

Lamentations

WHAT'S THIS BOOK ABOUT? It is a poetic lament from a person watching the destruction of his beloved capital city.

WHO WROTE IT? Tradition says the author was Jeremiah.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN? Lamentations was written during or just after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

WHERE DOES THIS BOOK FIT? The fall of Jerusalem took place at the end of the era of the divided kingdom and marked the beginning of the Exile for the southern kingdom of Judah.

THE BREAKDOWN

- Chapter 1: Destruction of Judah and Jerusalem
- Chapter 2: God's anger toward his people
- Chapter 3: Trusting in God's love despite the chaos
- Chapter 4: Jerusalem's past glory and present desolation
- Chapter 5: A prayer for God's forgiveness and restoration

KEY CONCEPTS

- Mourning
- Comfort
- Unfailing Love
- Faithfulness
- Weeping

SCORECARD No people are named. The author uses "I" to describe himself and "she" to describe the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah.

READING TIME

1:30	2:01	2:30
3:01	4:00	1:30
2:00	2:30	

WORTH MEMORIZING

• 3:22-24

The faithful love of the Lord never ends!

His mercies never cease.

Great is his faithfulness;

his mercies begin afresh each

morning.

I say to myself, "The Lord is my

inheritance;

therefore, I will hope in him!"

• 3:37-40

Who can command things to happen

without the Lord's permission?

Does not the Most High

send both calamity and good?

Then why should we, mere humans,

complain

when we are punished for our sins?

Instead, let us test and examine

our ways.

Let us turn back to the Lord.

THE MASCULINE PERSPECTIVE

DEALING WITH SUFFERING. When we face suffering, we don't have to tough it out and pretend not to care. Jeremiah and the people of Jerusalem learned from their suffering. It made them more sensitive to God and to their own sin.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF
Lamentations?

+++
It's no fun
to be
humbled.

INTRODUCTION TO LAMENTATIONS

BACKGROUND

Lamentations is a five-poem lament for the fall of a great city—Jerusalem—to the Babylonian Empire. Each poem is an acrostic masterfully describing the sorrow of the catastrophe and praying for God's restoration and mercy.

This book is usually attributed to Jeremiah, the "Weeping Prophet." The title of the book in Hebrew is *Ekañ*, taken from the first words of 1:1, 2:1, and 4:1: "Ah how." In Greek and Latin translations, the book was given the name *Lamentations*.

MESSAGE

Three themes stand out in *Lamentations*:

OUTLINE

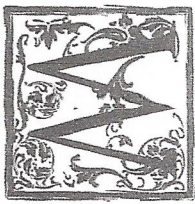
- I. A City Grieves
- II. God's Anger
- III. Despair and Mercy
- IV. Siege of Jerusalem
- V. Prayer for Restoration

tions: mourning, confession, and hope. Jeremiah mourns over the siege and burning of the city and the wrath of God, which is triggered by the unpertinent kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah confesses the sins of Judah and the righteousness of God's actions in response to them. Yet Jeremiah bases his hope in the mercies of God, which "are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (3:23).

TIME

The book of *Lamentations* was written after the Babylonians burned Jerusalem on August 15, 586 B.C.

- 1:1-22
- 2:1-22
- 3:1-66
- 4:1-22
- 5:1-22



Whether it's Hank Williams singing, "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry," or the Beatles yearning for "Yesterday," there's something about sad songs that summarizes the emotions of millions of people. Well, the saddest songs ever written are in the book of Lamentations.

After the Babylonian invasion in 586 B.C., the land of Israel was reduced to rubble. Jerusalem was in ruins, the temple obliterated, the city walls flattened, and the people massacred or deported. The prophet Jeremiah, melancholy by nature, was broken by the devastation. He had devoted a lifetime to urging his people to repent, and his book of Lamentations is a funeral dirge for Jerusalem following the judgment that fell on them.

Like the Psalms that served as Israel's hymnbook, the five laments of Jeremiah are musical in nature, thus emotional. They're carefully crafted as alphabetic acrostics, meaning the verses begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There are five chapters and five laments. Chapter 1 details Jerusalem's desolation. Chapter 2 characterizes God's anger against His people and their response. Chapter 3 documents Judah's complaint against what God has done. Lament 4 contrasts Judah's past and present. The fifth chapter stresses repentance and forgiveness.

Despite the sorrow in this book, our eyes are drawn to the hope it contains. In Lamentations 3, these words are like shafts of sunlight breaking through the clouds: *Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.*



KEY THOUGHT:

Sinfulness brings inevitable sorrow and judgment, but even in lamentable times God is faithful and His compassions never fail.



- Lamentations -

KEY VERSES:

"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."
Lamentations 3:22-23



KEY ACTION:

Just like Jeremiah in distress, we must lift our thoughts from the ashes and throw open the windows of our minds, recalling the wonders of the God in whom we hope.



KEY PRAYER:

God, give me patience to faithfully and joyfully wait upon You.

BASIC SURVEY

LAMENTATIONS

AUTHOR: Not stated, but traditionally Jeremiah.

DATE: Probably around 586 BC, shortly after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians.

INTEN WORDS OR LESS

A despairing poem over the destruction of Jerusalem.

DETAILS, PLEASE

Jeremiah witnesses the punishment he'd long threatened. Judah's "enemies prosper; for the LORD has afflicted her because of the multitude of her transgressions," Jeremiah wrote. "Her children have gone into captivity before the enemy" (1:5 NKJV). The sight brings tears to Jeremiah's eyes ("My eye, my eye overflows with water," 1:16 NKJV). Lamentations ends with the cry: "You have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure" (5:22 NIV).

QUOTABLE

> Restore us, O LORD, and bring us back to you again! Give us back the joys we once had! (5:21 NLT).

UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL

Though Lamentations doesn't indicate its author, Jeremiah is described in 2 Chronicles 35:25 as a composer of laments.

SO WHAT?

God's punishment seems severe, but as Hebrews 12:11 (NKJV) says, "No chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

READ LAMENTATIONS 1-2.

- One-Month Course: your next reading is on page 133. →
- Three-Month Course: your next reading is on page 133. →
- Six-Month Course: your next reading is on page 131. →

CLOSER LOOK

GOD DOESN'T WILLINGLY AFFLICT

God had forewarned His people centuries earlier that if they stubbornly disobeyed, He would send dire judgments upon them (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The people hadn't repented, "the wrath of the LORD arose against his people" (2 Chronicles 36:16 KJV), and judgment had come in full force. Their city was burned, and their people had starved for months in a siege, only to be finally killed or taken into exile.

It seemed as if God was acting utterly without mercy. Jeremiah complained, "The LORD was like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel" (Lamentations 2:5 NKJV). The prophet Habakkuk had prayed that God would judge His people, yet when the Babylonians were about to attack, he implored, "O LORD . . . in wrath remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:2 KJV).

In the midst of this great calamity, Jeremiah declared, "Though He causes grief, yet He will show compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men" (Lamentations 3:32-33 NKJV). Referring to this same judgment, he said, "As I live, saith the LORD GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33:11 KJV).

This is the heart of God. Even in judgment, God loves for people to repent so He can show mercy (Lamentations 3:40-42). He promises, "With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you" (Isaiah 54:8 NKJV).

READ LAMENTATIONS 3 AND PSALM 31.

- Six-Month Course: your next reading is on page 133. →

HIDDEN TREASURE

THE WEEPING PROPHET



Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem
by Rembrandt (1665-1669) shows Jeremiah as he weeps over God's judgment of his people.

and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jeremiah 9:1 KJV). This is why Jeremiah is called "the weeping prophet." Jesus also lamented, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing" (Matthew 23:37 NIV).

READ LAMENTATIONS 4 AND JEREMIAH 9.

HIDDEN TREASURE

FAMINE IN A SIEGE

In Bible times, powerful aggressors frequently invaded other lands. However, most cities—like Jerusalem—were highly fortified and had high, thick walls around them. And they stored up lots of food and had a water supply. Thus Jerusalem withstood a three-year siege by the Babylonians, although toward the end, they had almost completely run out of food. Jeremiah wrote, "All her people groan seeking bread; they have given their precious things for food." He wept for her "little ones who are faint because of hunger" (Lamentations 1:11; 2:19 NASB). People became skin and bones in long sieges, and many died of hunger (Lamentations 4:4-10). Yet God longed for people to obey Him so that He could show mercy to them and provide for them.

READ LAMENTATIONS 5 AND JEREMIAH 14.

REFLECTIONS

The abuse of a harmless thing is the essence of sin. The growth of the amusement phase of human life to such fantastic proportions is a portent, a threat to the souls of modern man. It has been built into a multimillion-dollar racket with greater power over human minds and human character than any other educational influence on earth. And the ominous thing is that its power is almost exclusively evil, rotting the inner life, crowding out the long eternal thoughts which would fill the souls of men if they were but worthy to entertain them. And the whole thing has grown into a veritable religion which holds its devotees with a strange fascination, and a religion, incidentally, against which it is now dangerous to speak.

For centuries the Church stood solidly against every form of worldly entertainment, recognizing it for what it was—a device for wasting time, a refuge from the disturbing voice of conscience, a scheme to divert attention from moral accountability. For this she got herself abused roundly by the sons of this world. But of late she has become tired of the abuse and has gotten over the struggle. She appears to have decided that if she cannot conquer the great god Entertainment she may as well join forces with him and make what use she can of his powers. So today we have the astonishing spectacle of millions of dollars being poured into the unholy job of providing earthly entertainment for the so-called sons of heaven. Religious entertainment is in many places rapidly crowding out the serious things of God. Many churches these days have become little more than poor theaters where fifth-rate "producers" peddle their shoddy wares with the full approval of evangelical leaders who can even quote a holy text in defense of their delinquency. And hardly a man dares raise his voice against it.

The great god Entertainment amuses his devotees mainly by telling them stories. The love of stories, which is a characteristic of childhood, has taken fast hold of the minds of the retarded saints of our day, so much so that not a few persons manage to make a comfortable living by spinning yarns and serving them up in various disguises to church people. What is natural and beautiful in a child may be shocking when it persists into adulthood, and more so when it appears in the sanctuary and seeks to pass for true religion.

Is it not a strange thing and a wonder that, with the shadow of atomic destruction hanging over the world and with the coming of Christ drawing near, the professed followers of the Lord should be giving themselves up to religious amusements? That in an hour when mature saints are so desperately needed, vast numbers of believers should revert to spiritual childhood and clamor for religious toys?

"Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us: Consider, and behold our reproach. . . . The crown is fallen from our head: Woe unto us, that we have sinned! For this our heart is faint; for these things our eyes are dim" (Lamentations 5:1, 16-17). Amen.

—The Root of the Righteous

ON SCRIPTURE

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. —Lamentations 3:22

All men are recipients of God's mercy. Don't think for a minute that when you repented and came back from the swine pen to the Father's house that mercy then began to operate. No, mercy had been operating all the time. Lamentations says, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." So remember that if you hadn't had the mercy of God all the time, stooping in pity, withholding judgment, you'd have perished long ago. The cruel dictator is a recipient of the mercy of God. The wicked murderer is a recipient of the mercy of God. And the blackest heart that lies in the lowest wallow in the country is a recipient of the mercy of God. That doesn't mean they'll be saved or converted and finally reach heaven. But it means that God is holding up. His justice because He's having mercy. He is waiting because a Savior died. All of us are recipients of the mercy of God.

—The Attributes of God I

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

This is a book about pain but with hope in God. The author vividly addresses the extremes of human pain and suffering as few other authors have done in history. For this reason, Lamentations is an important biblical source expressing the hard questions that arise during our times of pain. The suffering the author discusses was brought on by the brutal overthrow of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., one of the darkest times in Jewish history.



"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." (Ps. 136:22-23)

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

LAMENTATIONS DESCRIBES THE FUNERAL OF a city. It is a tearstained portrait of the once proud Jerusalem, now reduced to rubble by the invading Babylonian hordes. In a five-poem dirge, Jeremiah exposes his emotions. A death has occurred; Jerusalem lies barren.

Jeremiah writes his lament in acrostic or alphabetical fashion. Beginning each chapter with the first letter *aleph*, he progresses verse by verse through the Hebrew alphabet (every three verses in chapter three). In the midst of this terrible holocaust, Jeremiah triumphantly cries out, "Great is Your faithfulness" (3:23). In the face of death and destruction, with life seemingly coming apart, Jeremiah turns tragedy into a triumph of faith. God has never failed him in the past. God has promised to remain faithful in the future. In the light of the God he knows and loves, Jeremiah finds hope and comfort.

The Hebrew title of this book comes from the first word of chapters 1, 2, and 4: *Eka'h*, "Ah, how!" Another Hebrew word *Ginnoth* ("Elegies" or "Lamentations") has also been used as the title because it better represents the contents of the book. The Greek title *Thyrenoi* means "Dirges" or "Laments," and the Latin title *Thyreni* ("Tears" or "Lamentations") was derived from this word. The subtitle in Jerome's Vulgate reads: "*Id est lamentationes Jeremiae prophetae*," and this became the basis for the English title "The Lamentations of Jeremiah."

WATCH WORDS

- weep (show grief through tears, crying)—1:2 (also 1:16)
- renew (repair, make new)—5:21

1:2 weep

(Heb. *bakah*) (Ruth 1:9; Ezra 3:12; Job 30:31)
H1058: This verb describes the act of weeping, which expresses emotions ranging from grief to happiness. While the word is often associated with lamentation, the "bitter weeping" of ancient people who were mourning their dead (2 Sam. 1:12), it is also used with expressions of joy (Gen. 29:11). The ancients wept when saying farewell (Ruth 1:9), over impending doom (Jer. 9:1), to express their joy over the rebuilt temple (Ezra 3:12), and at the burial of an individual (Gen. 50:1). In Lamentations, Jeremiah weeps over the sins of the people, the sins that would eventually result in the destruction of Jerusalem (Lam. 1:1, 16).

When naming a book of the Hebrew Bible, the first word was often adopted as the name of the whole book. In this case, 1:1; 2:1; and 4:1 begin the typical Hebrew cry of woe (Hb *élahz*, "Ah," "Alas," "How"), an exclamatory rather than interrogative Hebrew particle. Thus the book would have been known as *Alas!* Later rabbis referred to the book more by its contents—*griat*, i.e., "lamentations"—so this title came to be passed down in the Talmud and in the Greek translation (the Septuagint).

CIRCUMSTANCES OF WRITING

Author: Jeremiah's name has long been associated with this book. The Alexandrian form of the Greek Septuagint has these words preceding 1:1: "And it came to pass, after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem became desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem." The Latin Vulgate adds this phrase: "and with a sorrowful mind, sighing and moaning, he said." The Talmud observes that "Jeremiah wrote his own book and the book of Kings and Lamentations." Given this rich tradition linking Jeremiah to

Lamentations, it seems safe to conclude he did indeed write this book.

Background: The sad background for these poems of lament was the sacking of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple in 587 B.C. by the Babylonian army. Even though the book lists only one proper name ("Edom," 4:21-22), the allusions and the historical connections to the events listed so dramatically in 2 Kings 25; 2 Chron. 36:11-21; and the book of Jeremiah are unmistakable. Perhaps a short list of the key events and some of their allusions in the book of Lamentations will help make this point:

EVENTS

LAMENTATIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Siege of Jerusalem | 2:20-22; 3:5-7 |
| 2. Famine in the city | 1:11,19; 2:11-12,19-20; 4:4-5,9-10; 5:9-10 |
| 3. Flight of the Judean army | 1:3,6; 2:2; 4:19-20 |
| 4. Burning of the temple, palace, and city | 2:3-5; 4:11; 5:18 |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 5. Breaching of the city walls | 2:7-9 |
| 6. Exile of the people | 1:1,4-5,18; 2:9,14; 3:2,19; 4:22; 5:2 |
| 7. Looting of the temple | 1:10; 2:6-7 |
| 8. Execution of the leaders | 1:15; 2:2-20 |
| 9. Vassal status of Judah | 1:1; 5:8-9 |
| 10. Collapse of expected foreign help | 4:17; 5:6 |

MESSAGE AND PURPOSE

Lamentations does not offer a complete or understandable explanation for the suffering and pain found here, but it was important that the pain and suffering be connected to the actual events of 586 B.C. If these pent-up feelings of agony could not be attached to some datable event, the pain could threaten to take on cosmic proportions. This is why history is necessary. When sorrow becomes detached from history, suffering gets out of hand because perspective is lost, tempting a suffering person to lose touch with reality.

There was more than enough to weep over. The united lament of the people related to their covenant history with God. This anchored their sorrow but also gave their grief specific barriers, lest they should be overwhelmed and lose all hope.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIBLE

Few things contrast religious and humanistic traditions more than their respective responses to suffering. The humanist sees suffering as a bare, impersonal event without ultimate meaning or purpose. For believers, suffering is a personal problem because they believe that all events of history are under the hand of a personal God. And if that is true, then how can God's love and justice be reconciled with our pain?

Lamentations gives no easy answers to this question, but it helps us meet God in the midst of our suffering and teaches us the language of prayer. Instead of offering a set of techniques, easy answers, or inspiring slogans for facing pain and grief, Lamentations supplies (1) an orientation, (2) a voice for working through grief from "A" to "Z," (3) instruction on how

Timeline of Lamentations

630 B.C.	Jeremiah called	620 B.C.	Josiah's reform	610 B.C.	Josiah killed at Megiddo	600 B.C.	Jehoiakim turns to Egypt for help	590 B.C.	Zedekiah rebels	580 B.C.	Nebuchadnezzar appoints Gedaliah governor
627		622		609		601		588		585	
					Nebuchadnezzar invades Judah		Nebuchadnezzar plunders the temple		Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem		Gedaliah assassinated
					605		597		586		585

LAMENTATIONS

A. JEREMIAH'S GRIEF IS EXPRESSED (1:1 – 22)

B. THE AGONY OF THE CONSEQUENCES (2:1 – 22)

C. THE PROPHET'S DEEP PAIN AND CONSOLATION (3:1 – 66)

D. THE PAST AND THE PRESENT IN FULL VIEW (4:1 – 22)

E. AN IMPASSIONED PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS (5:1 – 22)

THE BIG PICTURE

With head bowed in humility and pain, Jeremiah penned the words of Lamentations. His heart was broken. He wept to see the great city of Jerusalem destroyed and God's people sent into exile.

Jeremiah's pain was similar to that of a father with an errant child. The prophet had lived with God's people and pleaded with them to return to God. But his pleas fell on deaf ears. Jeremiah's tears were God's tears, for God weeps for our sin and mourns with us in our loss. Jeremiah didn't mince words or hide his pain. He wept openly and fully, releasing his emotions to God. His example can help us as we grieve over our own losses.

Lamentations does not provide pat answers for the suffering we experience. As we read, we discover that it is all right to be real in our emotions—to be angry, to be disappointed with life or to be concerned about what tomorrow holds for us. God accepted Jeremiah as he was—angry, tired, discouraged—and God will accept us as well.

Jeremiah gives us a model for expressing our pain to God. In response to his honest cries, God listened to Jeremiah and comforted him. In the midst of his agony, Jeremiah found one ray of hope despite the destruction around him—"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail" (Lamentations 3:22). As we face great pain in our lives, we can tell God what we are feeling and find hope that he really does hear and care for us.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL THEMES

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRIEF

Grief is the process that helps us release our pain and losses to God. In grief we come to terms with our past and find freedom to live in the reality of the present. Grief also lays the groundwork for our hope for the future. When we harden our hearts and refuse to grieve over our pain, we make it difficult to progress in our spiritual renewal. We see that God honored the tears and grief of Jeremiah. He will also reward our honesty as we share our pain with him, bringing healing for the present and hope for the future.

THE PAIN OF CONSEQUENCES

God does not always protect us from the consequences of our attitudes and behaviors. Through them we learn to accept responsibility for the sins we have committed and the mistakes we have made. Only then can our spiritual growth continue.

THE GIFT OF OUR EMOTIONS

Emotions flow from the core of our being. If we develop a pattern of denying or hiding our feelings, we lose some of the sense of who we are—emotional beings, created by God. Jeremiah's honesty in his writing style shows us that we have nothing to fear in bringing even our rawest or most embarrassing emotions to God. The more honest we are about how we feel, the more completely we will become involved in our relationships with God and with others.

FORGIVENESS—A WAY OF LIFE

Jeremiah finished grieving and turned to God to seek forgiveness. The book of Lamentations ends with an emotional statement that shows a wavering in Jeremiah's confidence in God (see Lamentations 5:22). Behind this statement is Jeremiah's humility, coupled with his hope that God will start the process toward reconciliation and forgiveness. Jeremiah knew God's heart. He knew that God would forgive. If we truly repent of our sin, we can be sure that God will forgive us, too, no matter how great our sins and failures. We need to come humbly before God and place our lives in his strong, gentle hands.

Essential Facts

PURPOSE:

To lament the destruction of Jerusalem and the sins of Judah and to pray for restoration.

AUTHOR:

The prophet Jeremiah.

AUDIENCE:

The people of Judah after they were exiled to Babylon.

DATE WRITTEN:

Soon after the fall of Jerusalem (approximately 586 BC).

SETTING:

Jeremiah, amidst the ruins of Jerusalem, lamenting for the exiled Jews.

KEY VERSES:

"Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail" (3:21 – 22).

SPECIAL FEATURES:

Lamentations is written in the rhythm and style of ancient Jewish funeral songs and chants. Each chapter contains an acrostic poem: Each new verse opens with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

1:1-8-22 After suffering through Jerusalem's devastation and exile, many of the Jews were forced to recognize that they had sinned. Before Jerusalem's destruction, many believed that God would protect Jerusalem and the Temple regardless of how they lived. The destruction of Jerusalem forced them to face reality. They had sinned, and their sins had terrible consequences. Accepting responsibility for our failures is an essential part of the spiritual growth process.

2:1-18 God's anger is described in detail in these verses, as are the devastating consequences of that anger. It should be noted that God is always slow to anger and quick to forgive. The Israelites had been warned by God's prophets for centuries before their enemies finally destroyed Jerusalem. We need to remember that God's anger is motivated by his love; it is his last resort as he seeks to get our attention. His purpose is not to destroy but to bring repentance and restoration.

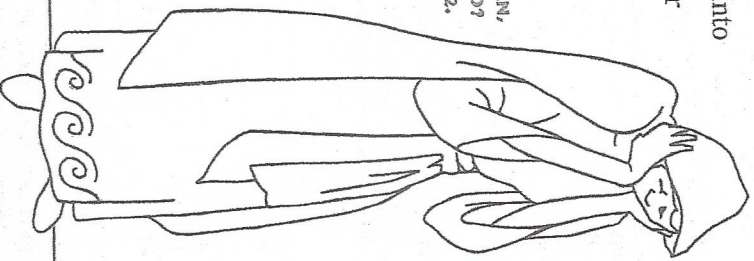
AN INTRODUCTION TO

LAMENTATIONS

Lamentations is a book of sad funeral poems, called dirges. The poems in this book express the

grief of the Jews who were taken into captivity in Babylon. Leaving their homeland made them feel like someone they loved had died.

WHO IS THIS WOMAN,
AND WHY IS SHE SO SAD?
SEE LAMENTATIONS 1:1-22.



Better Safe Than Sorry

Doing wrong has consequences. Some people don't learn that until it's too late. The Jews who were taken to Babylon had been warned many times to stop sinning and to obey God. They didn't listen. When punishment came, they were terribly sorry!

What lesson can we learn from Lamentations? Before doing something wrong, consider the consequences. Then choose to do right instead! That way, you won't have to be sorry later on.

Headlines

ZION HAS FALLEN AND CAN'T GET UP

Lamentations 1, page 1126

PROPHET CALLS OUT FROM PIT

Lamentations 3:53-65, page 1132

HAS GOD FORGOTTEN?

Lamentations 5, page 1134

THE WEeping PROPHET

Jeremiah expressly wept and lamented the destruction of Jerusalem. This book is sometimes referred to as the "Funeral for Jerusalem."

LAMENTATIONS

IN A NUTSHELL

Jeremiah wrote this book during the beginning of the exile to Babylon, after the city of Jerusalem was destroyed.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each of the first four chapters is an acrostic poem, the verses of which begin with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

BY THE NUMBERS

5 CHAPTERS
154 VERSES
3,178 WORDS

Heavenly Hope

In the midst of great destruction and condemnation, Jeremiah not only spoke of the nation's sin and punishment but also prayed for future mercy and restoration.

KEY PASSAGE

"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (3:22-23).

LIFE LESSONS: God will get your undivided attention using extreme methods if needed (1:12-15).

LIFE LESSONS: Maintain a close relationship with God, who will always be good to you (3:22-23).