

Jeremiah 48:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How say ye, We are mighty and strong men for the war?

Analysis

How say ye, We are mighty and strong men for the war? (איך תאמרו גבורים אנחנו) —Jeremiah's rhetorical question mocks Moabite military boasting. The Hebrew gibborim (mighty warriors) and anshei-chayil (men of valor) echo the self-confidence that preceded disaster. This recalls Goliath's taunts before David (1 Samuel 17) and anticipates James's warning against boasting about tomorrow (James 4:13-16).

The question indicts human pride that forgets creaturehood before the Creator. Military strength, when divorced from submission to God's sovereignty, becomes delusional self-deception. Moab's warrior culture, which had successfully resisted enemies for generations, would crumble before Babylon—proving that God humbles every nation that exalts itself.

Historical Context

Moab had a proud military tradition, successfully defending against Israelite incursions and maintaining independence through strategic alliances. The Mesha Stele (c. 840 BC) celebrates Moabite king Mesha's victories over Israel. This historical military prowess made Moab's boasting seem justified—until Nebuchadnezzar's overwhelming force proved all human strength inadequate against divine judgment.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 – Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. In what areas of competence or strength are you tempted to boast, forgetting your dependence on God's sovereign grace?
 2. How does remembering past successes sometimes blind us to present spiritual danger or coming judgment?
 3. What is the difference between legitimate confidence in God-given abilities and the prideful self-reliance that provokes divine opposition?

Interlinear Text

א יר	תִּתְאִמֵּר וְ	גָּבּוֹר יִם	אֲגֹנְתָּן חָנוֹן	וְאַבְשֵׁר	כִּיל	למְלֹאתָה:
H349	How say	ye We are mighty	H587	men	and strong	for the war
H559		H1368	H582	H2428		H4421

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 33:16 (Parallel theme): There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength.

Isaiah 10:16 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

Isaiah 10:13 (Parallel theme): For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man:

