

Jeremiah 46:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Wherefore have I seen them dismayed (מַדְעַת בָּאֵיתִ הָפָה חֲתִים) — The interrogative maddua expresses shocked surprise: 'Why do I see...?' The adjective hattim (חֲתִים) means 'terrified' or 'shattered.' After v. 3-4's confident preparation, the sudden reversal is stunning. **Turned away back** (תָּסִים אַחֲר) describes chaotic retreat—disciplined forces dissolving into panicked flight.

Their mighty ones are beaten down (גִּבְוָרִים, gibboreihem, gibborim) — Egypt's elite warriors, the gibborim, flee without fighting. **Fear was round about, saith the LORD** (מָגָור מִפְּנֵבָב נָאָמֵן הָבָה) — The phrase magor missaviv ('terror on every side') is Jeremiah's signature expression (6:25, 20:3, 10), signifying God-sent panic that breaks military discipline.

Historical Context

Ancient battle accounts rarely describe such comprehensive panic among elite forces. The Babylonian Chronicles confirm Egypt's catastrophic defeat at Carchemish, stating Nebuchadnezzar 'accomplished their overthrow and beat them until they ceased to exist.' Divine terror caused military collapse beyond natural battlefield dynamics.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What causes elite warriors to flee without fighting when God sends supernatural fear?
2. How does 'terror on every side' demonstrate judgment extending beyond physical defeat to psychological collapse?
3. Why is God's declaration ('saith the LORD') crucial for understanding this as divine judgment, not mere military misfortune?

Interlinear Text

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| אַחֲרֵי | תָּסַג יְמִים | מִדְבָּר | בְּאֵת | מִתְּהִלָּה | מִתְּהִלָּה |
| H4069 | Wherefore have I seen | H1992 | them dismayed | and turned | away back |
| | H7200 | | H2844 | H5472 | H268 |
| וְגַבּוּרִים מִ | בְּפִזְבָּדָה וְ | וְמִן וּסְ | בְּאָמֵן וְ | בְּאָמֵן וְ | בְּאָמֵן וְ |
| and their mighty ones | are beaten down | apace | and are fled | | H3808 |
| H1368 | H3807 | H4498 | H5127 | | |
| וְהַפְנֵן וְ | מִמְּרֹךְ יְמִים | מִמְּרֹךְ יְמִים | בְּנֵאמֵן | בְּנֵאמֵן | בְּנֵאמֵן |
| and look not back | for fear | was round about | saith | the LORD | |
| H6437 | H4032 | H5439 | H5002 | H3068 | |

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 6:25 (Parallel theme): Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy and fear is on every side.

Jeremiah 49:29 (Parallel theme): Their tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, Fear is on every side.

Jeremiah 46:21 (Parallel theme): 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.

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