

# **The Book Of Lamentations**

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# The Book of Lamentations #1

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – December 29, 2019  
2 Chronicles 35:25 – Lamentations 1:1, 2:1; 4:1 (How?)

## *Introduction*

### I. SETTING OF THE BOOK

- A. Written to reflect the weepings of Jeremiah and the people of Judah when they were going to be sent into captivity to Babylon.
- B. During Jeremiah's time, the book of the law was found in the house of the Lord. Evidently it had been neglected and put away from common view.
- C. 2 Kings 22:8 *And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.*
- D. 2Chronicles 34:15 *And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan.*

### II. AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

- A. There is no direct mention of the author included in this book.
- B. It is universally accepted that Jeremiah is the author.
  - 1. Jeremiah 7:29 *Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a **lamentation** on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.*
  - 2. This along with a few other references to lamenting in the book of Jeremiah itself.

### III. NAME OF THE BOOK

- A. The name of the book *Lamentations* is taken from the book of Jeremiah referencing the verse we just read from Jeremiah 7:29 and others. See 2 Chron. 35:25.
- B. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the name is the first word of the first verse, a common thing.

- C. The first word is the word **How**. This is the name of the book in Hebrew. It is the Hebrew word Aichah, which is the word **How**
- D. This word begins three of the poems: 1:1; 2:1; and 4:1.
- E. Lamentations means *weeping*, and this is a poem about Jeremiah's weeping over his city and country and people.
- F. Jerusalem is being taken over and destroyed by the Babylonians, and Judah's temple is also being destroyed.
- G. We see Jeremiah's pain in the words of these poems.

#### IV. DIVISION OF THE BOOK

- A. The book of Lamentations has a poetic character to it.
- B. The book is a collection of five (5) lamentations that Jeremiah issues forth for what God is doing to his city and his people.
- C. There are 22 characters in the Hebrew alphabet.
  1. Four of the five dirges (or funeral poems) contain 22 verses, one for each letter of the Hebrew Alphabet.
  2. Each line begins with a letter of the alphabet in consecutive order as the Hebrew alphabet.
  3. In three parts of the poems the Hebrew letters are reversed, some say to show confusion and heartbreak concerning Judah's captivity and the destruction of their city, Jerusalem.
- D. The book of Lamentations in the Hebrew Scriptures is put with the third division of their books of the Bible, that of the Psalms.
- E. Luke describes that three-section division in Luke 24:44 *And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the **law of Moses**, and in **the prophets**, and in the **psalms**, concerning me.*

#### V. PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

- A. The capture of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar.
- B. The suffering of the people during this siege.
- C. The confession of Judah's sins
- D. The begging for deliverance by Almighty God.
  1. Chapter 1 - Grief of the City of Jerusalem

2. Chapter 2 - Destruction as a result of Sin
3. Chapter 3 - Sufferings at the hand of God
4. Chapter 4 - Acknowledgment of Sin
5. Chapter 5 - Details of Judah's condition and prayer for deliverance.

# The Book of Lamentations #2

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – January 5, 2020

Lamentations 1:1, 2:1; 4:1 (How?)

## *The Cry Of The City Jerusalem*

### I. A PERSONIFICATION

- A. The words of this first chapter of Lamentations are words that are spoken by the city of Jerusalem, as though Jerusalem is a real person.
- B. It depicts the condition that Jerusalem is in, due to the capture of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.
- C. The city cries out for two reasons in this chapter.
  - 1. First, the barrenness of the city
  - 2. Second, the anguish of the city

### II. THE BARRENNESS OF THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, 1-11

- A. How Does The City Sit Solitary? 1
  - 1. It used to be full of people and is now become a widow.
  - 2. She was a great city at one time and had princes among the provinces.
  - 3. But now she has become tributary, which means they paid taxes to both Egypt and Babylon for protection, which was to no avail.
- B. She Weeps Sore In The Night, 2
  - 1. The city is now crying, because her lovers (Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon) have deceived her and have not come to her to give her comfort as she is being plundered and taken captive.
  - 2. Her friends have become her enemies.
- C. Judah Is Gone Into Captivity, 3
  - 1. She has gone captive, because she has not kept God's law.
  - 2. The law implied here is that of *servitude*, in which they did not release their slaves after six-years' service.

Jeremiah 34:14 *At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. 15 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: 16 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. 17 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. 18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, 19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; 20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth.*

D. The Ways of Zion Do Mourn, 4

1. No one comes to Jerusalem's feasts any longer.
2. The gates, which once were busy with travelers, merchants, visitors, and worshipers, are now silent, and the ways of the city mourn.
3. The ways of the city can be considered the **ways of business** for

their benefit commercially.

4. But the Ways of Zion are also the **ways of the commands** and the worship of Jehovah God, which Jerusalem had neglected and had forgotten the meaning of their true worship to God.
  5. Israel was to be a light unto the Gentiles – Isaiah 49:6 *And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*
  6. But they were not even a light to their own, much less to the Gentiles.
- E. Her Enemies Are The Chief, And Prosper, 5
1. The nations around Jerusalem were prospering both from the trade with Jerusalem and from the taxes collected.
  2. God caused this due to Jerusalem's great transgressions.
- F. All Her Beauty Is Departed, 6
1. John Gill – “The kingdom removed; the priesthood ceased; the temple, their beautiful house, burnt; the palaces of their king and nobles demolished; and everything in church and state that was glorious were now no more:”
- G. Jerusalem Remembered The Pleasant Things, 7
1. You understand, don't you, that what we miss most are the things that we have lost.
  2. While we have them and use them to our advantage, we take them for granted; but, when they are lost, we cherish them more and more.
  3. Jerusalem is now in captivity, remembering the days of old when their land, their property, their customs, and their religion were all in tact, but they have been wasted and are now gone.
- H. Jerusalem Hath Grievously Sinned, 8
1. It is because of sin that Jerusalem is now in captivity.
  2. The nations around Jerusalem have seen her for what she is (her nakedness), and Jerusalem sighs and turns away because of her shame.
  3. She should be ashamed and will be even later when God touches

her with his mercy.

I. Her Filthiness Is In Her Skirts, 9

1. This simply means that her sin is manifest, or well known among her enemies. They can see her sin clearly, but she did not consider her *last end*, or her prosperity that she had before her captivity.
2. She *came down wonderfully*, which means what she is now is greatly different from what she was before and fell suddenly.
3. She was once the glory of Israel; now she is the shame of Israel.
4. She has no comforter, but the enemy has magnified himself to bring her down.
5. She asks the Lord to behold her affliction, which is a small start to recovery.

J. The Heathen (unbelievers and foreigners) Have Entered Into Her Sanctuary, 10

1. The Chaldeans were able to go into, not only Israel and Jerusalem, but also into the holiest places in Jerusalem, where no one was to go except for the priests and a few others.
2. The enemy trampled down their worshiping place and made it desolate.
3. God had commanded that they not enter there (10).

K. Her People Sigh, 11

1. They are hungry and thirsty.
2. The people have sold their most prized possessions in order to have a small morsel of bread or something to drink.
3. “See, O Lord, and consider.” She is asking God to see what her desperate condition is and that he may possibly do something about it.
4. Then Jerusalem sums up all this condition by saying, “for I am become vile.”

III. THE ANGUISH OF THE CITY, 12-22

A. Is It Nothing To Those Who Pass By? 12

1. People would pass by desolate Jerusalem and give it no attention.

2. Jerusalem is wondering why and how people can do this.
  3. Do they not see the devastation? Do they not care?
- B. God Has Sent Fire, 13
1. God has sent a fire from above, which means this is by God's command and according to his purpose.
  2. Some believe this could also be the fire of divine wrath burning in the bones of the people of Jerusalem, who feel the harshness of God's wrath in their minds and hearts.
  3. God is also a net, which has caught Jerusalem and kept her from going on to greater heights in her glory.
- C. Jerusalem Is Made Weak, 14
1. God's punishment is like a yoke on Jerusalem's neck.
  2. This has made her weak.
  3. The Lord delivered Jerusalem into the hands of the enemy so that she cannot rise up on her own but will need God's favor and strength if it is to be so.
- D. The Lord Has Trodden Jerusalem Under Foot, 15
1. This is a description of the winepress whereby people would put grapes in the press, and some people would walk on the grapes to squeeze the juice out of the grapes.
  2. So, "The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress.
- E. Jerusalem Weeps For Her Children, 16
1. She weeps, and no one can stop her tears from flowing down her cheeks.
  2. Her children are desolate with no help, because the enemy prevails.
- F. Zion Spreads Out Her Hands For Help, 17
1. Either to Babylon for surrender,
  2. Or to the nations for help in this time of sorrow.
  3. Or just to put out the hands to give up, because there is no help.
  4. 2 Chronicles 36:17 *Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave*

*them all into his hand.*

- G. Jerusalem's Message To Its People, 18-19
1. The Lord is righteous
  2. I have rebelled against his commandments.
  3. All people, behold my sorrow!
  4. I called my lovers, but they deceived me.
  5. The priests in Jerusalem died from hunger and disease.
  6. The priests *sought their meat*, or went about trying to find food for those who were starving, and they starved themselves.
- H. Jerusalem's Message To The Lord, 20-22
1. I am in distress.
  2. The enemy is glad that God has allowed this (or done this).
  3. "Thou wilt bring the day" – This is the day of deliverance for Jerusalem, when God will bring them back from captivity.
  4. Then the enemy will be like Jerusalem is now.
  5. "Let their wickedness come before thee; and do unto them as you have done unto me."
  6. Because Jerusalem's heart is faint.
    - a. Faint because of the result of sin.
    - b. Faint because of her ceaseless weeping.
    - c. Faint because no one will come to her comfort and help.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Oh, it is only to the Jews that this applies, you might say.
- B. No, it is to all nations.
- C. Psalm 9:17 *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and **all the nations** that forget God.*
- D. Psalm 50:22 *Now consider this, **ye that forget God**, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

# The Book of Lamentations #3

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – January 12, 2020

Lamentations Chapter 2

## *God's Destruction And Jeremiah's Response*

### I. THE LORD'S JUDGMENT, 1-10

#### A. A Design Of God's Plunder, 1-2

1. The design given here is as though the Lord is picking up Judah, bringing Judah up to the clouds and then slamming Judah down again to the ground, causing great damage.
2. Cast down in verse 1
3. Thrown down in verse 2
4. Brought down in verse 2
5. In doing so, he polluted the kingdom and its princes, 2

#### B. A Description of God's Plunder, 3-10

1. Verse 3
  - a. Cut off the horn (strength) of Judah, 3
  - b. God has drawn back his right hand, as though he is pulling back the string of an a bow to shoot an arrow at Judah, 3
  - c. He burned and devoured the place, 3
2. Verse 4
  - a. He bent his bow toward Judah, 4
  - b. He stood with his right hand, as though he has an arrow in his hand.
3. Verse 5
  - a. Slew all that were pleasant, 5 – princes, priests, men, women, friends.
  - b. He poured out his fury like fire – especially in Jerusalem where the temple was burned and the walls of the city likewise.
  - c. The Lord was as a enemy, 5
  - d. The Lord swallowed up Judah with her palaces and strong holds and increased her mourning and lamentation (weeping),

4. Verse 6
  - a. Violently took away the tabernacle (or temple)
  - b. Took away the places of assembly, which was the court around the temple.
  - c. Feasts and Sabbaths were done away.
  - d. God despised the king and the priest.
5. Verse 7
  - a. Cast off his altar; therefore, there were no more blood sacrifices given.
  - b. All the holy places were given into the hands of the enemy quickly and violently.
6. Verse 8
  - a. God has purposed to do all of this, but he has drawn a line, which means that he will go only so far and will eventually end this violence.
  - b. The rampart and wall will both lament as though they are people.
7. Verse 9
  - a. The gates are broken down, and the bars (or the hinges) are broken.
  - b. The kings and princes have gone into captivity among the Gentiles.
  - c. Among the Gentiles, there is no Mosaic law; so the people of Israel are left without their needed law.
  - d. Also, the law of God was burned in the temple, though, no doubt, there were copies still available, though not used.
  - e. Neither was there any divine vision from God among the Gentiles except for a few, namely Ezekiel and Daniel in Babylon, and Jeremiah left in the land of Judah. Later there were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
  - f. But there was a famine of the word of God in those days.
8. Verse 10
  - a. The elders sit silent with nothing to say to the people. They sit upon the ground, though they previously would sit high at

the gate of the city.

- b. The elders cast dust upon their heads because of their sorrow and shame.
- c. They also put on sackcloth, which denotes sorrow, where they used to be clothes in fine garments.
- d. The virgins, young, unmarried ladies, walked around with their heads down, where they used to lift up their heads in beauty dressed in fine garments appropriate for a man to marry.

## II. JEREMIAH'S LAMENT, 11-22

### A. The Bemoaning Of Jeremiah, 11-17

1. In verse 11 and 12 Jeremiah is literally ill because of God's judgment against Judah. It has affected his eyes, his bowels (his inward parts), and his liver (gall bladder) is poured on the ground because of the children and their starvation. Verse 12 tells us that the young ones die in their mothers bosom.
2. In verse 13 Jeremiah wonders what he can do to comfort Jerusalem. It is only in the will and power of God that Jerusalem can be comforted.
3. Verse 14 tells us one of the reasons for God's wrath upon Jerusalem. It is because false prophets have seen vain and foolish things. They did not discover Jerusalem's sin and became the reason for Judah's banishment.
4. Verse 15 – Other nations pass by and clap their hands in fun and hiss and wag their heads and say "Is this the city that men call The Perfection of Beauty, the Joy of the Whole Earth?"
5. Verse 16 admits that Babylon had looked for this day. Now it has come, and the enemy of Judah is pleased.
6. Verse 17 admits that it was not Babylon that has done this destruction on its own but that God is the author of this evil deed due to his purpose and promise he had given to Israel many years before.

### B. The Beseeking Toward The People, 18-19

1. Jeremiah here shows the condition of the people of Judah in this

desperate condition of destruction from the hand of God.

2. He begs them to “let the tears run down like a river day and night.”
3. He begs them to never cease from crying, let this crying not cease until God has rectified the situation.
4. In verse 19 he asks the people to get up in the night and cry with lamentation to the Lord and show the Lord your little children who are starving and see if the Lord will hear and answer.

C. The Beseeking Toward God, 20-22

1. In verse 20 Jeremiah beseeches the Lord to consider, *Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this.*
  - a. They are God’s own chosen people
  - b. They are called by God’s name
  - c. But now the women eat their children
  - d. And now the priest and the prophet are slain in the sanctuary
2. In verse 22 he says to God, *thou has killed, and not pitied.*
3. Verse 22 – Jeremiah reminds God that he (God) is the one who has caused Jeremiah’s terrors (or his enemies) around him.
  - a. It is God who called upon Babylon to do all of this.
  - b. There were none left in Judah; for the ones who were left were eventually slain or carried into Egypt.
  - c. God had no pity even on those who were swaddled (or gently cared for, the babies). God’s judgment came upon every person, old or young.
  - d. This is a portend (or prophetic mention) of the wrath of God upon the earth later when there will not be, and never has been, any partiality with God.
  - e. His wrath is upon everyone who sins without regard to who a person is.
  - f. \*This is the reason that each one of us should look prophetically at the wrath of God yet to come and be sure that we care enough to give the Gospel to those who may be under that coming wrath.
  - g. Because it is only through the Gospel that sinners can be saved from the wrath to come.

h. When this wrath comes in the future, there is no remedy as there was for Judah.

# The Book of Lamentations #4

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – January 22, 2020

Lamentations Chapter 3:1-18

## *Jeremiah's Lament*

### I. INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER

A. This chapter is divided by some into four sections:

1. Jeremiah's Lament, 1-18
2. Jeremiah's Hope, 19-42
3. Jeremiah's Suffering, 43-54
4. Jeremiah's Prayer, 55-66

B. In this lesson we will consider the first section: **Jeremiah's Lament**, 1-18

### II. LAMENT PHYSICALLY, 3:1-7

A. 1 *I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath.*

1. Jeremiah had seen affliction more than any other prophet
2. Others had prophesied of the events of the captivity and destruction of Jerusalem, but Jeremiah lived to see them for himself.
3. The *rod of his wrath* does not point to God's eternal wrath on the soul, but on an anger in correction to his own people.
  - a. In Isaiah 54:8 *In a **little wrath** I hid my face from thee for a moment;*
  - b. Yet in Jeremiah 21:5 God says, *And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in **great wrath**.*
  - c. In Jeremiah 3:32 the word **grief** is used.
  - d. In Isaiah 10:5 *O Assyrian, the rod of **mine anger**, and the staff in their hand is **mine indignation**.* So, Assyria, or Babylon, was the rod of God's anger against his own people for correction and repentance.
4. Some believe this affliction is a type of Jesus Christ as God's

wrath came down upon him on the cross.

- B. 2 *He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.*
1. Darkness here refers here to distress, anguish, or calamity. God has brought Jeremiah to this.
  2. This darkness, some believe, is a type of the darkness around the cross when Jesus died and also of God's hiding his face from Jesus as he died.
  3. The light here is the joy of the blessings and benefits of God, but God is not bringing Jeremiah or Judah to light but to darkness.
  4. Though he will eventually bring them to light, to joy, and to prosperity.
  5. God brought his Son to light when he resurrected him from the dead.
- C. 3 *Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day.*
1. God, Jeremiah says, has turned against him as an enemy, as God used to be his friend. Jeremiah feels abandoned by God as his friend.
  2. *All the day* refers to God's continual anger, coming at Jeremiah and at Judah one stroke after another seemingly to have no end.
- D. 4 *My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.*
1. Physically Jeremiah has been injured by those who tortured him and put him in prisons and dungeons.
  2. I do not know that they literally broke his bones, but Jeremiah credits God for doing these things for correction. His bones may have seemed to be broken.
  3. Gill says by *broken my bones* refers to his strength, that he was extremely weak.
- E. 5 *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.*
1. It is as though God has built fortresses around Jeremiah so that he cannot escape his afflictions.
  2. His suffering was as bitter as wormwood and gall.
  3. Lamentations 3:19 *Remembering mine affliction and my misery,*

*the wormwood and the gall.*

- F. 6 *He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.*
1. Jeremiah was in the prisons and dungeons (dark places).
  2. In these *dark places* Jeremiah was cut off from society and the world as though he were *as they that be dead of old*, in their graves and do not appear on the earth.
  3. In other words, he was as a dead man, though he was still living.
- G. 7 *He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.*
1. In prisons and dungeons he was *hedged about* and could not escape.
  2. These *chains* are taken from “. . . a metaphor taken from malefactors that have heavy chains put upon their legs, that they may not make their escape out of prison.” (Gill)

### III. LAMENT SPIRITUALLY, 8-13

- A. 8 *Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.*
1. It is a sad thing when believers cry out to God, and God shuts the door and does not answer.
  2. Proverbs 1:28 *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:*
- B. 9 *He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked.*
1. God enclosed Jeremiah's ways, meaning the same as before, that God has closed him in with no escape.
  2. There is no escape from God's correction of his judgments.
  3. *Hewn stone* are those that have been firmly place and cemented to make a wall strong. There is no escape.
  4. *Made my paths crooked* means that God has built, not only a wall, but a maze through which it is impossible for Jeremiah to find his way out.
  5. He cannot even cry unto the Lord for escape. God will not answer. This is Jeremiah's spiritual condition, and Judah's.
- C. 10 *He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret*

*places.*

1. Hosea 5:14 *For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.*
  2. No matter where Jeremiah seeks an escape, there will be a bear waiting at any opening he may find, or as a lion in a secret place, just waiting for Jeremiah or anyone to come out so they can pounce on them—this is Babylon.
- D. 11 *He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.*
1. One commentator seems to think that *turned aside my ways* has to do with thorns scattered in the way to make the way hard to travel.
  2. Probably taken from Hosea 2:6 *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths.*
  3. *Made me desolate* indicates the complete ruin that God brought upon Judah.
- E. 12 *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.*
1. God has bent his bow for both physical and spiritual harm.
  2. Physical, because Babylon had made Judah and Jerusalem their mark for the bow an arrow.
  3. Spiritually, because God has aimed his arrows at Judah for correction and has used Babylon to do the work.
- F. 13 *He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.*
1. Babylon's arrows are pointed at Jerusalem, and God's arrows are pointed at Judah's heart to bring sorrow to bring to repentance.
  2. *My reins* indicates the very center of the land of Israel, Jerusalem.
  3. Job 6:4 *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.* In Job's case it was for a very different reason and purpose.

#### IV. LAMENT SOCIALLY, 3:14-18

- A. 14 *I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day.*
1. Because Jeremiah preached the truth in prophecy, he was put into derision (or a mockery) to all *my people*, those who had a different philosophy and thought perhaps that they could do better with the help of Egypt than to trust in the Lord.
  2. Those who derided Jeremiah wrote songs about him and his worthless prophecies, which prophecies were actually true and were being fulfilled day by day.
- B. 15 *He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.*
1. God has turned his people against Jeremiah and caused bitterness in his life.
  2. God has made him *drunken with wormwood*, which is a drunkenness, not with strong drink, but with affliction.
  3. Isaiah 51:17 *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD **the cup of his fury**; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*
- C. 16 *He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes.*
1. There was what was called *gritty bread* or even *stone bread*, in which people would add very small gravel stones for bulk to serve more people.
  2. These stones would sometimes break the teeth.
  3. So, Jeremiah's afflictions were like *gritty bread*, hard to eat.
  4. *Ashes* are for mourners as they mourned the loss of the loved ones or their belongings.
- D. 17 *And thou hast removed my soul far off from **peace**: I forgot **prosperity**.*
1. You have heard of *peace* and *prosperity*. Well, here it is in the Bible.
  2. God had removed Jeremiah and Judah from peace and prosperity.
  3. So much so, that Jeremiah has almost forgotten what it was like to have prosperity and enjoy the good of the land.

E. 18 *And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:*

1. In this verse Jeremiah almost gives completely up on any hope that there will ever be a day of prosperity again.
2. He thought his strength and hope had perished from the LORD.
3. In his affliction and desperation Jeremiah was ready to give up hope.
4. This is a spiritual and a social condition whereby people give up all hope.
5. But when hope seems to be perishing, there is always hope in Christ.
6. In his own book, Jeremiah uses the word HOPE eight (8) times. They are pretty revealing:

**Jeremiah 2:25** Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, **There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.**

**Jeremiah 14:8** **O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble,** why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?

**Jeremiah 17:7** **Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.**

**Jeremiah 17:13** **O LORD, the hope of Israel,** all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.

**Jeremiah 17:17** Be not a terror unto me: **thou art my hope in the day of evil.**

**Jeremiah 18:12** **And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices,** and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

**Jeremiah 31:17** **And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD,** that thy children shall come again to their own border.

**Jeremiah 50:7** All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even **the LORD, the hope of their**

**fathers.**

# The Book of Lamentations #5

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – January 29, 2020

Lamentations Chapter 3:19-42

READ: (Jer 18:12) *And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.*

## *Jeremiah's Hope*

- I. A REMEMBERING HOPE, 3:19-24
  - A. Jeremiah is remembering the misery, the wormwood, and the gall, 19
  - B. His soul (his inward being) keeps them in his memory, 20
    1. These are kept in his memory to humble him.
    2. Our own afflictions are given to us to humble us.
      - a. Sickness, such as Paul's thorn in the flesh.
      - b. Persecution that came upon the saints in the Bible and upon us today.
  - C. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope, 21
    1. But Jeremiah remembers something in addition to his grief, his affliction.
    2. He remembers that he has hope.
    3. We should all remember amidst our sufferings and sorrows that there is hope in the Lord.
    4. Psalm 130:7 *Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.*
  - D. It is because of the mercy of the Lord that we are not consumed, 22
    1. Jeremiah did not die in the prison or dungeon, or from famine.
    2. God had made a promise:
      - a. Jeremiah 30:11 *For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether*

*unpunished.*

3. God's compassions fail not, 22
- E. God's compassions are new every morning, 23
  1. This proves that they do not fail. They are continual.
  2. It is also true of his love, grace, and mercy.
  3. God's love, grace, and mercy are the same as they were of old.
  4. They have not changed, and his *mercies endure for ever*.
  5. Great is the Lord's FAITHFULNESS, 23
    - a. That wonderful song was written "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"
    - b. God does what he says and what he wants.
    - c. He is faithful in every righteous respect.
- F. The Lord is our portion, our inheritance, 24
  1. 1 Peter 1:4 *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*
- G. *Therefore will I trust in him,* 24
  1. We will trust ONLY in the Lord.
  2. Psalm 40:4 *Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.*

## II. THE GOOD IN HOPE, 3:25-31

- A. The Lord is good to those who wait on him and seek him, 25
  1. Isaiah 40:31 *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*
  2. To wait assumes there is hope; therefore, God is good to them, having saved their souls from sin and having promised them eternal life.
- B. We must hope and quietly wait, 26
  1. We are waiting for the salvation of the Lord.
  2. This is not the eternal salvation of the soul but the FULL salvation of both soul and body when Jesus returns.
  3. Romans 8:25 *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*
- C. It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, 27
  1. The yoke is probably the law of the Lord.

2. The restraint of God's COMMANDMENTS is a good yoke for the young.
  3. They learn discipline and self control.
  4. So, it is good to bear the yoke in youth.
  5. In this he learns to be patient and wait upon the Lord in hope.
  6. It is also good for the young to bear some AFFLICTIONS.
- D. He sits in silence at the awesomeness of God, having borne sorrow, 28
1. Conflict and affliction gives wisdom and experience to the elderly.
  2. Romans 5:3-5 *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*
- E. He puts his mouth in the dust, 29
1. Job 42:6 *Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*
  2. We must first see ourselves as vile and sinful before we can lift up our eyes in hope. Jesus saved us from vileness to hope.
  3. *If so there may be hope.* "these words do not express hesitation and doubt, but hope and expectation of help, to bear the yoke of God's commandments, and in due time to be delivered from affliction and distress."
- F. He gives his cheeks to his enemies, 30
1. He surrenders to suffering and affliction without turning in revenge, as Baptists have done throughout their history.
  2. He allows himself to be filled with reproach, because he hates his afflictions, but he is willing to experience it for the Lord.
- G. The Lord will not *cast off for ever*, 31
1. Jesus said, *I will never leave you nor forsake you.*
  2. It is true with every believer in Jesus Christ. Our hope is in him.

### III. GRIEF IS TEMPORARY, 3:32-36

- A. God causes grief, yet with it he has compassion and a multitude

of mercies, 32.

B. God does not do this out of his ILL WILL, 33

1. If this were a part of God's eternal decrees, his wrath would never end; it would be forever.
2. He gets no pleasure in doing these things, but he does them out of his love and for our good.

C. He will not crush people under his foot, 34

1. In other words, he will not utterly destroy them that are his, whom he gives affliction for their own good.
2. We are all *prisoners of the earth*. We are temporal. God could, if he so desired, crush us to complete destruction; but he has sworn not to destroy his chosen ones.

D. God will not turn aside from righteous judgment before the most high (God), 35

1. He cannot, in other words, destroy a people to whom he has promised to give hope.
2. That hope must be accomplished.
3. When we stand before God (the most high), his judgment will be pure and good and holy.

E. God will not subvert a man, verse 36, or trick him or deceive him as to his judgment before God. The Lord does not approve this.

IV. GOD DISPENSES IT ALL, 3:37-39 | Jeremiah 23:15

A. Man cannot command things to come to pass, 37

1. Especially when God commands that it shall NOT come to pass.
2. If man succeeds in his council, it is because God has commanded it or allowed it to come to pass.

B. A Good Question, 38

1. Does not both good and evil come out of the mouth of God?
  - a. Yes, they both do.
  - b. He can cause to rain and bring good crops, or he can stop the rain and ruin the crops.
  - c. God can bless Israel with many blessings, and he can also send an enemy like Babylon upon Israel for evil.

C. Therefore, man cannot complain, 39

1. Every person deserves the punishment of God upon him.
2. Man is his own sinner. God did not make him a sinner.
3. Therefore, he cannot complain when he receives the reward of his sin.
4. But no one deserves the great blessings of God that are showered both on the just and the unjust.
5. We may like the one and hate the other, but they all come from God.
6. But we cannot complain that God is unjust or deceiving in whatever he does, whether we like it or not.
7. Ezra 9:13-15 *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be **no remnant** nor escaping? 15 O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.*

#### V. WE ARE AT FAULT, 3:40-42

- A. We should search and try our ways, 40
  1. Instead of murmuring and complaining.
  2. We should all search out God and know his person and his manner and his love for us.
  3. We should think on things above, not on things on the earth, though they cannot be completely searched out, for God is *transcendent*.
  4. But we can know more and more about God as we search him out.
  5. When we *search our ways*, we will know that we are actually vile creatures before a holy God.
  6. When we find out how vile we really are, then we should *turn*

*again to the Lord.*

- a. Because it is because they have turned away from him that Judah is having all these problems.

B. We are to lift up our hearts and hands to God in the heavens, 41

1. First our hearts, since the heart deceives us.

- a. In salvation, the Holy Spirit worked upon our hearts.
- b. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness (Romans 10:10).
- c. Then our hearts are to be ever turned to the Lord.
- d. But sometimes our hearts get turned to the world.

2. Then our hands

- a. We are to lift up our hands in praise to God and in an exercise of good works because of our eternal salvation given to us by God.
- b. Our hands are to be turned from working in and for the world but first to working for the Lord.
- c. As Jesus said, *busy about my Father's business.*

C. Lamentations 3:42 *We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.*

1. In conclusion to this section, there is a great admission:

- a. We have **transgressed**, or sinned against God
- b. We have **rebelled** against God.
- c. But God has not pardoned, because they have not repented.
- d. **God will not pardon without repentance.**
- e. If they repent, then God will repent – Jeremiah 18:8 *If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*

2. This is our lesson today.

- a. We must repent as Christians.
- b. We must turn back to God as individuals and as a nation.
- c. We must see ourselves as vile, which we are, except by the grace of God.
- d. We must turn to God in our lives and serve him.

3. Here is the hope of Israel – Jeremiah 33:8 *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against*

*me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.*

D. Yes, we are at fault, but GREAT IS HIS FAITHFULNESS to forgive!

E. This is our GREAT HOPE.

# The Book of Lamentations #6

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – February 5, 2020

Lamentations Chapter 3:43-66

## *Jeremiah's Suffering And Prayer*

### I. JEREMIAH'S SUFFERING, 3:43-54

#### A. Suffering From God, 43-45

1. God has covered with anger, 43 – The anger of God is against Israel, and this anger is like a thick covering between Israel and God so that Israel cannot come easily into God's presence for help.
2. God has slain (killed) without pity, 43 – God's pity has been with Israel in many situations, but now, under the anger of God, there is no pity for Israel. They have brought this upon themselves through their rebellion and other great sins against God.
3. God has covered himself with a cloud, 44 – This is a cloud of separation between God and Israel. God has turned away from Israel against any pity that he might have toward them. It is as though he has put on a covering like a blanket, wrapped himself in it, so that he would not bless Israel but rather direct anger toward them for their sins.
  - a. This covering was so thick that Israel's prayers would not break through.
  - b. Proverbs 1:28 *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:*
  - c. Job 35:13 *Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.*
  - d. Isaiah 1:15 *And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.*
  - e. God would not hear their prayers, because Israel would not hear the Lord when he spoke – Jeremiah 22:21 *I spake unto*

*thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.*

4. God has made them as the waste of the world.
  - a. 1 Corinthians 4:13 *Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.*

#### B. Suffering From Enemies, 45-54

1. Insults from the enemies, 45 – They opened their mouths against Israel, no doubt calling them all kinds of degrading names and accusing them of all kinds of ungodly things.
2. Fear came from their enemies, 46 – With no connection and no assurance from God, they sank into deep fear of their enemies. God had told Israel not to fear their enemies, but now God is so far away and separated from them with his thick covering that they have no choice but to fear their enemies, since God is not fighting for them now but against them.
3. They feared, 47, because of the desolation and destruction by the enemies of Israel
4. Jeremiah continually weeps because of all this destruction, 48-55
  - a. He wept so much that he compared to the running of the rivers of water.
  - b. Verse 49, his tears trickle down *without any intermission*. The weeping never stops as his eyes behold what God is doing to this wonderful and beautiful land.
  - c. He will continue to weep, 50, until *the LORD look down, and behold from heaven*; that is, until the thick covering is taken away from between Israel and God and when God's mercy will again flow through to bless Israel again.
  - d. His eyes affect his heart as he looks at God's destruction. His heart hurts for the people of God, called *the daughters of my city*, 51.
  - e. His enemies chased him, like a bird and without a cause, 52

- f. His enemies cast him into a dungeon and put a great stone on top so that he would perish in the dungeon, 53.
- g. When in the dungeon, Jeremiah thought he would die because of the waters that *flowed over my head*. There was much water in a dungeon much like a cistern, and he could have drowned; but God spared his life, 54. He feared death and said *I am cut off*, 54

## II. JEREMIAH'S PRAYER, 3:55-66

### A. Jeremiah Called Upon The Name of the Lord, Verses 55-59

1. Much like Jonah in the belly of the fish, Jeremiah cried out to the Lord from down in the dungeon.
2. God heard his voice. Evidently the thick cover has now been removed.
3. He asked God to listen to his breathing, for he may be near death.
4. He wanted God to listen to his cry, his pleading for life and for mercy.
5. God is now saying to Jeremiah, *fear not*. (57)
6. God pleaded his cause and redeemed his life; in other words, God has saved Jeremiah's life when Jeremiah could not save his own.
7. It is the same with our salvation. (58)
8. (59) – God has seen Jeremiah's wrong (as he sees all wrong). Now he wants God to judge his cause. Is his cause worthy of God's notice and of his action toward Jeremiah? (Gill): – “do me justice, right my wrongs, and save me from mine enemies; and let it appear to all the world my cause is just, and they are in the wrong.”

### B. Jeremiah Calls For Vengeance Upon His Enemies, 60-66

1. God has seen all his enemies' vengeance against him and all that they imagined to do to him, and their reproach toward him, 60-61
2. God has heard the lips of his enemies against Jeremiah and against Israel, 62.

3. Jeremiah desires that God see all their sitting down and their rising up (in other words, all of their actions) and what his enemies do *all the day*, 63.
4. This is what Jeremiah wants God to do against his enemies, 64-66
  - a. Lamentations 3:64 *Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands. 65 Give them sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them. 66 Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of the LORD.*
5. This cry of Jeremiah is not only a **petition** for God to bring vengeance upon his enemies, but it is also (and perhaps even more so) a **prophecy**, because he has promised that he will bring judgment upon the enemies of Israel.

### III. CONCLUSION

- A. This is precisely what God has promised to do to the enemies of his people, the saved, for all the persecution, the demeaning, the harsh words and the offensive ideas that lost people have toward believers in Christ.
- B. Romans 12:19 *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather **give place** unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
- C. The Great Tribulation Period is reserved in the mind of God to punish the enemies of Jesus Christ and to render justice to the worst offenders against the cross of Christ and against the message of the Gospel, hatred for the Bible, and for lies and persecutions against Christians.
- D. Revelation 19:2 *For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*
- E. Then there will be rejoicing for the great deliverance that God give to every believer.
  1. Rev 19:3-5 *And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose*

*up for ever and ever. 4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

2. So, then, we should not fear our enemies but remember that God will render rightful judgment against them and will give us eternal peace through his precious blood
- F. Not let us see how the Bible summarized the work of God in regard to us and our enemies:
1. *Rev 21:4-8 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*
  2. This should be reassuring to all of us who are saved, but it should make lost sinners tremble for what the justice of God is to bring upon sinners.
  3. The sinner's need is to repent and trust Jesus, his death, burial, and resurrection to eternal life.

# The Book of Lamentations #7

By Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – February 12, 2020

Lamentations Chapter 4

## *Description And Reason For Suffering*

### I. THE DEDICATED TEMPLE, 4:1-2

#### A. Solomon Dedicated The Temple

1. 1 Kings 8:6 *And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.*
2. 1 Kings 8:10 *And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,*

#### B. “The gold has become dim”

1. There was much gold in the temple.
2. Most of it was stolen by the Babylonians.
3. Some few pieces, no doubt, were left to be covered with ash, dust, and perhaps even rust.
4. This gold in the temple no longer glittered as it once did.

#### C. “The most fine gold changed.”

1. Some of the furniture of the temple were covered with *fine gold*.
2. Even this was cankered, or had grown dim and ugly, what little was left in Jerusalem. Psalm 137:1 *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.*

#### D. “The stones of the sanctuary are poured out.”

1. These are perhaps the great stones that were used to build the temple and the wall of Jerusalem.
2. The temple and wall were built by strong and brave men, who fought as they built, because enemies hindered them.
3. Now these precious stones were scattered all along the streets. Nehemiah saw the destruction – Nehemiah 2:13 *And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.*

#### E. “The precious sons of Zion . . . are esteemed as earthen vessels.”

1. These *sons of Zion* are the noted leaders in the city of Jerusalem.
2. They are the messengers of the things of God, which things (or

doctrines) were to bless and protect Israel from enemies.

3. Now these *sons of Zion* are nothing but *earthen vessels, or clay pots*, the work of the hands of the potter.

## II. THE DESTROYED PEOPLE, 4:3-10

### A. "The daughters of my people" [The Women]

1. Sea monsters take care of their young, feeding and protecting them.
2. Ostriches abandon their young and neglect them.
3. This is what has happened to the women of Jerusalem because of the wrath of God, which has come upon Jerusalem.
4. Their babies' tongues (verse 4) cleave to the roof of their mouths because of hunger. Their mothers do not feed them because of a great famine.
5. The children beg for bread, but there is none to be had; no one gives them bread, so the children are starving.

### B. The Rich

1. The rich used to eat delicately, but now they are desolate (empty) in the streets like homeless people today.
2. The rich grew up in *scarlet*, or with luxurious clothing and pretty things. Now they are *embracing dunghills*.
3. They are now in the company of the poor, which they used to scorn and belittle.
4. Saw a homeless man yesterday. As I passed by I noticed a sign that said, "**Bet you can't flip me a quarter.**"

### C. Iniquity is being punished, 6

1. Sodom was destroyed in a day.
2. Judah had the hand of God's wrath upon her for more than 70 years.
3. The sudden destruction is better than the lingering agony and torture of famine and disease and dying slowly.

### D. Nazarites, 7

1. These were men who were dedicated to the service of the Lord and had great restrictions upon their lives as to how they lived.
2. They must not touch a dead body, must not cut their hair, along with many other restrictions. They washed their bodies often to be as pure and as clean as possible.
3. Their bodies were as ruddy as rubies. The word *ruddy* means RED.
4. Their faces were fair, clean, and reddish, which showed forth their good health due to their diets and their duties.

5. They looked like dolls as though they were cut out of sapphire and polished.
  6. But now they are to look upon as having bodies blacker than a coal. The phrase *blacker than a coal* literally means “blacker than black.”
  7. Their skin was dry and cracked like a stick.
  8. Those slain by the sword (9) are better than the ones who died by starvation, suffering daily for a long period of time.
- E. Women eat their children, 10
1. The women before were *pitiful women*. They had pity on their children and cared for them tenderly and faithfully.
  2. Now they *have sodden their children*, or they cook their children to eat for their daily food to escape starvation.
  3. In these verses we have met the Destroyed People.

### III. THE DELIBERATE DESTRUCTION, 4:11-12

- A. The Surprise of Suffering, 11-12
1. The LORD has accomplished his fury, his wrath.
  2. God kindled a fire (by the hands of the Babylonians) and has destroyed the foundations so that there seems to be no hope for Judah anymore.
  3. The kings of the earth (12) could not believe that this could happen to the once powerful and protected Judah.

### IV. THE DECEIVING PROPHETS AND PRIESTS, 13-16

- A. Fault With The Prophets and Priests, 13
1. 2 Chronicles 36:14 *Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.*
  2. These are not the prophets of Baal, as some say.
  3. These are the false prophets among the Jews and the disobedient priests among them.
  4. All of this wrath from God is mainly the fault of the prophets and priests, who would not obey the commandments of God and would not teach the people the right way.
  5. They have shed blood (or caused the shedding of blood) in the midst of Judah from the wrath of God’s judgment.
- B. False Prophets Were Blind Men, 14

1. These prophets and priests wandered here and there, not knowing the truth of God and polluted themselves with (or caused) the shedding of blood so much that the men did not want to touch them, or have anything to do with them.
  2. Both those in Judah and even the heathen did not want to have anything to do with these false prophets and priests; they were no different from anyone else. They, too, were part of God's destruction upon Judah.
- C. People Did Not Respect The Priests and Elders, 16
1. Neither did God himself regard them as true prophets and priests.
  2. The people rejected them, also.

#### V. THE DISHEARTENED JEWS, 4:17-20

- A. The Jews looked for some help but in vain, 17-18
1. They turned to Egypt and other nations for help, but to no avail.
  2. The nations watched their every step so that they could not come and go as they may want. They were locked up in their own city under the wrath of God's judgment.
- B. The persecutors came upon Judah quickly, 19
1. They pursued the Jews as they would wild beasts.
  2. Coming out of the mountains and hiding in the valleys to kill.
  3. I was reminded here of **Masada**, a Jewish city situated on the top of an isolated rock plateau that was sieged by the Romans in about 73 AD. They were quartered on the top of a stone hill and could not escape because of the Roman army. About 960 people committed suicide so they would not starve to death or be captured by the Romans.
- C. Their king of Judah was captured and killed, 20
1. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was run down and captured.

*Jeremiah 52:3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. . . . 5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. . . 8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. . . 10 And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. 11 Then he put out the eyes of*

*Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.*

2. He was taken to Babylon, and his eyes were put out, and he was put in prison until he died.
3. Judah thought that later they may be safe *under his shadow*, but that was not to be.
4. Many of them did live among the heathen, but not under his shadow.

## VI. THE DISCOVERED ENEMY, 21-22

### A. The Enemy Discovered, 21

1. The Jews here make an ironic statement to Edom, that they should *Rejoice and be glad*.
2. The truth is that they will not rejoice and be glad. The same punishment that has come to Judah will also come upon Edom.
3. Babylon will destroy Edom, also.

### B. The Blessing To Judah, 22

1. The punishment of Judah is accomplished; it is done.
2. God will no more carry them into captivity as he did under Babylon.
3. But he will visit Edom with Punishment, because he will discover Edom's sins just as he discovered Judah's sins.
4. Numbers 32:23 *But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.*

## VII. CONCLUSION

So, we have a temple, a people, prophets and priests, a chosen nation, the Jews, and a harsh enemy. This is the scenario that produces both good and bad among God's people and the churches of Jesus Christ.

It produces good when we as God's people are faithful to his word, when we honor God's temple, the local church, admonish our prophets and priests (who would be our preachers) to preach the true word of God, knowing that we are God's chosen people, and realizing that we have an enemy that is on hand all the time to discourage, degrade, and destroy God's people if it were possible.

Literature like Lamentations is written that we might realize our own condition before God and realize that, if our preachers (symbolized here by the prophets and priests) were preaching the pure word of God, and if God's people would take heed to the word of God and follow it and be faithful to God's house, our enemies would

be cast out from us, and God would be glorified in our lives, our churches, and our nation.

May we learn this great lesson from this great book so we may turn away the wrath of God which can and may come upon our nation, our churches, and our individual lives. There is no need for us to suffer as these people did. It was all because of sin—being unfaithful to God.

**T H E E N D**