

# Jeremiah 48:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All ye that are about him, bemoan him; and all ye that know his name, say, How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!

## Analysis

**All ye that are about him, bemoan him**—(נָדוּ לוּ קָלַ-סְבִּיבִיו) Jeremiah calls neighboring nations to lament Moab's fall. **How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!**—(אֵיכָה נִשְׁבַּר מַטֶּה-עֹז מַקְלֵל תִּפְאָרָה) The matteh oz (staff of strength) and maqel tifarah (rod of beauty/glory) symbolize royal authority and national splendor. Both 'staff' and 'rod' signify dominion (Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:2).

The rhetorical 'How!' (eykah, also beginning Lamentations) expresses shock at the reversal of fortunes. Nations that seemed permanently established—possessing both power (oz) and glory (tifarah)—can be broken suddenly. This anticipates Revelation's lament over fallen Babylon: 'Alas, alas, that great city!' (Revelation 18:10, 16, 19).

## Historical Context

Moab had maintained independence and regional influence for centuries, controlling the lucrative King's Highway trade route. The 'strong staff' and 'beautiful rod' likely reference both Moab's military power and its cultural prestige, including monumental architecture at cities like Dibon. Neighboring nations (Edom, Ammon, Arabian tribes) had commercial and diplomatic relations with Moab, making its fall economically and politically shocking.

## Related Passages

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

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What contemporary 'strong staffs' and 'beautiful rods'—institutions, nations, or leaders—seem unbreakable but stand under divine judgment?
2. How should observing the fall of powerful entities affect our trust in worldly systems versus eternal kingdom values?
3. What is the proper balance between mourning others' calamities (as commanded here) and recognizing divine justice in judgment?

## Interlinear Text

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him bemoan	H0	H3605	All ye that are about	H3605	him and all ye that know
H5110			H5439		H3045

his name	say	H349	broken	staff	How is the strong	rod
H8034	H559		H7665	H4294	H5797	H4731

תפאורה:  
and the beautiful  
H8597

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 9:4** (Parallel theme): For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

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