

# Isaiah 24:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

## Analysis

**From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs** (מִכְנֹף הָאֶרֶץ, mik'naf ha'aretz, literally 'from the wing/edge of the earth')—The prophet hears praise echoing from earth's extremities. **Even glory to the righteous** (עֲבִי לְצַדִּיק, tsebi latsadiq) can mean 'glory to the Righteous One' (God) or 'glory belongs to the righteous.' Either way, it celebrates divine vindication.

Then comes jarring reversal: **But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!** (רָזִי לִי רָזִי לִי, razi-li razi-li)—The repetition intensifies anguish. רָזִי (razi) means 'my leanness,' 'my wasting away,' suggesting physical/spiritual emaciation from witnessing continued treachery. **The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously**—The Hebrew repeats בָּגַד (bagad, to act treacherously) four times in escalating forms, creating a drumbeat of betrayal. This isn't occasional faithlessness but pervasive, deepening treachery that devastates the prophet.

## Historical Context

This verse captures prophetic tension: glimpsing future salvation yet remaining immersed in present sin. Isaiah hears distant songs of the redeemed but confronts

immediate reality—persistent human treachery. 'Treacherous dealers' (בִּגְדִים, bogdim) refers to covenant-breakers, those who betray trust, particularly Israel's unfaithfulness to God. The prophet's anguish reflects spiritual burden—seeing both God's promised glory and humanity's continued rebellion. Jeremiah experienced similar agony (Jeremiah 9:2). This prophetic grief foreshadows Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44), seeing both coming judgment and offered salvation.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How should believers balance celebrating God's ultimate victory with grieving over present evil and suffering?
2. What does Isaiah's visceral reaction ('my leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!') teach about appropriate spiritual responses to persistent sin?
3. In what ways does the repeated emphasis on treachery reveal the seriousness of covenant-breaking and unfaithfulness to God?

## Interlinear Text

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מִכֶּנֶּר	הָאָרֶץ	זִמְרֹת	שָׁמָעֵנוּ	צָבָה
From the uttermost part	of the earth	songs	have we heard	even glory
H3671	H776	H2158	H8085	H6643
לְצַדִּיק	וְאָמַרְתִּי	כִּי	לִי	כִּי
to the righteous	But I said	My leanness	H0	My leanness
H6662	H559	H7334	H7334	H7334
				לִי
				H0
				וְאָמַרְתִּי
				H188
בָּגְדוּ:	בָּגְדוּ:	וְכָבֵד		
have dealt treacherously	have dealt treacherously	have dealt very		
H898	H898	H899		
בָּגְדוּ:	בָּגְדוּ:			
have dealt treacherously	have dealt treacherously			
H898	H898			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 21:2** (Parallel theme): A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

**Isaiah 33:1** (Parallel theme): Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

**Jeremiah 5:11** (Parallel theme): For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

**Jeremiah 3:20** (Parallel theme): Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.