

Isaiah 16:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.

Analysis

"I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh." Despite Moab's enmity, Isaiah mourns their devastation—true prophetic compassion. "I will water thee with my tears" uses irrigation imagery ironically—tears water ruins instead of nourishing vines. Battle cries falling upon harvest indicate war destroying abundance. The prophet weeps not because judgment is unjust, but because sin's consequences are tragic. This models Christian response: unwavering in truth, yet genuinely sorrowful. Christ wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) while pronouncing judgment.

Historical Context

These cities formed Moab's agricultural heartland. Ancient warfare timed campaigns to harvest season—capturing food supplies while denying them to enemies. Vintage shouts were ironically replaced by war cries. Isaiah's compassion for enemies reflects the prophetic tradition—Jeremiah similarly mourned Judah's judgment while proclaiming it. This differentiates true prophets from false ones who either minimize judgment or announce it gleefully.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Isaiah's grief for enemies model proper Christian response to divine judgment?
2. What does watering ruins with tears teach about sin's tragedy despite justice demanding consequences?
3. How should conviction about righteous judgment coexist with genuine sorrow?

Interlinear Text

שְׁבָתָם הַגְּפַנְתָּעַל שְׁבָתָם הַגְּפַנְתָּעַל
H5921 H3651 Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah
H1058 H1065 H3270 H1612 H7643

עַל כִּי אֶלְעַל הַחַטָּאת וְאֶבְיַיְהָ
I will water thee with my tears O Heshbon and Elealeh H3588 H5921
H7301 H1832 H2809 H500

נִפְלֵל: הַיְד דְּלִזְעִים כְּעַל קְיַצְתָּה
for thy summer fruits H5921 and for thy harvest for the shouting is fallen
H7019 H7105 H1959 H5307

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 40:12 (Parallel theme): Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

