

Jeremiah 6:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble:
anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in
travail.

Analysis

The response to news of invasion shows terror: 'We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble.' Physical weakness ('feeble hands') accompanies psychological distress: 'anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail.' The childbirth metaphor appears frequently in judgment contexts, suggesting both intensity and inevitability of the coming pain. This verse captures the helplessness of those facing God's judgment—previous confidence and bravado evaporate when reality arrives. The progression from hearing to physical weakness to overwhelming anguish shows how knowledge of approaching judgment affects the whole person.

Historical Context

When news reached Jerusalem of Babylon's approach, initial disbelief gave way to panic. Archaeological evidence shows hasty defensive preparations attempted in Jerusalem's final years.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Why does knowledge of approaching judgment often paralyze rather than motivate repentance?
2. What is the significance of using childbirth imagery for judgment and eschatological events?
3. How should present awareness of future judgment shape current spiritual priorities?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמַע בְּנוֹ	אֵת	שְׁמַע וְ	בַּפְנֵי	יְדֵינוּ	אָבָה
We have heard	H853	the fame	wax feeble	thereof our hands	anguish
H8085		H8089	H7503	H3027	H6869
בָּחַזְקָה תִּכְלִין	חַיְל	פִּילִדָּה:			
hath taken hold	of us and pain	as of a woman in travail			
H2388	H2427	H3205			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 4:31 (Parallel theme): For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

Jeremiah 50:43 (Parallel theme): The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail.

Jeremiah 49:24 (Parallel theme): 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.

Isaiah 28:19 (Parallel theme): From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.

Isaiah 21:3 (Parallel theme): Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it.

Jeremiah 13:21 (Parallel theme): What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee? for thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee: shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail?

Jeremiah 30:6 (Parallel theme): Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

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