

Isaiah 22:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly,
labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the
daughter of my people.

Analysis

Look away from me; I will weep bitterly—Isaiah's anguish is so profound he refuses comfort. The Hebrew אָמַר (amar, "Therefore said I") introduces his personal lament. **I will weep bitterly** (אֶבְכֶּה בַּמֶּרִי, evkeh vamari) uses the verb בָּכָה (bakah, weep) intensified by mar (bitter)—sobbing with bitter grief, not mere sadness.

Labour not to comfort me (אַל-תְּאַיֵּצוּ לְנַחֲמֵנִי, al-ta'itsu lenachameni)—don't hurry/press to console me. True prophets don't just announce judgment; they grieve over it. **The spoiling of the daughter of my people** (שָׂד בַּת-עַמִּי, shod bat-ami)—"daughter of my people" is a tender, corporate term for Jerusalem/Judah. The prophet's heart breaks over the coming devastation, modeling how God's messengers should combine truth-telling with compassion.

Historical Context

Prophetic grief is a consistent biblical theme. Jeremiah is the 'weeping prophet' (Jeremiah 9:1, 13:17). Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Paul had 'great heaviness and continual sorrow' for Israel (Romans 9:2). Isaiah's bitter weeping shows that announcing judgment doesn't mean callousness—true prophets grieve over sin's consequences even while declaring them. This distinguishes genuine prophetic ministry from harsh judgmentalism.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does Isaiah's refusal of comfort teach about the depth of grief appropriate when God's people face judgment?
2. How can we balance declaring truth about sin's consequences with genuine compassion for those facing judgment?
3. What does 'the daughter of my people' reveal about how we should view the church or our nation—with tender concern despite their failures?

Interlinear Text

עַל H5921	כֵּן H3651	אָמַר רְחִי H559	שֶׁעוֹ H8159	מִנִּי H4480	אָמַר רְ H4843	בִּבְכִי H1065
		Therefore said	I Look away		bitterly	from me I will weep
אֶל H408	תָּא יִצוּ H213	לְנַחֵם נִי H5162	עַל H5921	שׁ ד H7701		בֵּת H1323
	labour	not to comfort	me because of the spoiling			of the daughter
		עַמִּי: H5971				
		of my people				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 9:1 (Parallel theme): Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Matthew 2:18 (Parallel theme): In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Psalms 77:2 (Parallel theme): In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

Jeremiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive.

Jeremiah 31:15 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

Micah 1:8 (Parallel theme): Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org