with blood. Chitzai (my arrows) and charbi (my sword) execute divine judgment; the sword to'khal (devours/eats) basar (flesh) like a ravenous beast. This shocking imagery depicts total, decisive judgment—no half measures, no survivors among the impenitent.

**And that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy**—(מֵדָם קָלָל וְשִׁבְיָה מִרְאֵשׁ פְּרֻעָות אֹיְבָה) chalal (slain) and shiyah (captives) indicate comprehensive defeat. Me-rosh par'ot oyev (from the head/beginning of the enemy's leaders) suggests judgment begins with enemy commanders, the "longhaired" warriors or princes. God's vengeance is thorough and begins at the top of Israel's oppressors' power structure.

## Historical Context

This graphic battle imagery was standard in ancient Near Eastern victory hymns and royal inscriptions. However, Israel's tradition uniquely attributes military victory to divine intervention rather than royal prowess. The language anticipates prophetic oracles against nations (Isaiah 13; 34; Jeremiah 46-51; Ezekiel 25-32) and Revelation's imagery of Christ's return (Revelation 19:13, 15). Early church interpretation saw this as eschatological—God's final judgment on evil.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do you reconcile God's violent judgment imagery with His love and mercy?
2. What does God's thorough judgment on unrepentant evil reveal about His holiness and justice?

## Interlinear Text

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אָשָׁכֵ יְרֵךְ      חַצֵּי      מִזְמָרָת      יִמְרָבֵב

**drunk**      **I will make mine arrows**      **and that with the blood**      **and my sword**

H7937

H2671

H1818

H2719

וְשָׁבֵת הַתָּאכֵל      סָלֵל      בְּשָׂרֵב      מִזְמָרָת

**shall devour**      **flesh**      **and that with the blood**      **of the slain**      **and of the captives**

H398

H1320

H1818

H2491

H7633

אֹיְבָן      פְּרֻעַ וְתַ

**from the beginning**      **of revenges**      **upon the enemy**

H7218

H6546

H341

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 32:23** (Parallel theme): I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

**Jeremiah 46:10** (Word): For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

