

LAMENTATIONS

AN OVERVIEW

Purpose

To teach God's people that to disobey Yahweh is to invite disaster, and to show that He suffers when His people suffer.

Author

Jeremiah.

Date

Soon after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Audience

The people of Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Setting

Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians and her people had been killed, tortured or taken captive.

Special Features

Three strands of Hebrew thought meet in Lamentations—prophecy, ritual, and wisdom. The key passage is 3:19–24, where Jeremiah affirms that belief in God's mercy and faithfulness is the key to a restored relationship with God. This fact is true even for people who have merited and received God's judgment (1:18). Hope, not despair, is the final word in Lamentations.



Key Verses

“The roads to Jerusalem are in mourning, for crowds no longer come to celebrate the festivals. The city gates are silent, her priests groan, her young women are crying—how bitter is her fate!” (1:4 NLT)

“I have cried until the tears no longer come; my heart is broken. My spirit is poured out in agony as I see the desperate plight of my people. Little children and tiny babies are fainting and dying in the streets.” (2:11 NLT)

“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 NIV)

Key People

Jeremiah, the people of Jerusalem.

Key Place

Jerusalem.