

Psalms 78:63

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage.

Analysis

The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage. The parallel structure emphasizes complete social devastation. **Fire consumed** (akhelah esh, אָכְלָה אֵשׁ) may be literal (war's destruction) or metaphorical for judgment consuming the next generation. **Young men** (bachurav, בָּחוּרָיו)—prime warriors—died in battle, leaving no defenders or future fathers.

Maidens were not given to marriage describes broken wedding songs—no betrothal celebrations because the grooms were dead. The Hebrew literally reads 'their virgins were not praised/celebrated' (betulotav lo hulalu, בְּתוּלָתָיו לֹא הָלַלָו, referring to traditional bridal songs and marriage festivities. War left a generation of widows and spinsters, demographically crippling the nation.

This judgment strikes at Israel's future—no marriages means no children, threatening national extinction. God's severest temporal judgments often involve cutting off progeny. Yet this anticipated exile's greater devastation and ultimately points to Christ, the Bridegroom whose marriage to His bride (the church) death could not prevent (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Historical Context

The Aphek defeat decimated Israel's fighting men. Without young warriors and marriages, the nation faced generational crisis. This demographic catastrophe paralleled covenant curses: 'You shall betroth a wife, and another man shall lie

with her' (Deuteronomy 28:30). The horror of war includes not just immediate casualties but social fabric destroyed.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does war's devastation of marriage and family reveal the comprehensive nature of sin's consequences?
2. What does the absence of wedding songs teach about joy's dependence on righteousness and peace?
3. How should the church respond to demographic crises (low birth rates, delayed marriage) in light of biblical emphasis on fruitfulness?

Interlinear Text

ל	א	וּ	בְּתוּלָת	וְ	אֲכָלָה	בְּחוֹזֶק	וְ	
their	young	men	consumed	The	fire	and	their	maidens

their young men consumed The fire and their maidens H3808

H970

H398

H784

H1330

הוֹלְלָה:

were not given to marriage

H1984

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 7:34 (Parallel theme): Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of

gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.

Jeremiah 16:9 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

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