

# Lamentations 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew all that were pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

## Analysis

A terrifying image: "He hath bent his bow like an enemy" (darakh kasho ke-oyev, דָּרַךְ קָשׁוֹ כְּאֹיֵב). God assumes the posture of a warrior attacking His own people. The term oyev (אֹיֵב, "enemy") shocks—the covenant LORD treating Israel as an enemy. "Stood with his right hand as an adversary" (nitsav yemino ke-tsar) continues the military imagery. God's right hand, which should defend Israel (Psalm 44:3), now attacks. The verse's climax: "and slew all that were pleasant to the eye" (vayaharog kol machamadei-ayin). The "pleasant to the eye" (machamadei-ayin) may refer to young men and women in their prime, or to everything visually beautiful in Jerusalem. The final phrase intensifies: "in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion he poured out his fury like fire" (be-ohel bat-Tsiyon shaphakh ka-esh khamato). Divine fury (chemah, חֵמָה) pours out like molten fire in the very place meant for worship. This demonstrates that location and religious heritage provide no immunity from judgment when hearts are rebellious.

## Historical Context

Archers bending bows is common ancient warfare imagery, but God Himself as archer appears rarely and always in judgment contexts. Psalm 7:12-13 warns God will whet His sword and bend His bow for the wicked. Job 16:12-13 uses similar imagery of God's arrows piercing Job. Deuteronomy 32:23 threatens: 'I will heap

mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.' The 'right hand as adversary' inverts Exodus 15:6: 'Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power.' The 'pleasant to the eye' echoes Eden—the tree was 'pleasant to the eyes' (Genesis 3:6). What humans find attractive and valuable, if not submitted to God, becomes target of judgment. The pouring out of fury 'like fire' fulfills Deuteronomy 32:22: 'For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell.' Jeremiah 7:20 warns God will pour out fury on Jerusalem for idolatry: 'it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.'

## **Related Passages**

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## **Study Questions**

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1. How does God taking the position of enemy challenge our assumptions about unconditional divine favor apart from covenant faithfulness?
2. What does it mean that God's right hand—the hand of blessing—becomes the instrument of judgment when we persist in rebellion?
3. In what ways does Christ satisfy the divine fury 'poured out like fire' so that believers face grace rather than wrath?

## Interlinear Text

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דָּבַר ה'	קִשָּׁתוֹ	כְּאוֹיֵב	נָצַב	יְמִינוֹ	
He hath bent	his bow	like an enemy	he stood	with his right hand	
H1869	H7198	H341	H5324	H3225	
כַּצֵּר	וַיַּהַרְגֵם	כָּל	מִמְּדֵי	עַיִן	בֵּית הָעֵל
as an adversary	and slew	H3605	all that were pleasant	to the eye	in the tabernacle
H6862	H2026		H4261	H5869	H168
בֵּית	צִיּוֹן	שָׁפַךְ	כַּאֲשֶׁר	חֲמָתוֹ	
of the daughter	of Zion	he poured out	like fire	his fury	
H1323	H6726	H8210	H784	H2534	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 7:20** (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

**Isaiah 42:25** (Parallel theme): Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

**Jeremiah 21:5** (Parallel theme): And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

**Ezekiel 24:25** (Parallel theme): Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,

**Job 6:4** (Parallel theme): For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

**Jeremiah 30:14** (Parallel theme): 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.

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