

Jeremiah 46:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

Analysis

Order ye the buckler and shield (עֲרַכְתֶּן מַגֵּן וְצִנָּה) — The Hebrew imperative irkhu commands battle readiness. Magen (מַגֵּן) designates the small round shield, tsinnah (צִנָּה) the large body shield. This begins a vivid, ironic taunt: God commands Egypt to prepare thoroughly for battle—only to demonstrate the futility of human military preparation against divine decree.

Draw near to battle (וְגַשְׂו לְמִלְחָמָה) — The verb geshu means 'approach' or 'advance.' The poetic structure mimics a commander's urgent war cry, creating dramatic tension before the devastating reversal in v. 5-6. This rhetorical technique mocks Egypt's confidence, similar to Isaiah's taunts against Babylon (Isaiah 47:1-15).

Historical Context

Egyptian military confidence stemmed from centuries of imperial dominance and advanced chariot warfare technology. Under Pharaoh Necho II, Egypt sought to fill the power vacuum after Assyria's collapse (612 BC). This verse captures Egypt's aggressive military posture before Carchemish's catastrophic defeat shattered their empire.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why does God use ironic military commands to highlight the futility of resisting His purposes?
2. How does meticulous battle preparation become meaningless when fighting against God's decree?
3. What modern 'shields and bucklers' do nations or individuals trust instead of divine sovereignty?

Interlinear Text

לִמְלָחָמָה: אֶגֶּשׁ וְאֶצְבַּע הַמְּגִלְתָּה מִגְּדָל עַרְכָּת

Order ye the buckler and shield and draw near to battle

H6186 H4043 H6793 H5066 H4421

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 21:5 (Parallel theme): Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.

Nahum 2:1 (Parallel theme): He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily.

Nahum 3:14 (Parallel theme): Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the morter, make strong the brickkiln.

Joel 3:9 (Parallel theme): Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: