

<CHAPTER III>
THE THIRD DIRGE

*A personal lament and prayer 3:1 - 66*¹

a. The lament of the afflicted 3:1 - 21

Aleph

- 1 I am the one who has experienced affliction²
under the rod of God's wrath.
2 He has driven me and forced me to walk
in darkness rather than light;
3 he has repeatedly turned his hand³
against me without ceasing.

Beth

- 4 He has made my flesh and my skin grow old (*or, waste away*)
and has shattered my bones.
5 He has fenced me in⁴ and surrounded me
with poverty⁵ and hardship.
6 He has forced me to dwell in darkness
like those who have died in former times.

Gimel

- 7 He has walled me in⁶ so that I can not escape,
he has weighted⁷ me down with heavy chains.⁸
8 Even though I call out and cry for help (*or, plead*),
he shuts out (*or, does not listen to*)⁹ my prayers.
9 He has walled me in with hewn blocks of stone;
he has made my paths to be a maze.

Daleth

- 10 To me he is like a lurking bear;
like a lion in ambush.
11 He has forced me from my path and mangled me.¹⁰
He has made me desolate
(*or, he has left me without help*).
12 He has drawn his bow and set me up
to be a target for his arrows.

1 All the basic themes of a lament are found in the various groupings in this chapter. Acrostic triplets form a very elaborate arrangement in which the first letters in each of the verses meet the acrostic requirement of the poet with three verses having the same letter of the alphabet to begin the verse and the exact order of the Hebrew alphabet is followed with the exception of verses 43 - 48 when Pe **פ** and Ain (Ayin) **א** again are in reverse order.

2 A possible emendation would be: "whom the Lord has shepherded with." Syriac: "Mighty God, see my oppression."

3 Hebrew: **בָּשָׁב וּבָשָׁב** Literally: "He returns, he returns" hence, "repeatedly."

4 Hebrew: **בָּנִי/ו** literally: "he has built against me." Thus "fenced me in" becomes a better translation than the NRSV's "besieged."

5 A slight emendation. The MT word is one used for a bitter and poisonous weed.

6 I. e. imprisoned.

7 Hebrew: **בְּיָדַי**.

8 Literally: "he has made my bronze heavy." LXX: *χαλκος*. Syriac: "my fetters."

9 Hebrew a hapax legomenon. Peshitta: "He did not hear my prayers."

10 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "He has turned aside my ways." Thus the concept seems to be: "he has driven me off my way (as an animal might be chased away)."

- He
- 13 He has shot the arrows of his quiver
into my vital organs.¹¹
- 14 I have become the laughingstock of all people,¹²
the constant object (*or, butt*) of their taunting songs.
- 15 He has filled me with bitterness;
he made me drink my fill of gall.¹³
- Waw
- 16 He made me suffer which was (*like breaking rocks with my teeth*)¹⁴
and caused me to cower (*or, cringe*) in ashes
(*or, he laid me in the dirt*).
- 17 My soul is deprived of peace.¹⁵
I have forgotten what happiness (*or, prosperity*)¹⁶ is.
- 18 I tell myself, "My glory (*or, splendor*) is gone
along with all I had hoped for from the Lord."
- Zayin
- 19 Remember my affliction and my homelessness;¹⁷
is like bitterness¹⁸ and poison.
- 20 My soul thinks of it continually,
for it is depressed within me.¹⁹
- b. Divine mercies received 3:21 - 34*²⁰
- 21 Then I remembered
and therefore I have hope.
- Heth (Cheth)
- 22 The unfailing love²¹ of the Lord has never ceased.²²
His mercies (*or, compassions*)²³ never fail.
- 23 They are renewed each morning:²⁴
"So great is your faithfulness!"
- 24 I say, "The Lord is my portion,
therefore I will hope in him."²⁵

11 The Hebrew word **בִּבְיָדָי** means "kidneys," sensitive but vital organs. Many translators choose to use the word "heart." In Syriac and Vulgate the verse begins with "Behold."

12 Vulgate: "omni populo mei."

13 Literally: **חֲמוֹמָה** "wormwood." *Artemisia herba-alba* is the most likely source of a bitter taste. It is used metaphorically in the Bible. The LXX never uses "wormwood" but simply translates the concept as "bitterness." *χολης* or "gall" is used for the Hebrew word.

14 Literally: "made my teeth grind." The Hebrew word is rare. **29*ב** and LXX: *εκβαλλω*

15 Literally: "You cast off peace (*Shalom*) from my soul."

16 Literally: "good."

17 Literally: "wandering."

18 Cf. footnote 10, above. The same word is used in the LXX.

19 Hebrew uncertain.

20 The change in theme seems to come at an unexpected place. One would assume it would begin with a new letter of the alphabet but instead it seems apparent that a change in theme comes with the last of the three z (Zayin) verses.

21 The Hebrew word for love *chesed* signifies true love.

22 So Syriac & Targums. Hebrew: "we are not cut off."

23 Hebrew unclear. The Hebrew word is used in an abstract form which could be translated as "steadfast love."

24 Syriac: "at the renewal of the morning."

25 The word order is changed in the Syriac & Vulgate.

- Teth
- 25 The Lord is good to those who eagerly wait for him ²⁶
(or, those whose hope is in him),
to all those who seek him.
- 26 It is good that one waits quietly ²⁷
for the salvation of the Lord.
- 27 It is good for a young person
to bear the yoke. ²⁸
- Yodh
- 28 Let him patiently wait in silence
since ²⁹ the Lord has imposed it;
29 let him bury his face ³⁰ in the dust.
Perhaps ³¹ there is still hope.
- 30 Let him offer his cheek to be struck
and let him be overwhelmed with disgrace.
- Koph
- 31 The Lord will not reject ³²
people for ever;
32 but although he inflicts grief, he will have compassion,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love,
33 for he does not willingly *(or, willfully)*³³ afflict
or cause grief for anyone. ³⁴
- Lamed
- 34 To crush all the prisoners of the land ³⁵
under his feet,
35 so as to deny human rights to people *(or, reject their cause)*
in the presence of the most high, ³⁶
36 when one's normal course of life is deprived of justice ---
wouldn't the Lord see that *(or, does the Lord not see)?*
- Mem
- 37 Whose decrees have always been fulfilled
if the Lord has not ordained *(or, decreed)* them?
(or, No one can make anything happen, if the Lord is not willing.)
38 Is it not through the word ³⁷ of the Most High

26 The Hebrew concept with the word includes the thought of being eager

27 Hebrew unclear., So: emended. The Hebrew word used here has no root word. LXX reads the Hebrew as [~]/_~ and [~]/_~

28 The French Common Translation: "to submit himself to restraint." Spanish Common translation: "to learn patience."

29 The Hebrew **ב**, is better translated as "since" than "when" as in the RSV & NRSV.

30 Literally: "mouth." I. e. humble submission or abject recognition of unworthiness.

31 The Hebrew word **ב**! while not generally translated as "perhaps" can be translated that way and it suits the context here.

32 The Targums insert "his servants." Poetically there is obviously a word missing to complete the meter in this verse.

33 Literally: "from the heart."

34 Literally: "the sons of men."

35 I. e. Palestine.

36 Hebrew: [~]/_~ An honorific title for God, used many times in the OT. Some Hebrew scholars translate the word as dealing with God's approval. I.e. "Would The Lord approve that?"

37 Literally: "mouth."

that good and evil³⁸ come?

(*or, Why should we complain about being punished for sin
as long as we are still alive?*)

39 Why should a living person³⁹ complain
about the punishment for his own sins?⁴⁰

c. A call for spiritual renewal 3:40 - 42

Nun

40 Let us search and examine our way of life,
and return to the Lord!⁴¹

41 Let us lift up (*or, open*) our hearts and hands⁴²
unto⁴³ God in heaven and say;

42 "We have sinned and rebelled
and you have not forgiven."

d. The consequences of sin 3:43 - 54

Samekh (Samech)

43 "You have clothed yourself with anger and pursued us,⁴⁴
killing without pity (*or, mercy*);

44 You have clothed⁴⁵ yourself with a cloud,⁴⁶
so that no prayer can pass through.

45 You have made us to be filth⁴⁷
in the midst of the nations.

Pe

46 "All our enemies
loudly rail (*or, jeer*) against us."⁴⁸

47 Panic and pitfall (*or, disaster and ruin*)⁴⁹ have become our lot⁵⁰
along with devastation⁵¹ and destruction.

48 Rivers of tears flow from my eyes
because of the ruin (*or, downfall*)⁵² of the daughters of my people.

38 Hebrew: **רָעָו** because it is preceded by a generic article it would best be translated as "evil" instead of "misfortune."

39 Literally: "one who has breath." Syriac: "Why should a person think, plan or have in mind..."

40 TEV translates: "Why should we complain about being punished for sin, as long as we are still alive?"

41 Beginning with this verse the poet identifies himself with his people.

42 Some scholars seek to emend this line though it does not seem necessary in Hebrew.

43 Hebrew: **עִלָּי**. LXX & Syriac read the Hebrew as **עִלָּי** "upon" or "along with."

44 The anger is the righteous wrath of God which punishes the hardened sinner. Spanish Common Language translation: "You surround us with your anger."

45 The Hebrew word **עָנַן** has no object in Hebrew so **עָנַן** "yourself" is understood.

46 Anger is compared to an impenetrable cloud.

47 The Hebrew word describes anything that is rejected or unfit. The Hebrew word used here is **בְּצִי**. For a comparable New Testament counterpart which is also equally rare cf. I Corinthians 4:13. LXX: **καμμυσα**.

48 Cf. 2:16a for the identical quotation.

49 Note the Hebrew assonance: Panic *wpcht* Ruin *pchd*.

50 Literally: "is to us."

51 A hapax legomenon.

52 The cognate of the Hebrew word would be translated "to shatter, to tear to pieces, to wreck" thus implying the complete termination of organized life in the kingdom.

Ain (Ayin) 49 "My tears will flow as a ceaseless stream
that will not halt,⁵³
50 until the Lord looks down from heaven
and sees our affliction.⁵⁴
51 What I see causes my soul grief⁵⁵
over the fate of all the young women of our city.

Sadhe (Tsadhe) 52 "My enemies have certainly hunted me like a bird
though not for any specific cause.
53 They threw me, alive, into the pit⁵⁶
and hurled stones on me.⁵⁷
54 Water closed in over my head;
I said, 'I am about to die.'⁵⁸

e. Comfort and imprecation 3:55 - 66

Qoph (Koph) 55 "I have called on your name, O Lord,
from the depths⁵⁹ of the pit;
56 Hear my plea (*or, You heard my plea*). 'Do not close⁶⁰
your ear to my cry for help.'⁶¹
57 Whenever I called you, you came near.
You said, 'Do not fear!'

Resh 58 "O Lord, You championed my cause (*or, came to my rescue*).⁶²
You have redeemed⁶³ my life.
59 You have seen the wrong done to me, O Lord,
vindicate my cause!
60 You have seen all the vindictiveness⁶⁴
and all the devices that have been plotted against me.

Schin (Sin) 61 "You have heard their taunts (*or, insults*), O Lord,⁶⁵

53 The word translated "halt," is a hapax legomenon. Syriac: "Because there is no alleviation."

54 Hebrew uncertain.

55 Literally: "What I see torments my soul."

56 Literally: "They imperiled my life in the pit." With slight emendation: "They threw me into a pit to die." The pit is a euphemism for utter destruction.

57 Some scholars feel the thought is that a stone was placed over the opening of the pit to seal it. This is the translation of the French Common Language translation and the TEV.

58 MT: "I am cut off."

59 Literally: "from the pit of depth." A reference to the grave?

60 Literally: "hide."

61 Hebrew uncertain. The word for "help" is a form which perhaps may mean "respite or relief." Some scholars feel the word is a gloss.

62 Literally: "The cause of my soul."

63 ❖ God becomes the Go'el. Cf. Leviticus 25: 23ff., 43-54. Ruth 4:1-12. Consult a good Bible Dictionary for an understanding of the Law of the Go'el.

64 Vindictiveness seems to describe the Hebrew concept in this strophe.

65 "Lord" is missing in the LXX.

all their designs (*or, plots*) against me.
62 The utterances (*or, whisperings*)⁶⁶ and mutterings of my assailants
are constantly spoken against me.
63 Whether they sit or stand⁶⁷
I am the object of their taunt songs⁶⁸
(*or, Whether they are idle or busy*
I am the butt of their taunts).

Tau

64 "Repay them for their deeds, O Lord,
on the basis of their actions.
65 Cause them to have mental anguish⁶⁹
May your curse be on them!
66 Oh, pursue them in anger and destroy them
from underneath the Lord's heavens!"⁷⁰

66 Literally: "lips."

67 Literally: "during their sitting down and their rising up."

68 A hapax legomenon. Literally: "mocking song."

69 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "a covering of the heart." Possibly the word is based on an Arabic word meaning "derangement of the mind." (The basis for the above translation.) Does this mean: 1. insensibility of mind, or 2. stubbornness of will.

70 So: Syriac, LXX Vulgate. Hebrew: "the heavens of the Lord." Syriac: "under your heavens, O Lord."

<CHAPTER IV>
THE FOURTH DIRGE

Jerusalem in the past and present 4:1 - 22

a. Earlier days recalled 4:1 - 12

- Aleph 1 How the gold has become tarnished,⁷¹
 how the pure (*or, fine*) gold has changed.⁷²
The sacred (*or, precious*) stones lie scattered
at every street corner.⁷³
- Beth 2 The precious children of Zion⁷⁴
 who were worth their weight in fine gold⁷⁵
now are considered to be as valuable as earthenware,
the work of a potter's hands!
- Gimel 3 Even the jackals⁷⁶ offer their breast⁷⁷
 and nurse their young,
but the daughters⁷⁸ of my people have become cruel
like the ostriches⁷⁹ in the wilderness.
- Daleth 4 The tongues of the infants cling
 to their palates because of thirst.
The children beg for food,
with no one giving them any.
- He 5 Those who had feasted on delicacies⁸⁰
 lie perishing (*or, destitute*)⁸¹ in the streets.
Those who were dressed in purple⁸² (*or, who lived in luxury*)
have settled down on refuse dumps (*or, lie down on ash heaps*).

71 Hebrew uncertain. We know that gold does not tarnish. Possibly the reference is that gold has become despised. By changing one Hebrew letter the word becomes "hated." There are two Hebrew words for gold which would be translated as "pure gold" and "fine gold."

72 The Hebrew word **חלל** is Niphal, thus meaning "to change." At the point in time in Hebrew history that is referred to in Dirge 4 the people of Israel had given all their gold to the conquerors, or those who threatened to conquer and as a substitute were using polished brass for display purposes. Syriac translates: "Who are better than precious stones." Hebrew literally: "weighed against."

73 Verses 1 to 12 are a brief summary of the reversal of national fortunes.

74 The name means "fortress." It is a name given to Jerusalem.

75 Literally: "the one weighed out against fine gold."

76 Some scholars feel the reference is to whales. This is done by using different vowel combination than those used by the Masoretes.

77 Literally: "draw near to the breast."

78 So emended by the Targums and LXX as they translated. LXX: $\theta\upsilon\gamma\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\epsilon\varsigma$.

79 The translated word is one that was spoken (the Qere). The word that was written (the Ketiv): **בבבב ב**, makes no sense, thus "ostriches" is the traditional translation. Cf. Job 30: 14ff.

80 The Hebrew word is a special form that is emphatic since there is a contrast that is about to appear.

81 Hebrew: **ב/ול**. Possibly better translated as "desolate" or "stand aghast."

82 Literally: "established in crimson."

Waw	6 The punishment (<i>or, iniquity</i>) of the daughter of my people has exceeded the punishment (<i>or, sin</i>) of Sodom, ⁸³ which was overthrown in a moment ⁸⁴ with no human hand involved. ⁸⁵
Zayin	7 Her princes (<i>or, consecrated ones</i>) ⁸⁶ were brighter (<i>or, purer</i>) than snow, whiter than milk; their limbs ⁸⁷ were more ruddy than coral, the beauty of their bodies ⁸⁸ like lapis lazuli, ⁸⁹
Heth (Cheth)	8 but now their faces are blacker than soot. They are not recognizable in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones, and it has become as dry as a stick.
Teth	9 The victims of the sword were better off than the victims of hunger whose life drains away, ⁹⁰ for they are stricken by the lack of produce (<i>or, food</i>) in the field. ⁹¹
Yodh	10 The hands of compassionate women have cooked their children; these became their food ⁹² in the destruction of my people. ⁹³
Koph	11 The Lord vented his wrath; he poured out his blazing anger, ⁹⁴ and kindled a fire in Zion that has consumed it to its foundation.

83 The name means "burnt." Cf. Genesis 13 & 14.

84 The Hebrew word can be used to describe a woman during the birth process, which could be prolonged. It could also be used to describe our thought in a moment of time.

85 Hebrew uncertain. The Hebrew word possibly is derived from a root word meaning "to whirl, writhe or tremble." Possibly the thought is that no hands trembled because of the suddenness of the destruction. NIV: "without a hand turned to help her."

86 Literally: "her devotees." Some Hebrew manuscripts have "Nazirites." Cf. Numbers 6. Translators usually use "princes." Some scholars emend the word to read "youths" by altering one letter in Hebrew.

87 Literally: "bone."

88 Hebrew uncertain.

89 Scholars often translate the Hebrew word **9b52** as "sapphire" because the word sounds like sapphire but in reality it is the word for lapis lazuli.

90 Literally: "they flow."

91 Hebrew unclear. The concept is that the wounded warriors can at least struggle to find food from the fields but those who are starving have no strength to find something for their survival. Syriac: "like those are wounded and lying (literally, thrown) in the field."

92 Possibly the Hebrew word should be "their devouring" depending on which vowel points are used. LXX: εἰς βρωσιν.

93 Like 2:20 the reference is to cannibalism.

94 Possibly a reference to II Chronicles 36:19.

- Lamed 12 The kings of the earth did not believe,
nor did any of the inhabitants of the earth,
that an enemy (*or, invader*) could enter
the gates of Jerusalem.⁹⁵
- Mem 13 This was because of the sins of her prophets
and the iniquities of her priests
who shed the blood of the righteous
in her midst.
- Nun 14 They staggered⁹⁷ blindly through the streets,
and were so defiled with blood;⁹⁸
that no one would dare
to touch their garments.
- Samekh (Samech) 15 "Away! Away!"⁹⁹ people shouted¹⁰⁰ at them.
"Away! Away! Touch not!"¹⁰¹
because¹⁰² they were destined to be fugitives and wanderers
among the nations who said,
"They dare not remain with us any longer."¹⁰³
- Pe 16 The Lord himself¹⁰⁴ has scattered them.¹⁰⁵
He will no longer have regard for them.¹⁰⁶
The priests are shown no respect,
and there is no concern for the elders.¹⁰⁷
- Ain (Ayin) 17 Our eyes failed, we were constantly watching¹⁰⁸
in vain for help.
We watched eagerly
for a nation that could help.¹⁰⁹

95 The name means "possession of peace."

96 The poet is not simply seeking a scapegoat but is seeking the root of the problem.

97 LXX: ερηγοροι αυτης.

98 The word order is changed in the LXX.

99 Cf. Leviticus 13:45. Vulgate: "polluti."

100 LXX: καλεσατε αυτος.

101 Some scholars feel "shouted at them" is a gloss. Syriac: "Do not touch them."

102 Hebrew: **b**, used here in the sense of "when or because."

103 Hebrew uncertain.

104 MT: "the face of the Lord."

105 LXX: μερις αυτον.

106 Hebrew unclear. A possible translation might be: "The face of those whose portion was the Lords, he no longer regards."

107 Some LXX and Old Latin manuscripts read: "prophets." Some Hebrew manuscripts place verse 16 following verse 17 so the alphabet is correct. As it is, these two letters are exchanged in the alphabetical order.

108 A hapax legomenon. Literally: "Our eyes were still kept straining for us. That was in vain."

109 Literally: "for a nation that could not help."

Sadhe (Tsadhe) 18 They dogged our steps
 so that we could not walk the streets.¹¹⁰
 Our doom has drew near; our days are numbered;
 for our end had come (*or, our time was up*).¹¹¹

Qoph (Koph) 19 Our pursuers were swifter
 than eagles (*or, vultures*) in the sky;
 we were harassed on the mountains
 and ambushed in the wilderness.

Resh 20 We, the Lord's anointed, while still breathing,¹¹²
 were captured in their traps.
 We had the understanding that it was the Lord who said,
 "Under his shadow we will live among the nations."

Schin (Sin) *c. Punishment promised for Edom 4:21 - 22*
 21 Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Edom,¹¹³
 who resides¹¹⁴ in the land of Uz,¹¹⁵
 but the cup¹¹⁶ will also pass to you.
 You will get drunk and expose your nakedness.¹¹⁷

Tau 22 The punishing of your iniquity, daughter of Zion, is accomplished!
 He will keep you in exile no longer!

 He will punish your iniquity, daughter of Edom!
 He will uncover your sins!

110 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "in our broad places." Possible translation might be: "with long strides." NEB: "we walk the side streets." Syriac: "those walking."

111 Literally: "our end has drawn near, our days are complete (full)."

112 Literally: "in our breath of life." LXX: εθηρευσαμεν.

113 The name means "red." Edom was a portion of present day Jordan.

114 This word is what is traditionally read, (the Qere). The written word, (the Ketiv), is a feminine form that makes the sense unclear.

115 The name means "firmness." A location in the south of Edom.

116 LXX: "The Lord's cup."

117 Syriac: "So that you will be miserable."

<CHAPTER V>
THE FIFTH DIRGE

*National prayer for mercy 5:1 - 22*¹¹⁸

a. A plea for mercy 5:1 - 10

- 1 Remember, O Lord, what has happened to us;
look on us and see our disgrace!
- 2 Our inherited lands have been ceded (*or, surrendered*) to aliens;
our homes to strangers.
- 3 We have become orphans, fatherless;
our mothers are truly widows.¹¹⁹
- 4 We must pay¹²⁰ to drink our own water;
the wood we get must be purchased.
- 5 We have become forced laborers (*or, persecuted*) by our oppressors;
we are exhausted but not permitted to rest.¹²¹
- 6 We held out a hand to¹²² (*or, made a pact with, submitted to*) Egypt,
and also to Assyria to obtain enough bread.
- 7 Our ancestors have sinned, and are no longer living;
but now we must bear their guilt.
- 8 Slaves¹²³ are ruling over us;
there is no one to rescue us from them.¹²⁴
- 9 To get sustenance we must risk our lives
because of the heat in the wilderness.¹²⁵
- 10 Our skin glows like an oven,¹²⁶
with the fever of¹²⁷ starvation.

b. The nature of sin 5:11 - 18

- 11 Women have been raped in Zion,
as well as virgins in the towns of Judah.
- 12 Princes have been hanged by their hands;
the elders are not respected.¹²⁸
- 13 Young men must carry millstones (*or, grind at the mills*),¹²⁹

118 While there are 22 verses, this dirge is not acrostic poetry as are the previous dirges.

119 The Hebrew assertive, , (Koph) gives the thought of being "truly widows." The verse is spoken in hyperbole since not all fathers were killed and mothers widowed.

120 LXX: εἰς ἡμερῶν. Literally: "we drink our water for silver."

121 Hebrew uncertain. MT: "we have been pressed upon." Symmachus a Jewish convert to Ebionite teachings (3 Century CE) included "With the yoke on our necks" to make the Hebrew understandable. This was also included in the LXX and Symmachus' Hexapla and Tetrapla.

122 Literally: "have given the hand to."

123 A reference no doubt to the public officials of the conqueror.

124 Possibly a double meaning in Hebrew: "slaves" and "corrupt leadership" can be the same word in Hebrew, based on context and vowels.

125 Hebrew uncertain. "Heat" could possibly be translated as "sword."

126 Hebrew uncertain. Possibly: "is black as an oven."

127 Literally: "because of the presence of."

128 Literally: "the faces of the elders."

129 Hebrew unclear. The Hebrew word is **מִלּוֹן** "grinding mill." The LXX has κλαυθμον which possibly should be

and youths stagger under loads of wood.
 14 The elders have gone from the city gate;¹³⁰
 the young men from their music.
 15 The joy¹³¹ of our hearts is gone (*or, has ceased*);
 our dancing has been turned to mourning.
 16 The crown (*or, garland*) has fallen from our head;¹³²
 woe to us, for we have sinned!
 17 We are sick¹³³ of heart
 because of those things our eyes have grown dim.

18 Jackals prowl on Mount Zion,
 which is desolate.

c. A plea for divine restoration 5:19 - 22

19 But¹³⁴ you, O Lord, are enthroned¹³⁵ for ever;
 your throne endures from generation to generation.
 20 Why have you forgotten us completely?¹³⁶
 Why have you forsaken us for so long a time?
 21 Take us back to yourself,¹³⁷ O Lord. Let us be restored (*or, come back*)!
 Renew our days as of old ---
 22 unless you have utterly discarded (*or, rejected*) us¹³⁸
 and you are angry with us beyond measure.
 (*or, Do you despise us so much that we are unwanted?*)

Take us back to yourself, O Lord
 and allow us to come back.
 Restore our relationship,
 as in the past.¹³⁹

αλαθομενον. The work of the young men would have been considered demeaning -- work for slaves or women
 . Cf. Judges 16:21.

130 The city gate was where the elders congregated and meted out justice.

131 Literally: "joy of heart."

132 A description of the loss of statehood. Cf. Jeremiah 13:18.

133 Hebrew: ~~weak~~ meaning "faint."

134 Found in three MT manuscripts, LXX, Old Latin, Syriac, Vulgate & Arabic.

135 Literally: "sit." I. e. as a king.

136 Literally: "length of days" which would signify, old age.

137 "to yourself" is omitted in 2 Hebrew manuscripts.

138 There are 2 possible translations. 1. Unless you have utterly rejected us, or 2. Have you completely rejected us?

139 An additional prayer found in Hebrew but not included in LXX, Vulgate and other early translations.