

Jeremiah 48:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence.

Analysis

Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh (וּבֶשׁ מוֹאָב תִּכְמוֹשׁ)—Kemosh was Moab's national deity (Numbers 21:29; 1 Kings 11:7), to whom children were sacrificed. **As the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence** (כַּאֲשֶׁר-בְּשׁוֹ (בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִבֵּית אֵל מִבְּטָחָם)—Jeremiah compares Chemosh's failure to defend Moab with Bethel's golden calf failing to protect northern Israel during Assyria's conquest (722 BC).

The verse demolishes false confidence in religious systems divorced from the true God. Both Bethel (corrupted worship) and Chemosh (pagan idolatry) proved powerless in crisis. Divine judgment exposes the bankruptcy of all substitutes for covenant relationship with Yahweh—whether outright idols or distorted orthodoxy.

Historical Context

Bethel, once sacred as the site of Jacob's vision (Genesis 28:19), became the southern cult center for Jeroboam's golden calf apostasy (1 Kings 12:28-29). By the time of Assyria's conquest, Bethel symbolized Israel's religious compromise. Jeremiah uses this recent history as a warning to Moab, whose trust in Chemosh would prove equally futile.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What 'Bethels' or 'Chemoshes'—religious activities or traditions—might you trust more than genuine relationship with God?
2. How does historical judgment on false worship systems challenge contemporary confidence in religious performance over heart transformation?
3. What does it mean that even corrupted forms of true worship (Bethel) can become as worthless as outright paganism (Chemosh)?

Interlinear Text

בִּשְׁמוֹ	וּמוֹאָב	מִכֶּמֶשׁ	כְּאֲשֶׁר	בִּשְׁמוֹ	בֵּית יִתְ
shall be ashamed	And Moab	of Chemosh	H834	shall be ashamed	as the house
H954	H4124	H3645		H954	H1004
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל	מִבֵּית יִתְ	אֵל לְ	מִבְטָחָם:		
of Israel	H0	of Bethel	their confidence		
H3478		H1008	H4009		

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 45:16 (Parallel theme): They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols.

Jeremiah 48:39 (Parallel theme): They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him.

Judges 11:24 (Parallel theme): Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.

