

# Isaiah 27:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

## Analysis

**When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.** This verse continues describing the desolate city, now using agricultural imagery. **When the boughs thereof are withered** (beyavesh qetsireyha, בַּבְשׁ קְצִירָה, literally "when its harvest/branches dry up") pictures dead, brittle branches. **They shall be broken off** (tishavarna, תִּשְׁבַּרְנָה) suggests easy snapping of lifeless wood.

**The women come, and set them on fire** (nashim ba'ot me'irot otah, נָשִׁים בָּאוֹת מֵעִירֹת אֹתָה)—women gathering dead branches for fuel, the most mundane domestic task, occurs in ruins of once-great powers. The reason for this irreversible judgment: **for it is a people of no understanding** (ki lo am-binot hu, קַיְלָא עַמָּד בִּינָה) (בִּינָה). Binah (בִּינָה) means discernment, insight, wisdom—specifically spiritual understanding. Romans 1:21-22 describes Gentiles who "became vain in their imaginations...professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Rejecting knowledge of God leads to judicial abandonment.

**Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that**

**formed them will shew them no favour** reverses covenant language. God as Creator (osehu, עָשָׂה, maker) and Former (yotsero, יָצַר, potter/shaper) normally implies care, but willful rejection of understanding results in forfeited mercy (lo yerachamenu, לֹא יַרְחַם אֵנוֹן) and favour (lo yechannenu, לֹא יַחַנֵּן אֵנוֹן). This is Hosea's "Lo-ruhamah" ("no mercy," Hosea 1:6) and "Lo-ammi" ("not my people," Hosea 1:9) made permanent for those who finally reject God.

## Historical Context

---

Nations surrounding Israel had access to knowledge of the true God through Israel's presence, Scripture, and prophets, yet persistently chose idolatry and opposed God's people. Their lack of understanding was willful, not innocent ignorance. Romans 1:18-32 explains how suppressing truth leads to darkened understanding and judicial hardening. For the church, this warning applies to apostates who had knowledge but rejected it (Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:26-27). Persisting in unbelief despite clear revelation results in irreversible judgment.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

---

1. What does this verse teach about the consequences of willfully rejecting spiritual understanding?
2. How does being created and formed by God increase accountability for those who reject Him?
3. What distinguishes 'a people of no understanding' (willful rejection) from genuine spiritual seekers who struggle with doubts?

## Interlinear Text

---

בֵּבֶשׁ	קָצִירָה	תִּשְׁבַּרְנָה	בָּאַוְתָּה	נָשָׁיִם	בָּאַוְתָּה
thereof are withered	When the boughs	they shall be broken off	the women	come	
H3001	H7105	H7665	H802		H935
מְאֵיר וֹתֶה	לֹא כִּי אָוֹתָה	עַם	בִּינּוֹת		
and set them on fire	H853	H3588	for it is a people	of no understanding	
H215		H3808	H5971		H998
עַל הַאֲלֵין	יְבָטַח כֵּן	עָשָׂה הַזֶּה			
H1931	H5921	H3651	H3808	them will not have mercy	therefore he that made
			H7355		H6213
וַיַּצְרֵר	לֹא	יְחִיבֵּר			
on them and he that formed	H3808	them will shew them no favour			
H3335		H2603			

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Isaiah 1:3** (Parallel theme): The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

**Isaiah 43:7** (Creation): Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

**Isaiah 44:24** (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

**Isaiah 43:1** (Creation): But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

**Jeremiah 8:7** (Parallel theme): Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

