

Pesikta De-Rab Kahana, Piska 15:3  
Commentary on Lamentations 1:1

Bar Kappara began his discourse with the verse My Lord God of Hosts summoned on that day to weeping and lamenting, to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth (Isa. 22:12).

The Holy One said to the ministering angels: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning, what does he do? They replied: He hangs sackcloth over the entrance of his house. God said: I will do likewise; I clothe the skies in blackness and make their raiment sackcloth (Isa. 50:3).

Then He asked the angels: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning what else does he do? They replied: He extinguishes the lamps. God said: I will do likewise; The sun and the moon will become black, and the stars withdraw their shining (Joel 4:15).

Then He asked them: A king of flesh-and-blood when in mourning, what else does he do? They replied: He goes barefoot. God said: I will do likewise; The Lord in the whirlwind and in the storm will be His way, and the clouds the dust of His feet (Nahum 1:3).

Then He asked them: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning, what else does he do? They replied: He sits and keeps silent. God said: I will do likewise; Let him sit alone and be patient, when He has laid it upon him (Lam. 3:28).

Then He asked them: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning, what else does he do? They replied: He turns the couches upside down. God said: I will do likewise; As I looked on thrones were set in place [right side up] (Dan. 7:9).

Then He asked them: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning, what else does he do? They replied: He rends his purple garment. God said: I will do likewise; The Lord has done what He purposed, He rent His wool (Lam. 2:17). What is meant by He rent His wool? That He rent, so said R. Jacob of Kefar Hanan, His imperial purple garment.

Finally He asked them: A king of flesh-and-blood, when in mourning, what else does he do? They replied: He sits and laments. God said: I will do likewise, How does [the Presence] sit solitary (Lam. 1:1).