

Purpose

To teach people that to disobey God is to invite disaster and to show that God suffers when His people suffer

Date Written

Soon after the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC)

Setting

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

Key Verse

"I have cried until the tears no longer come. My heart is broken, my spirit poured out, as I see what has happened to my people. Little children and tiny babies are fainting and dying in the streets."

Lamentations 2:11

Key People

Jeremiah and the people of Jerusalem

Special Features

Lamentations is written in the rhythm and style of ancient Jewish funeral songs or chants. It contains five poems corresponding to the five chapters.

An Overview (5 Chapters)

- Jeremiah Mourns for Jerusalem (1:1-22)
- God's Anger at Sin (2:1-22)
- Hope in the Midst of Affliction (3:1-66)
- God's Anger Is Satisfied (4:1-22)
- Jeremiah Pleads for Restoration (5:1-22)

Major Themes

- *Destruction of Jerusalem:* God's warnings are justified. He does what He says He will do. His punishment for sin is certain. Only by confessing and renouncing our sin can we turn to Him for deliverance. How much better to do so before His warnings are fulfilled.
- *God's Mercy:* God will always be faithful to His people. His merciful, refining work is evident even in affliction. At those times, we must pray for forgiveness and then turn to Him for deliverance.
- *Sin's Consequences:* God was angry at the prolonged rebellion by His people. Sin was the cause of their misery and destruction was the result of their sin. To continue in rebellion against God is to invite disaster. We must never trust our own leadership, resources, intelligence, or power more than God. If we do, we will experience consequences similar to Jerusalem's.
- *Hope:* Only God can deliver us from sin. Without Him, there is no comfort or hope for the future. Because of Christ's death for us and His promise to return, we have a bright hope for tomorrow.