

Amos 5:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up.

Analysis

The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise (נָפְלָה לֹא-תוֹסִיף קָוָם בְּתוּלָת)—the verb naphal (נָפָל, "fallen") in the perfect tense indicates completed action: Israel has fallen, not will fall. From God's eternal perspective, their doom is so certain it's spoken as accomplished fact. The term "virgin of Israel" (betulat Yisrael, בְּתוּלָת יִשְׂרָאֵל) depicts the nation as young woman in her prime, emphasizing tragic waste—Israel dies before fulfilling her destiny. The phrase **she shall no more rise** (lo-tosif qum, לֹא-תוֹסִיף קָוָם) uses emphatic negative: absolutely will not rise again. This prophesies Israel's permanent end as political entity.

The verse continues: **she is forsaken upon her land; there is none to raise her up** (nitshah al-admatah ein meqimah, נִטְשָׁה עַל-אֲדָמָתָה אֵין מֶקִימָה). The verb natash (נִטְשָׁה, "forsaken/abandoned") describes corpse left unburied—the ultimate indignity in ancient culture. Israel lies dead on her own land with no one to bury her or raise her up. The imagery evokes battlefield carnage where bodies rot unburied. This reverses covenant promise: God gave Israel the land as inheritance, but now she lies dead upon it, forsaken. The phrase "none to raise her up" emphasizes total abandonment—no ally, no rescuer, no hope of recovery.

Historical Context

The imagery of "virgin of Israel" lying dead resonates with ancient Near Eastern lament traditions. Daughters represented hope, future, posterity—a virgin's death

before marriage and childbearing was tragedy compounded. By depicting Israel this way, Amos emphasizes wasted potential and permanent loss. The prophecy fulfilled literally in 722 BC when Assyria conquered Samaria, deported the population, and repopulated the land with foreigners (2 Kings 17:6, 24). The northern kingdom never recovered—the ten tribes were "lost" to history. Jeremiah later uses similar imagery for Judah (Jeremiah 14:17, 18:13), showing this prophetic tradition continued. Yet God's ultimate purposes transcend national Israel's failure—the New Covenant in Christ brings resurrection life to all who believe, Jew and Gentile alike (Ephesians 2:11-22).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does describing Israel as "virgin" intensify the tragedy of their coming judgment?
2. What does it mean that Israel's doom is spoken in past tense ("is fallen") before it historically occurred?
3. How does this lament relate to Christ's weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44) before its destruction in AD 70?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁרָא לְבָתוֹל תְּמִקִּימָה:
is fallen H3808 she shall no more rise The virgin of Israel
H5307 H3254 H6965 H1330 H3478

מִקִּימָה: אֵין עַל אֶדְמָת הָעֵל נִטְשׁ הַ
she is forsaken H5921 upon her land rise
H5203 H127 H6965

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 14:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

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