

Job 30:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

Analysis

My harp also is turned to mourning (וַתְּהִי לְאֶבֶל כִּנּוֹרִי, vatehi le-evel kinnori)—The noun kinnor (כִּנּוֹר) is a stringed instrument, symbol of joy and celebration (Genesis 4:21, Psalm 33:2). The noun evel (אֶבֶל) means mourning, grief. Job's music, once joyful, now laments. The phrase **my organ into the voice of them that weep** (וְעָגַבִּי לְקוֹל בְּכִיִּים) uses ugav (עָגַב), another musical instrument (likely a flute or pipe). The "voice of them that weep" (qol bokhim) indicates Job's music accompanies tears, not celebration.

This is the inversion of worship. Psalm 137:2-4 parallels this: "We hanged our harps... How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?" Exile silences praise. Job experiences spiritual exile while physically present. This anticipates Good Friday's silence before Easter's song. Lamentations becomes praise only through resurrection. The gospel transforms mourning: "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Christ's resurrection ensures our harps will sing again.

Historical Context

Music was integral to ancient Israelite worship and culture. Harp and organ (pipes/flute) accompanied feasts, worship, and celebration. Their silence or transformation to lament instruments indicated profound crisis. David's harp soothed Saul (1 Samuel 16:23), but Job's harp intensifies grief. Temple musicians

led both praise (2 Chronicles 5:12-13) and lament. Job's reversed music signals liturgical crisis—worship turned to mourning.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can lament be a form of worship rather than abandonment of faith?
2. What does the transformation of Job's instruments teach about suffering's comprehensive impact?
3. How does the Psalter's blend of praise and lament guide our worship during suffering?

Interlinear Text

וְיָהּ י	לְ אֵבֶל	כִּנּוֹר י	וְעֹגֶב י	לִקְוֹל
H1961	also is turned to mourning	My harp	and my organ	into the voice
	H60	H3658	H5748	H6963

בְּכִיָּם:
of them that weep
H1058

Additional Cross-References

Lamentations 5:15 (Parallel theme): The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.

Isaiah 21:4 (Parallel theme): My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me.

