

Lamentations 5:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.

Analysis

The book's troubling conclusion: "But thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us" (ki im-ma'os me'astanu katsafta aleinu ad-me'od, סִמְמָתָא קָצְפָתָה עַלְנוּ עַד־מְאֹד). The phrase ma'os me'astanu uses emphatic construction: "rejecting, you have rejected us"—complete repudiation. "Very wroth" (katsafta...ad-me'od, קָצְפָתָה...עַד־מְאֹד) means extreme anger. This seems to contradict verse 19's affirmation of God's eternal throne and earlier hope (3:22-26). Why end on despair? Some traditions read verse 21 as the final verse, repeating it after 22 so the book doesn't end negatively. But the canonical ending serves important purposes:

1. It's honest—full restoration hasn't yet occurred
2. It validates ongoing struggle with God's seeming distance
3. It points beyond itself to the greater restoration only Messiah brings.

The unresolved ending mirrors Israel's state: partial return from exile, but full covenant promises awaited fulfillment in Christ. The book teaches lament as ongoing spiritual discipline, not instantly resolved but held in tension with hope.

Historical Context

Even after the 538 BC return, restoration was partial. The second temple (completed 516 BC) lacked the Ark, Shekinah glory, Urim and Thummim. Haggai 2:3 records: "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" Though

physically returned, full covenant blessings awaited future fulfillment. Malachi (circa 430 BC), the last Old Testament prophet, addresses continued struggles: corrupt priesthood (Malachi 1:6-14), broken marriages (2:13-16), social injustice (3:5). The Old Testament ends with partial restoration and messianic expectation (Malachi 4:5-6). The 400 silent years between testaments saw no prophets, only anticipation. This explains Lamentations' unresolved ending—it points forward to greater fulfillment. Luke 1:68-79 and 2:29-32 celebrate what Lamentations awaited: Messiah's arrival bringing ultimate redemption. Christ fulfills what Lamentations' incomplete restoration anticipated—reconciliation with God, covenant renewal, indwelling Spirit, resurrection hope.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What spiritual value is there in Scripture leaving some laments unresolved rather than providing instant happy endings?
2. How does Lamentations' troubling conclusion point forward to the greater restoration and reconciliation only Christ accomplishes?
3. What does it mean to hold both lament and hope in tension, and how does this model mature faith versus demanding immediate resolution?

Interlinear Text

עַד	עַל	יְנֻכֵּה	בְּקָצְבָּת	מִאָבֶת	נִזְבְּחָת	פָּתָח	קָצַב	עַל	אָמַר	כִּי	עַד
H5704	H5921	H7107	H3973	H3988	H3588	H518					

:תְּנַךְ
us thou art very
H3966

