

Lamentations 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: the Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress.

Analysis

God's active role in judgment continues: "The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me" (silah kol-abirai Adonai be-kirbi). The verb salah (שָׁלַח, "trodden under foot, rejected") describes contemptuous trampling—treating warriors as worthless. The "mighty men" (abirim, אֲבִירִים) were elite warriors, yet God crushes them effortlessly. "He hath called an assembly against me" (kara alai mo'ed) uses ironic language—mo'ed usually means appointed feast or sacred assembly (Leviticus 23). Here it's an appointed time of judgment, inverting festive gathering into slaughter. "To crush my young men" (lishbor bacuraj) describes breaking Israel's military strength—the young warriors who should defend are instead destroyed. The final image: "the Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress" (darakh Adonai gat le-betulat bat-Yehudah). Winepress imagery appears in Isaiah 63:3 (God treading nations) and Revelation 14:19-20, 19:15 (final judgment). The virgin represents Jerusalem/Judah—once pure, now crushed like grapes, her blood flowing like wine.

Historical Context

Judah's military was systematically destroyed by Babylon. 2 Kings 25:4-7 records the army fleeing when walls were breached, King Zedekiah captured, his sons executed, and himself blinded. Jeremiah 39:4-7 gives similar account. The 'mighty

men' included professional soldiers, officers, and the royal guard—all defeated or killed. The winepress metaphor would be familiar; ancient winepresses involved treading grapes with feet to extract juice. Archaeological excavations have uncovered numerous winepress installations throughout Israel. The image of God treading people in a winepress is horrifying—human lives crushed like fruit. Yet it accurately portrays judgment's totality. Joel 3:13 uses similar imagery: 'the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.'

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God 'treading' and 'trampling' His people challenge comfortable views of divine love divorced from holiness and justice?
2. What does the ironic use of 'appointed feast' (mo'ed) for judgment teach about God's sovereignty over timing?
3. How does Christ experience the winepress of God's wrath (Isaiah 63:3, Revelation 19:15) so believers are spared?

Interlinear Text

סָלַךְ	נִ	כָּל	יְהִי	אָדָן	בְּקָרְבָּן
hath trodden under foot		H3605	all my mighty	The Lord	men in the midst
H5541		H47		H136	H7130

בְּחֹזֶק	רִ	לְשָׁבֶר	מֹעֵד	עַל	אֶת
of me he hath called	H5921	an assembly	against me to crush	my young men	
H7121		H4150	H7665		H970

בְּתַ	לְבִתּוּל	תְּ	אָדָן	יְ	גַּת
the daughter	the virgin	The Lord	as in a winepress	hath trodden	
H1323	H1330	H136	H1660	H1869	
					H3063

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 28:18 (Parallel theme): And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

Isaiah 63:3 (Parallel theme): I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

Malachi 4:3 (References Lord): And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.

Revelation 19:15 (Parallel theme): And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Hebrews 10:29 (Parallel theme): Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Luke 21:24 (Parallel theme): And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
