

Psalms 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

Analysis

God causes His enemies to 'turn their back' in defeat—their flight is sovereignly ordained. The imagery of God preparing arrows 'against the face of them' depicts active divine judgment. Reformed theology sees God not merely permitting evil's defeat but actively bringing it about. God is the warrior who fights for His people; victory comes through His direct intervention, not human effort alone.

Historical Context

Arrows symbolized divine judgment throughout Scripture (Deut. 32:23, Ps. 7:13). The image of God as divine archer assured Israel that military outcomes were determined in heaven, not solely on the battlefield. This encouraged trust during overwhelming odds.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does viewing God as actively fighting for you change your approach to spiritual warfare?
2. In what battles do you need to trust God's 'arrows' rather than your own strength?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	תַּשִּׁית מוֹ	שׁ כָּם	בְּ מִיתְרֵי יָךְ
H3588	Therefore shalt thou make	them turn their back	thine arrows upon thy strings
	H7896	H7926	H4340
תַּכּוֹן	עַל	פְּנֵיהֶם:	
when thou shalt make ready	H5921	against the face	
H3559		H6440	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 18:40 (Parallel theme): Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

Psalms 64:7 (Parallel theme): But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.