

Jeremiah 9:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.

Analysis

This verse continues the summons: 'And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us.' The Hebrew mahar (מַהֲרָה, hasten, hurry) and nehi (נְהִי, lamentation) indicate urgency—mourning must begin immediately. 'That our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.' The Hebrew imagery is extravagant: eyes 'running' (yarad, יָרַד, descend, flow) with tears, eyelids 'gushing' (nazal, נָזַל, flow, drip) water. The mourners' songs will provoke the tears the hardened people cannot otherwise produce. They need external stimulus to grieve appropriately for their coming destruction.

Historical Context

The mourning women's function included teaching survivors how to grieve, leading ritual expressions of loss, and ensuring the dead received proper honor. Verse 20 commands teaching daughters this skill, suggesting generational transmission of mourning expertise. The inability to mourn naturally—requiring professional help—may indicate the spiritual numbness described earlier (8:12).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does the need for professional mourners to stimulate grief reveal about the people's spiritual condition?
2. How does authentic grief over sin differ from the induced weeping described here?

Interlinear Text

וְתַמְהַ בָּהּ	עַל יְנוּ וְתַשְׁבַּחַ	בְּ הִ	וְתַבְּדַלֵּה
And let them make haste	and take up	H5921	a wailing
H4116	H5375	H5092	H3381
עַיִן יְנוּ	וְעַפְעַפְתִּי	זְלִלָּה	מִים:
for us that our eyes	with tears	and our eyelids	gush out
H5869	H1832	H6079	H5140
			H4325

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 14:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

Jeremiah 9:1 (Parallel theme): Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Isaiah 22:4 (Parallel theme): Therefore said I, Look away from me; I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

