

Jeremiah 48:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds.

Analysis

Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory (נָשָׂת בַּת—) —Dibon, Moab's capital where the Mesha Stele was discovered, must descend (redi) from kavod (glory/honor). **And sit in thirst** (וְשָׁבֵי בְּאַמְתָּא) —The besieged city will lack water, a devastating reversal for the well-watered plateau. **For the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds** (כִּי־שָׁׁקֵד מוֹאָב עַלְּךָ בְּן־שָׁחַת מִבְצָרֶיךָ).

The command to 'sit in thirst' reverses Psalm 23's 'green pastures' and 'still waters'—those who reject the Shepherd experience desolation. Dibon's fortifications (mivtsarayikh, strongholds) prove worthless. This foreshadows Jesus's warning about building on sand versus rock (Matthew 7:24-27): human defenses collapse without divine foundation.

Historical Context

Dibon (modern Dhiban, Jordan) was Moab's administrative capital, strategically located on the King's Highway. The Mesha Stele (c. 840 BC), found there in 1868, boasts of Moabite building projects and victories. Archaeological excavations show massive fortifications and a thriving Iron Age city—exactly the 'glory' and 'strongholds' Jeremiah addresses. Nebuchadnezzar's forces devastated the site around 582 BC.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'strongholds' (wealth, reputation, education, relationships) provide false security that God might require you to abandon?
2. How does the image of descending from glory to sit in thirst illustrate the consequences of pride and self-sufficiency?
3. In what ways does Jesus offer 'living water' (John 4:10) that makes earthly securities and glories pale by comparison?

Interlinear Text

דַּיְבָּרִים	בְּתִים	בְּתִים	דִּיבָּרִים
מִכְבּוֹד	בְּצִמְתָּה	בְּצִמְתָּה	מִכְבּוֹד
מִכְבּוֹד	בְּצִמְתָּה	בְּצִמְתָּה	מִכְבּוֹד
מִכְבּוֹד	בְּצִמְתָּה	בְּצִמְתָּה	מִכְבּוֹד

מִבְּצִמְתָּה	שְׁחִיתָה	שְׁחִיתָה

מִבְּצִמְתָּה:
thy strong holds

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 47:1 (Parallel theme): Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

Numbers 21:30 (Parallel theme): We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba.

Isaiah 15:2 (Parallel theme): He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off.

Jeremiah 48:22 (Parallel theme): And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

Joshua 13:17 (Parallel theme): Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,