

Jeremiah 46:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks;
for they also are turned back, and are fled away together:
they did not stand, because the day of their calamity was
come upon them, and the time of their visitation.

Analysis

Her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks (גַּם־שִׂכְרֶיהָ בְּקִרְבָּהּ) —Egypt's mercenaries (sekireyha) are compared to egley marbeq (calves of the stall), pampered livestock raised for slaughter. The irony is devastating: soldiers hired for strength prove as helpless as penned animals. **They did not stand** (לֹא עָמְדוּ)—the verb amad means to take a stand in battle.

The day of their calamity (יוֹם אֲיָדָם) and **the time of their visitation** (עֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם) employ legal terminology—eyd (calamity) and pequddah (reckoning/visitation) denote God's appointed moment of judgment. No amount of military preparation can withstand divine decree.

Historical Context

Egypt regularly employed foreign mercenaries, especially Greek, Libyan, and Nubian soldiers. These professional troops were expensive but considered elite forces. The metaphor of fatted calves would resonate with an agricultural society familiar with livestock management and sacrifice.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. In what ways do we rely on "hired help"—external securities—rather than trusting God's protection?
2. How does the image of pampered livestock for slaughter illustrate the temporary nature of worldly strength?
3. What does the phrase "day of their calamity" teach about divine appointments we cannot escape or postpone?

Interlinear Text

גַּם H1571	שָׂכָרָהּ יְהוָה H7916	בְּקִרְבָּהּ H7130	בְּעֶגְלֵי יְהוָה H5695	מִרְבֵּי קֶרֶן H4770	כִּי H3588	גַּם H1571
	Also her hired men	are in the midst	bullocks	of her like fatted		
הֵם מָה H1992	הֵפְנוּ וְ	וְהָיוּ H6437	נִסּוּ H5127	יַחְדָּם יוֹם H3808		
	for they also are turned back	and are fled away	together			
עָמְדוּ H5975	כִּי יוֹם H3588	בְּיָמֵי H3117	אֵימָתָם H343	בָּא H935	עָלֶיהָ H5921	
	they did not stand	because the day	of their calamity	was come		
עַל תְּ H6256	פְּקֻדָּתָם: H6486					
	upon them and the time	of their visitation				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 46:5 (Parallel theme): Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith the LORD.

2 Kings 7:6 (Parallel theme): For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

Isaiah 34:7 (Parallel theme): And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

Psalms 37:13 (Parallel theme): The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

Jeremiah 50:27 (Parallel theme): Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

Amos 6:4 (Parallel theme): That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

Hosea 9:7 (Parallel theme): The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it: the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred.

2 Samuel 10:6 (Parallel theme): And when the children of Ammon saw that they stank before David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob, and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand footmen, and of king Maacah a thousand men, and of Ish-tob twelve thousand men.

Micah 7:4 (Parallel theme): The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.

Obadiah 1:13 (Parallel theme): Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their

affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity;

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