

Jeremiah 9:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning women, that they may come:

Analysis

This verse calls for mourners: 'Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women.' The Hebrew meqonenoth (מְקוֹנוֹת, mourning women) were professional wailers who led public lamentation at funerals. 'That they may come; and send for cunning women, that they may come.' The Hebrew chakamoth (חֲקָמוֹת, skilled/wise women) indicates expertise in funeral rites and laments. The call for professional mourners suggests the coming devastation will exceed family capacity for grief—organized, expert mourning will be required for the magnitude of death coming. The double command ('call,' 'send') emphasizes urgency.

Historical Context

Professional mourning women were common throughout the ancient Near East. Egyptian and Mesopotamian art depicts them at funerals with characteristic gestures and dress. In Israel, these women led communal grief with traditional laments (2 Chronicles 35:25). The passage suggests the scale of death will require their full mobilization—every skilled mourner in the nation called to service.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the call for professional mourners suggest about the scale of coming judgment?
2. How does organized, communal grief differ from individual sorrow, and what purpose does it serve?

Interlinear Text

וְיֹאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֶל־הַתְּבֹונָה וְאֶל־אֶבְרָא וְאֶל־יְהֹוָה כֵּן

H3541 Thus saith the LORD of hosts Consider ye and call
H559 H3068 H6635 H995 H7121

שְׁלַח וְיַחֲכָם וְתַעֲלֵם וְאֶל־וּתְבֹונָה וְלִמְקוֹן וְתַעֲלֵם

for the mourning women that they may come H413 for cunning and send
H6969 H935 H2450 H7971

וּתְבֹונָה:

that they may come

H935

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 12:5 (Parallel theme): Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

2 Chronicles 35:25 (Parallel theme): And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.