

Jeremiah 49:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth.

Analysis

Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts, from all those that be about thee. God pronounces the reversal of Ammon's false confidence. Instead of the arrogant question 'Who shall come unto me?' (v. 4), God declares 'I will bring fear' (ani mevi pachad, אָנָּי מַבְיא פַּחַד). The noun pachad (פַּחַד) means terror, dread, or sudden alarm—paralyzing fear that destroys courage. The source is 'the Lord GOD of hosts' (Adonai YHWH Tzeva'ot)—the sovereign commander of heaven's armies. When God Himself brings fear, no human courage can stand.

The phrase 'from all those that be about thee' indicates surrounding enemies will attack from every direction. Ammon's neighbors—Babylon primarily, but also other nations—will converge against them. What Ammon trusted for security (geographic position, alliances) becomes the source of terror. Isaiah 24:17-18 describes this inescapable judgment: 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee.'

And ye shall be driven out every man right forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth. Complete social collapse is described: 'driven out' (naddach, נָדַח, scattered/dispersed) 'every man right forth' (straight ahead, headlong flight without direction). The phrase 'none shall gather him that wandereth' depicts refugees scattered with no one to rescue or regroup them. This

reverses the shepherd imagery—instead of gathered flocks, scattered individuals with no shepherd. Jesus later declares Himself the Good Shepherd who gathers the scattered (John 10:11, 16; Matthew 23:37).

Historical Context

This prophecy was fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Ammon around 582 BC, three years after Jerusalem's fall. Josephus (*Antiquities* 10.9.7) records that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Ammon and Moab. Archaeological evidence shows destruction at Ammonite sites during this period. The Ammonites were scattered, their kingdom effectively ended, and they gradually assimilated into surrounding populations. Unlike Israel, who maintained identity through exile and returned to their land, Ammon disappeared from history. Their trust in treasures and valleys proved futile; God's word proved certain. The ultimate lesson: those who oppose God's people and trust in themselves face certain judgment, while God preserves and regathers His covenant people.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to 'bring fear' on those who arrogantly asked 'Who shall come unto me?' demonstrate the danger of presumption and false security?
2. What does the image of people 'driven out' with 'none to gather them' teach about the consequences of rejecting God's protection?
3. In what ways does Christ as the Good Shepherd who gathers the scattered provide hope in contrast to the judgment on Ammon?

Interlinear Text

וְהִנֵּה אָדָן אֱלֹהִים מְבֵיא אֶלְעָלָה כִּי תָּאַמֵּן בְּדָבָר	H2005 H935 H5921 H6343 H5002 H136 H3069	Behold I will bring a fear upon thee saith the Lord GOD
מִכָּל אָבָא וְתַּחַטְּפָם סְבִיבְךָ יְהִי מִכָּל אָבָא וְתַּחַטְּפָם	H6635 H3605 H5439 H5080	of hosts from all those that be about thee and ye shall be driven out
אֲשֶׁר אָשָׁר לְפָנֶיךָ יְהִי מִקְרָב יְהִי לְפָנֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר	H376 H6440 H369 H6908 H5074	every man right forth and none shall gather up him that wandereth

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 46:5 (References Lord): 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.

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.