

Lamentations 4:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

Analysis

Chapter 4 opens with divine judgment executed: **"The LORD hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof."** The Hebrew *killah* YHWH *et-chamato shafakh charon apo vayyatset-esh be-Tsiyon vatochal yesodoteha* emphasizes completed action. *Killah* (כָּלָה, "accomplished, completed") means God has fully executed His planned judgment. *Chamato* (חַמָּתוֹ, "His fury") and *charon apo* (חַרוֹן אַפּוֹ, "fierce anger") are strong terms for divine wrath.

"Poured out" uses *shafakh* (שָׁפַךְ), meaning to pour out completely, like emptying a vessel. God's stored-up anger has been fully released. "Kindled a fire" (*vayyatset-esh*, וַיַּצִּת־אֵשׁ) describes literal burning during Jerusalem's destruction (2 Kings 25:9). "Devoured the foundations" (*vatochal yesodoteha*, וַתֹּאכַל יְסוּדוֹתֶיהָ) indicates destruction so thorough that even foundations—the most permanent structures—were consumed.

Theologically, this verse asserts God's active role in Jerusalem's fall. It wasn't merely Babylonian military superiority but divine judgment. The language of fury, anger, and fire recalls Deuteronomy 32:22: "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." The covenant curses were fully executed.

Historical Context

The literal fire of 586 BC fulfilled this prophecy. 2 Kings 25:9 records: "And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire." Nebuchadnezzar's forces systematically burned the city. Archaeological excavations confirm extensive fire damage—layers of ash, burnt timbers, heat-cracked stones, evidence of intense conflagration.

The fires devoured even foundations. Stone foundations don't typically burn, but intense heat can crack and destabilize them. The language emphasizes totality—nothing remained intact. Micah 3:12 had prophesied: "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps." The desolation was so complete that the site resembled rubble heaps rather than a city.

The theological significance is that God Himself kindled this fire. Isaiah 30:27-28 describes divine anger as burning fire. Jeremiah 4:4 and 21:14 warned of fire that no one could quench. The fulfillment demonstrated that God keeps His word—both promises and threats. His fury was accomplished, anger poured out, leaving nothing but devastation.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does 'accomplished his fury' teach about God's patience having limits and eventual full execution of threatened judgment?
2. How should the literal fire devouring Jerusalem's foundations illustrate the thoroughness of divine judgment?
3. In what ways does God's wrath being 'poured out' on Jerusalem point forward to wrath being poured out on Christ at the cross?

4. How should the certainty of God accomplishing His fury against sin affect both our fear of the Lord and our gratitude for salvation?

Interlinear Text

כָּלָה	יְהוָה	חֲמַת וְ	שָׁפַךְ	חֲרֹן
hath accomplished	The LORD	his fury	he hath poured out	his fierce
H3615	H3068	H853 H2534	H8210	H2740
אֲפִי	וַאֲנִי	אֵשׁ	וְאֶכְלָה	יְסוּדֵיהֶם
anger	and hath kindled	a fire	and it hath devoured	the foundations
H639	H3341	H784	H6726 H398	H3247

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 7:20 (References Lord): 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.

Ezekiel 22:31 (References Lord): Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

Jeremiah 17:27 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

Lamentations 2:17 (References Lord): The LORD hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.