

Jeremiah 49:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail.

Analysis

Damascus is waxed feeble (כִּפְתָּה דַמְשֵׁק, raphtah Dammeseq)—The verb raphah means to become slack, enfeebled. Syria's ancient capital loses military and political vitality. **Turneth herself to flee** (הַפְּנִתָּה לְנוֹס, hiphn'tah lanus)—Damascus personified as a woman turns to escape, but **fear hath seized on her** (וְחִרְדָּה, v'chirdah hecheziqattah). The verb chazaq (seize) suggests fear grips Damascus like a predator's jaws.

Anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail (אֲבָה וְחַבְלִים אֲחִזָּתָה, tsarah vachavalim achazattah kayyoledah)—Again the childbirth metaphor. Tsarah (distress) and chavalim (labor pains) are divinely appointed suffering. Damascus's feminization isn't contempt but indicates helplessness before God's irresistible power. No military prowess avails; only submission to divine sovereignty offers hope.

Historical Context

Damascus had survived Assyrian conquest (732 BC) and remained influential under Babylonian hegemony. But Nebuchadnezzar's campaigns through Syria-Palestine (605-604 BC) reduced Damascus to vassal status, fulfilling this prophecy of weakness and fear.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does Damascus's 'turning to flee' reveal about the futility of escaping God's judgment?
2. How does the repeated 'woman in travail' metaphor across different nations emphasize universal accountability to God?
3. In what ways do modern nations exhibit the same 'weakness' when they abandon God's standards?

Interlinear Text

בָּחָזְקָה יְקָה וְכָבָדָה
is waxed feeble and hath seized
H7503 H1834 H2388

כִּי-לְדָהָה:
פָּתַחַת הַמִּלְחָמָה
her as a woman in travail
H3205

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