

Jeremiah 22:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed.

Analysis

Go up to Lebanon, and cry—God commands personified Jerusalem to ascend the heights and wail from three mountain ranges: Lebanon (north), Bashan (northeast), and Abarim/Pisgah (east). These geographical markers form a panoramic sweep encompassing Judah's entire horizon. The repeated imperative **and cry** (אַלְעַז, tse'aqi—feminine singular, addressing daughter Zion) emphasizes desperate lamentation. Why? **For all thy lovers are destroyed** (נִשְׁבָרוּ כָל-מַאֲהָבוֹת, nishberu kol-me'ahavayikh—'broken/shattered are all your lovers').

The term מַאֲהָבוֹת (me'ahavim, 'lovers') sarcastically denotes Judah's political allies—Egypt, Edom, Moab—whom she trusted instead of Yahweh. These covenant-breaking alliances constitute spiritual adultery. When Babylon swept through the region, these 'lovers' proved worthless, just as Hosea and Ezekiel had dramatized through their marriages. The mountains witness Judah's shame: her trust in human power leaves her abandoned and desolate.

Historical Context

During Jehoiakim and Zedekiah's reigns (609-586 BC), Judah vacillated between Babylonian and Egyptian allegiance, seeking security through treaties rather than covenant faithfulness. By 586 BC, all surrounding nations had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar—Egypt defeated, Edom subdued, Moab conquered. Judah's political 'lovers' offered no rescue.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What modern 'lovers' (securities, alliances, ideologies) do you trust instead of God?
2. How does political idolatry manifest in your own nationalism or tribalism?
3. What would it mean to lament from 'the mountaintops' over your misplaced trust?

Interlinear Text

קְרַב	לְבָנָן	בַּלְבָנָן	וּבְבָשָׁן	וְבְבָשָׁן	תַּתִּין	קְרַב	לְבָנָן	בַּלְבָנָן	וְבְבָשָׁן	וְבְבָשָׁן	וְבְבָשָׁן
Go up	to Lebanon	and cry	in Bashan	and lift up	thy voice	and cry	to Lebanon	and cry	in Bashan	and lift up	thy voice
H5927	H3844	H6817	H1316	H5414	H6963	H6817	H5927	H3844	H6817	H1316	H5414
מִאָבָּהִים	כָּל	נִשְׁבַּר	וְ	כָּל	מִשְׁבַּר	וְ	מִאָבָּהִים	כָּל	נִשְׁבַּר	וְ	מִשְׁבַּר
from the passages	H3588	are destroyed	H7665	H3605	for all thy lovers	H157	from the passages	H3588	are destroyed	H7665	H3605
H5676							H5676				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 27:12 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

Ezekiel 23:22 (Love): Therefore, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side;

Lamentations 1:2 (Love): She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

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