

Isaiah 24:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened,
the mirth of the land is gone.

Analysis

There is a crying for wine in the streets—tse'aqah (תְּצַאקָה, "crying/outcry") in the chutsot (חוֹצוֹת, "streets/public squares") indicates public lamentation. The cry is al-yayin (עַל־יַיִן, "concerning wine")—people wail over wine's absence, suggesting both literal shortage (failed harvest, disrupted trade) and symbolic loss of joy. This echoes Joel 1:5's call to drunkards to weep because wine is cut off. Public squares, normally places of commerce and celebration, become venues of corporate grief.

All joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone—arab (אָרַב, "darkened/evening") suggests twilight descending, joy fading into night. Simchah (שִׂמְחָה, "joy") becomes arebah (אֶרְבָּה, "darkened"). **The mirth of the land** uses mesos ha'aretz (מְשׁוֹשׁ הָאָרֶץ), "exultation of the earth," now galah (גָּלָה, "gone into exile/removed"). The verb for "gone" is the same used for deportation into exile—joy itself is exiled from the land. Lamentations 5:15 similarly mourns: "The joy of our heart is ceased."

Historical Context

Public squares (chutsot) were the economic and social heart of ancient cities—markets, legal proceedings, and public gatherings occurred there. Wine scarcity would have been publicly visible and economically devastating, affecting merchants, consumers, and the agricultural base. The 'crying for wine' may reflect both literal shortage during siege (when Assyrian or Babylonian forces surrounded cities, cutting off supply) and the psychological despair of a people under

judgment. Exile imagery ('gone') foreshadows the Babylonian deportation (586 BC) when Judah's joy was literally exiled to Mesopotamia.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the public nature of this lamentation ('crying in the streets') emphasize the corporate dimension of covenant-breaking and judgment?
2. What does the verb 'galah' (gone into exile) teach about joy's dependence on God's presence and blessing?
3. In what ways do modern societies 'cry for wine'—seeking happiness in substances or circumstances rather than in God?

Interlinear Text

צֹחֵ הַ	עַל	הַיַּיִן	בְּחוּצַיִת	עֲרֵבָה	כָּל	שִׂמְחָתָהּ
There is a crying	H5921	for wine	in the streets	is darkened	H3605	all joy
H6682		H3196	H2351	H6150		H8057
הַגָּלָה	וְשִׂמְחָתָהּ	הַמִּשְׂכָּה	הָאֶרֶץ:			
is gone	the mirth	of the land				
H1540	H4885	H776				

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 7:14 (Parallel theme): And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.

