

# Jeremiah 8:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

## Analysis

God describes His careful observation of Judah's behavior: 'I hearkened and heard' uses *qashav* (קָשַׁב, to attend carefully) and *shama* (שָׁמַע, to hear). God listened intently for evidence of repentance. 'But they spake not aright' (lo-ken yedabberu, לֹא-כֵן יְדַבְּרוּ)—literally 'they do not speak rightly/correctly.' 'No man repented him of his wickedness' reveals the absence of genuine contrition anywhere in the nation. The phrase 'saying, What have I done?' represents the self-examination that should characterize repentance but was absent. Instead, 'every one turned to his course' uses *shav* (שָׁב, turned) with *meruts* (מָרוּץ, running, course)—like a horse rushing headlong into battle. The imagery suggests unthinking, unstoppable momentum toward destruction.

## Historical Context

This observation reflects Jeremiah's forty-year ministry during which he searched for genuine repentance among the people. His search for one righteous person (Jeremiah 5:1) parallels Abraham's intercession for Sodom. The horse-in-battle metaphor resonated with Judah's militaristic culture as they vacillated between Egyptian and Babylonian alliances. Archaeological evidence shows Judah maintained significant cavalry forces during this period.

## Related Passages

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**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's careful listening for repentance challenge our assumptions about divine awareness of our hearts?
2. What does the failure to ask 'What have I done?' reveal about the spiritual blindness that accompanies unrepentant sin?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶשׁ אֵין	יֵדְבָרוּ	כִּי	לֹא	וְאִשְׁמַע	הִקְשִׁי בְּתִי
<b>no man</b>	<b>but they spake not aright</b>			<b>and heard</b>	<b>I hearkened</b>
H376	H1696	H3651	H3808	H8085	H7181
כָּל הָ	עָשִׂי יִתִּי	מֶה	לֵאמֹר	כִּי עֵת וְ	עָלָיו
	<b>What have I done</b>		<b>saying</b>	<b>his wickedness</b>	<b>him of</b>
H3605	H6213	H4100	H559	H7451	H5921
בְּמִלְחָמָה:	שׁוּטֵיָּהּ	כָּס וּס	בְּמָרְצוֹתָם	שָׁב	
<b>into the battle</b>	<b>rusheth</b>	<b>as the horse</b>	<b>to his course</b>	<b>every one turned</b>	
H4421	H7857	H5483	H4794	H7725	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 14:2** (Parallel theme): The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

**Ezekiel 18:28** (Parallel theme): Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

**2 Peter 3:9** (Repentance): The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

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