

Jeremiah 51:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets.

Analysis

Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans—the chalalim (חָלָלִים, slain, pierced) will litter the land. **And they that are thrust through in her streets**—the Hebrew deqarim (דִּקְרִים, pierced through, stabbed) emphasizes violent death in urban combat. The streets where Babylonians walked in security and pride become scenes of slaughter.

This verse parallels what Babylon inflicted on Jerusalem (Lamentations 2:21, 4:9). The measure of judgment Babylon dealt is measured back to her (Revelation 18:6). The geographic specificity—'in the land of the Chaldeans' and 'in her streets'—emphasizes that judgment comes to Babylon's homeland, not just distant battlefields. The oppressor experiences what the oppressed suffered.

Historical Context

While Cyrus's initial conquest was relatively bloodless, subsequent Babylonian resistance brought severe reprisals. The revolts of 522 BC and 484 BC resulted in significant casualties. Xerxes I particularly devastated Babylon, destroying its fortifications and temples. Archaeological evidence shows destruction layers in Babylon from this period. The prophecy's fulfillment came progressively—initial conquest, then violent suppression of revolts, then gradual depopulation. The streets of Babylon, once filled with processions honoring Marduk and celebrating military victories, became desolate.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of 'measure for measure'—Babylon suffering what it inflicted—demonstrate God's justice?
2. What does the specificity of 'in her streets' teach about judgment coming home to those who thought themselves secure?
3. How should this verse shape our understanding that oppressors will ultimately face accountability for their violence?

Interlinear Text

וְנָפְלוּ	כִּלְלָהּ	בְּאֶרֶץ	כַּשְׂדִּים
shall fall	Thus the slain	in the land	of the Chaldeans
H5307	H2491	H776	H3778

וּמִדָּקְרָהּ	בְּחוֹצוֹתֶיהָ:
and they that are thrust through	in her streets
H1856	H2351

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 49:26 (Parallel theme): Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 13:15 (Parallel theme): Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword.

Jeremiah 50:30 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 14:19 (Parallel theme): But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

Jeremiah 50:37 (Parallel theme): A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all the mingled people that are in the midst of her; and they shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed.

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