

Psalms 74:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

Analysis

The psalmist describes destruction: "A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees" (Hebrew *yivvada k-m-vi l-ma-lah b-svakh-etz qardummot*). The image depicts woodsmen hacking temple cedar—once honored craftsmen are now destructive invaders. What was built with skill is demolished with axes. The verse captures tragic irony: tools meant for construction become instruments of desecration. The reversal from building to destroying mirrors Israel's covenant reversal from blessing to curse.

Historical Context

Solomon's temple was renowned for cedar paneling and carved work (1 Kings 6:15-36). Hiram's craftsmen from Tyre were "famous" for skillful temple construction. Now Babylonian soldiers hack it apart. This fulfilled Deuteronomy 28:45-52's curse warnings. Jesus prophesied similar destruction of Herod's temple (Matthew 24:1-2), fulfilled in 70 AD by Romans.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does seeing destruction of what was carefully built illustrate the devastating consequences of covenant unfaithfulness?
2. What spiritual "temples" (ministries, relationships, character) have you seen demolished through sin or negligence?
3. How does Christ as the indestructible temple (John 2:19-21) guarantee permanent security for believers?

Interlinear Text

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|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| אִישׁ יָדוּעַ | כַּמֶּנְבַּי יֵא | לָמַעְלָה | בְּסִבְרָה | עֵץ |
| A man was famous | according as he had lifted up | H4605 | upon the thick | trees |
| H3045 | H935 | | H5442 | H6086 |
| קִרְדָּמוֹת: | | | | |
| axes | | | | |
| H7134 | | | | |