

Psalms 144:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

Analysis

Cast forth lightning, and scatter them (ברֹקֶבֶק וְתִפְאַצֵּם) — Baroq baraq (flash forth lightning) depicts God as cosmic warrior wielding celestial weapons. Lightning scattered enemies at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:24) and in David's deliverance (Psalm 18:14). **Shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them** (שְׁלַח חִטְשֶׁךָ וְתַהַרְאֵם) — divine archery raining judgment like plague arrows (Deuteronomy 32:23, 42).

This military imagery describes spiritual realities: God actively fights for His people against overwhelming odds. The New Testament transforms these metaphors—God's arrows become the gospel penetrating hearts (Hebrews 4:12), and Christ's 'lightning' is His sudden return (Matthew 24:27). The church's weapons are 'not carnal' but 'mighty through God' to destroy strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern warfare relied on archers and often interpreted lightning storms as divine intervention. David experienced God scattering enemies through miraculous means (2 Samuel 5:24, 'the sound of marching in the mulberry trees'). Israel's prophets envisioned God as warrior (Isaiah 42:13, Zephaniah 3:17) fighting for His bride.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does praying for God to 'fight for you' differ from human striving and anxiety in facing opposition?
2. In what sense are lightning and arrows appropriate metaphors for God's word and gospel in spiritual warfare?
3. How should Christians pray imprecatory prayers for God's judgment on evil while loving personal enemies (Matthew 5:44)?

Interlinear Text

וְתַפִּיצֵּם בְּקָרְבָּן שְׁלַח אֶלְכָּם וְתַהְמֹם:
Cast forth lightning and scatter them shoot out thine arrows and destroy
H1299 H1300 H6327 H7971 H2671 H2000

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:23 (Parallel theme): I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

Deuteronomy 32:42 (Parallel theme): I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

Psalms 45:5 (Parallel theme): Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

Psalms 21:12 (Parallel theme): Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

