

# Lamentations

Lamentations Synthetic reading  
160015

Lamentations is a view of the judgement of the exile of Judah from the perspective of those being punished. They express their discomfort and terror at the extreme treatment they receive at the hands of the Babylonians. They also do it ironically from the perspective of being victims who are underserving of the treatment. They cry out to God for relief and declare how unfortunate their plight is. To some degree they are unaware or oblivious of the role they played in instigating the corrective activity of God for in light of their idolatry, injustice, and insurrection against the almighty.

The language is very poetic. It portrays with a great deal of metaphor the plight of the punished. It is also again extremely ironic and unaware of not only their problem, but that the solution lied not in crying out for immediate relief from the attack of the enemy but from digging deep in their worship and seeking and honoring and following the Lord.

In one sense it is interesting to compare this to the plight of so many who cry out to God in the midst of the crop that they are reaping based on the seed that they sowed. The cry is for relief and release without recognition of the part that they played that placed them in that plight or predicament in the first place.

**Rev. White's reading notes  
based on synthetic reading of the book**

This all the more interesting in light of the warnings and the proscriptions that were prophetically proclaimed in the history of the people. Regrettably because they rejected language that they did not want to hear, they also seemed oblivious to the corrective opportunity available in changing their heart, changing their minds, and changing their ways.

May we learn from their mistakes and gain from their example!

### Updates

Lamentations follows Jeremiah and is often attributed to Jeremiah, but the book is actually anonymous. It could even have multiple authors. However, like Jeremiah, it deals with that historical horror story of the siege of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile. Not only is the author anonymous, but also the book is nameless in the Hebrew scriptures. As a result, this book was sometimes referred to by the first word in the book – how. That's also what the author of the book deals with – how. The worst thing that could have happened, had happened! Now how are the people of God supposed to make sense of the disastrous downfall of the city of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah? The name, Lamentation or Dirges, was given by early Jewish rabbis.

Lamentations is a collection of 5 poems, 4 of which are constructed in the quinah or acrostic (alphabet) style. This means that the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet are the first letters of each successive stanza of the poem (there are some minor exceptions). Lament poems (compare Psalms 10, 63, 69, 74, & 79) give voice to the suffering of the people. These songs offer ways to process the trauma and the corresponding pain and despair. Lamentations gives emotional expression to the grief and suffering of a people. It also presents a kind of objection or protest to terrible tragedies that should not be tolerated.