

The Book of Lamentations

I. THE PROVOCATION AGAINST GOD (LAMENTATIONS 1).

Around 1000 B.C. David had established his capital in Jerusalem. (See 2 Sam. 6.) Thus, God had blessed this beloved city for nearly 400 years. He had allowed the northern kingdom to be carried away by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. But Jerusalem had been spared for another 115 years. All this mercy and longsuffering, however, had been in vain, for Judah continued provoking the Holy One of Israel through constant sinning. The end had now come.

Note the following verses of indictment: (1:1, 3, 8-9, 17).

II. THE PUNISHMENT FROM GOD (LAMENTATIONS 2).

- A. He had destroyed every home in Judah (2:2).
- B. Every fortress and wall was broken (2:2).
- C. He bent his bow of judgment across the land (2:4).
- D. He allowed his own Temple to fall as though it were a booth of leaves and branches in a garden (2:6).
- E. Judah's enemies were given full freedom to ridicule and destroy her citizens (2:15-16).
- F. Her people, old and young alike, choked the streets of Jerusalem with their lifeless bodies (2:21).

III. THE PROPHET OF GOD (LAMENTATIONS 3).

The tears of Jeremiah fell like a spring rain over the destruction of Jerusalem and its suffering people.

- A. The affliction of the prophet. All through Lamentations, Jeremiah shares the agony of his soul with us (1:12, 16; 2:11; 3:1-19).
- B. The assurance of the prophet (3:21-27, 31-33).
- C. The advice of the prophet (3:40-41).

IV. THE PEOPLE OF GOD (LAMENTATIONS 4).

- A. The children's tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths for thirst (4:4).
- B. The cream of Judah's youth were treated as earthenware pots (4:2; 5:13).
- C. The rich and pampered were in the streets begging for bread (4:5).
- D. Their mighty princes, once lean and tan, were now but skin and bones, and their faces black as soot (4:7-9).
- E. Tender-hearted women had cooked and eaten their own children (4:10).
- F. The false prophets and priests were blindly staggering through the streets, covered with blood (4:13-14).
- G. The king himself (Zedekiah) had been captured, blinded, and carried off into captivity (4:20).

V. THE PRAYER TO GOD (LAMENTATIONS 5).

Jeremiah's prayer contained four elements:

- A. That of remembrance (5:1).
- B. That of repentance (5:16).
- C. That of recognition (5:19).
- D. That of renewal (5:21).