

Lamentations 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

Analysis

The personification of Jerusalem as a weeping widow captures the profound grief of covenant judgment. The Hebrew *bakho tivkeh* (בָּכּוֹ תִבְכֶּה) uses an infinitive absolute construction meaning "weeping, she weeps"—emphasizing continuous, uncontrollable lamentation. The night setting intensifies the loneliness; ancient cities bustled by day but night brought vulnerability and isolation. Jerusalem's tears find no comfort from former allies who prove treacherous. The phrase "all her lovers" refers to political alliances with pagan nations—Egypt, Assyria, and others—that Judah pursued instead of trusting Yahweh (Jeremiah 2:36, Ezekiel 16:26-29). These "friends" who should have helped in crisis instead became enemies. This illustrates the futility of trusting human alliances over divine covenant. What appears as political wisdom apart from God becomes spiritual adultery leading to abandonment. Theologically, this verse reveals the consequences of misplaced trust. God designed Israel for exclusive covenant relationship, yet she sought security in foreign alliances. The Reformed understanding emphasizes that salvation comes through faith alone, not human effort or alliances. Christ alone provides the comfort that worldly "lovers" promise but cannot deliver (John 14:18, Hebrews 13:5).

Historical Context

Written circa 586 BC following Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Jerusalem, this lament reflects the immediate aftermath of the 18-month siege. The city that once hosted international commerce and pilgrims now sat empty. Archaeological evidence from this period shows widespread destruction in Judean cities, confirming biblical accounts. The "lovers" reference reflects Judah's foreign policy under kings like Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who vacillated between Egypt and Babylon, trusting neither in Yahweh. When Jerusalem fell, Egypt offered no military support (Jeremiah 37:5-10), and neighboring nations like Edom actively celebrated Judah's downfall (Psalm 137:7, Obadiah 1:10-14). Ancient Near Eastern treaties obligated allies to provide mutual defense, yet Judah's partners abandoned these commitments. The imagery of a widow abandoned by lovers would have resonated powerfully in ancient culture where women's security depended entirely on male protection. Without husband (king), sons (heirs), or kinsmen-redeemers (allies), Jerusalem faced complete destitution.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What modern 'lovers' or alliances do we trust instead of placing our full confidence in God's covenant promises?
2. How does Jerusalem's experience of abandonment by false allies illuminate the danger of compromising faith for worldly security?
3. In what ways does Christ fulfill the role of the true friend who 'sticks closer than a brother' (Proverbs 18:24) in contrast to Jerusalem's treacherous allies?

4. How should the certainty of divine judgment on covenant breaking shape our view of the church's relationship with secular culture and political powers?

Interlinear Text

תִּבְכֶּה ה	תִּבְכֶּה ה	בַּלַּיְלָה	וְדַמְעָתָהּ	עַל	לְחִיָּהּ ה
She weepeth	She weepeth	in the night	and her tears	H5921	are on her cheeks
H1058	H1058	H3915	H1832		H3895
אֵין	לָהּ ה	מִנְחָה מִ	מִכָּל	אֹהֲבֵי יָהּ	כָּל
H369	H0	she hath none to comfort	H3605	among all her lovers	H3605
		H5162		H157	
רַעַיָּהּ	בְּגָדוֹ	לָהּ ה	בְּה	יֵה יוֹ	ה
her all her friends	have dealt treacherously	H0	H1961	H0	
H7453	H898				
לְאֹיְבֵיהֶם:					
with her they are become her enemies					
H341					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 6:6 (Parallel theme): I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

Micah 7:5 (Parallel theme): Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

Psalms 31:11 (Parallel theme): I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me.

Jeremiah 30:14 (Love): All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased.

Jeremiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive.

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!

Jeremiah 4:30 (Love): And when thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.

Lamentations 1:9 (Parallel theme): Her filthiness is in her skirts; she remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: she had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself.

Lamentations 1:21 (Parallel theme): They have heard that I sigh: there is none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done it: thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called, and they shall be like unto me.

Lamentations 1:19 (Love): I called for my lovers, but they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.