

Isaiah 30:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

Analysis

Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame (וְהָיָה לָכֶם מְעוֹז פָּרְעֹה / וְהָיָה לָכֶם מְעוֹז פָּרְעֹה / vehayah lakhem ma'oz par'oh leboshet)—Ironical reversal: what they sought for strength (ma'oz, stronghold/refuge) becomes their shame (boshet, disgrace/humiliation). The very thing trusted for security produces embarrassment. Boshet also carried connotations of worthless idols (Jeremiah used it as substitute for Baal's name).

And the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion (וְהָיָה בְּצֶל מִצְרַיִם לְכִלְמָה / וְהָיָה בְּצֶל מִצְרַיִם לְכִלְמָה / vehachsut betsel mitsrayim likhlimah)—Khlimah means disgrace, dishonor, confusion—the shame of exposed folly. Their refuge becomes their ruin. This prophetic principle appears throughout Scripture: whatever we trust instead of God will ultimately fail and shame us (Psalm 20:7-8; Jeremiah 17:5-6). The shadow they sought for protection becomes the shadow of death.

Historical Context

This prophecy was fulfilled precisely. When Assyrian king Sennacherib invaded Judah in 701 BCE, Egypt sent a relief force under Tirhakah, but it was ineffective (2 Kings 18:21 records Sennacherib's taunt: Egypt is a "broken reed" that pierces the hand of anyone leaning on it). Judah's Egyptian alliance brought no deliverance—only shame when Egypt couldn't help. Ultimate deliverance came not through Egyptian chariots but through divine intervention (Isaiah 37:36—the angel of the

LORD struck down 185,000 Assyrians). Trusting God would have avoided the shame of failed human alliances.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How have you experienced the shame of trusting something or someone other than God, only to have it fail you?
2. Why does trusting created things instead of the Creator always lead to 'confusion' and disappointment?
3. What does this verse teach about the consequences of seeking security in worldly power rather than divine protection?

Interlinear Text

לִבְּשֵׁת	פַּרְעֹה	חֲמַעַז	לְכֹחַ	וְהָיָה
H1322	H6547	H4581	H0	H1961
be your shame	of Pharaoh	Therefore shall the strength		
לְכַלְמָה:	מִצֵּרִים	בְּצֵל	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
H3639	H4714	H6738	H2622	H2622
your confusion	of Egypt	in the shadow	and the trust	

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 20:5 (References Egypt): And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

Romans 5:5 (Parallel theme): And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 10:11 (Faith): For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

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