

Isaiah 21:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

Analysis

'For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.' The cause of refugee crisis: military devastation—'swords...bow...grievousness of war.' The multiplied terms emphasize comprehensive military threat: close combat (swords), ranged weapons (bows), and overall war's horrors. This wasn't voluntary migration but desperate flight from mortal danger. The description validates the refugees' need—they aren't opportunistic migrants but genuine victims of violence requiring aid. This establishes moral obligation to assist—when people flee genuine danger (not mere economic migration), providing refuge is justice, not optional charity. The passage doesn't identify the attacking force (likely Assyrian campaigns), focusing instead on humanitarian crisis and proper response. This models keeping focus on human need rather than political considerations when responding to displacement crises.

Historical Context

Assyrian military campaigns were notoriously brutal—psychological warfare through terror, systematic destruction, mass deportations. Arabian tribes weren't exempt from this violence. Sargon II and Sennacherib's annals describe campaigns in Arabia using same terror tactics employed elsewhere—impalement, burning, deportation. Refugees fleeing such violence faced genuine mortal danger justifying their flight and others' assistance. Modern parallels abound: wars and persecutions creating genuine refugee crises requiring humanitarian response. The biblical pattern establishes obligation to distinguish genuine refugees (fleeing

violence) from economic migrants, while maintaining compassion for both. The emphasis on weapons and war's grievousness validates the Dedanites' refugee status, modeling how to assess displacement claims—are they fleeing genuine danger?

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What distinguishes genuine refugees (fleeing violence) from economic migrants in biblical perspective?
2. How does describing specific threats (swords, bows, war) validate refugee status and moral claims?
3. What modern applications follow from biblical obligations toward displaced persons fleeing violence?

Interlinear Text

וּמִפֶּי יָ	חֶרֶב	וּמִפֶּי יָ	כִּי	וּמִפֶּי יָ	חֶרֶב	וּמִפֶּי יָ	וּמִפֶּי יָ
H3588		H6440	H2719	H5074	H6440	H2719	H5203
and from	sword	For they fled	and from	sword	the drawn	and from	
וּמִפֶּי יָ	חֶרֶב	וּמִפֶּי יָ	כִּי	וּמִפֶּי יָ	חֶרֶב	וּמִפֶּי יָ	וּמִפֶּי יָ
H7198	H1869	H6440	H3514	H4421			
bow	the bent	and from	the grievousness	of war			