

# Isaiah 29:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

## Analysis

**Moreover the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust** (וְהָיָה כְּאַבָּקָה וְרִיבֵי וְהָיָה, vehayah ke'avaq daq hamon zarayikh)—the זָרִים (zarim, strangers/enemies) who attack Jerusalem will themselves be reduced to fine dust. **And the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away** (וְכִמּוֹץ עֵבֶר וְהָיָה, ukemotz over hamon aritsim)—the עָרִיצִים (aritsim, tyrants/ruthless ones) will become like מוֹץ (motz, chaff) blown away. **Yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly** (וְהָיָה לְפֶתַע פְּתָאִם, vehayah lefeta pit'om).

The oracle pivots dramatically from verses 1-4's siege to sudden deliverance. After describing Jerusalem's humiliation, Isaiah announces the besiegers' own destruction—not through prolonged warfare but instantaneously. This prophesies Sennacherib's 701 BC defeat when the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (Isaiah 37:36). The terrible ones become chaff; the dust-like enemies vanish.

## Historical Context

The fulfillment came in 701 BC when Assyrian king Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem under Hezekiah. Despite overwhelming military superiority, the Assyrian army was decimated overnight (2 Kings 19:35-36). Sennacherib's own records (Taylor Prism) acknowledge withdrawing from Jerusalem after receiving tribute,

but notably avoid mentioning conquering the city—a conspicuous omission suggesting catastrophic loss.

## 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. How does this sudden reversal reveal God's sovereignty over seemingly invincible enemies?
2. What situations in your life seem hopeless until God acts 'at an instant suddenly'?
3. How does this verse encourage trust when surrounded by 'terrible ones'?

## Interlinear Text

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וְהָיָה H1961	כְּאֶבֶר קִי dust H80	וְיִקְרָא shall be like small H1851	וְהָיָה Moreover the multitude H1995	וְהָיָה of thy strangers H2114
וְכַמֹּץ shall be as chaff H4671	עָפָר that passeth away H5674	וְהָיָה Moreover the multitude H1995	וְהָיָה of the terrible ones H6184	
וְהָיָה H1961	וְהָיָה yea it shall be at an instant H6621	וְהָיָה suddenly H6597		

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Thessalonians 5:3** (Parallel theme): For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

**Isaiah 30:13** (Parallel theme): Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.

**Isaiah 37:36** (Parallel theme): Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

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