

Author: Prophet Jeremiah

Audience: Jerusalem

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

Special Features: Three strands of Hebrew thought meet in Lamentations – prophecy, ritual, and wisdom. It is written in the rhythm and style of ancient Jewish funeral songs or chants. It contains five poems corresponding to the five chapters.

Blueprint:

1. Jeremiah mourns for Jerusalem (1:1-22)
2. God's anger at sin (2:1-22)
3. Hope in the midst of affliction (3:1-66)
4. God's anger is satisfied (4:1-22)
5. Jeremiah pleads for restoration (5:1-22)

Megathemes:

Destruction of Jerusalem

→ God's warnings are justified. He does what He says He will do. His punishment for sin is certain.

God's Mercy

→ God will always be faithful to His people. His merciful, refining work is evident even in affliction.

Sin's consequences

→ To continue in rebellion against God is to invite disaster. Never trust our own leadership, resources, intelligence, or power more than God.

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.

→ The warning was loud and clear: If Judah will play with fire, its people will burn.

→ Romans 6:23 The ultimate consequence of sin is punishment.

SIN deceives you with freedom

→ We are given the freedom to do anything we want, but not everything is desirable to God.

→ We can ignore warnings just like Jerusalem did, but surely, judgement will come upon us.

→ We are actually going to become captives of sin, bound by its yoke.

Freedom only comes from Christ

→ True freedom comes from obeying God – breaking the bondage of sin that we sometimes deliberately put ourselves into.

→ "The Lord is righteous, I have rebelled." It is a true sign of repentance; when we justify God and condemn oneself. Awareness of one's sin is crucial to repentance.

→ Jerusalem's allies couldn't help her because they, too, were not rooted to God. They failed to seek Him.

→ Whenever you seek help in anything, it is best to seek it from God, Himself.

→ We can also seek godly counsel from our DGroup leaders / members / Pastors, etc who are also rooted to God and His words.

→ Having accountability partners are best to have as they can help you genuinely, rebuke you with love, help you align again in God's will for you, and become your spiritual mirror.

God is our ultimate comforter

CHAPTER 1 Jeremiah Mourns for Jerusalem

→ This is Prophet Jeremiah's song of sorrow for Jerusalem's destruction

→ "How lonely sits the city"

- Jerusalem was lonely
- Its people were mourning
- Jerusalem was forsaken by former allied nations → Jeremiah 2:20-25, 2 Kings 24:2, Psalms 137:7
- Jerusalem is in captivity
- Jerusalem's temple was violated
- Their multitude of sins had brought this judgement from the righteous God.

Lamentations

CHAPTER 2 *God's Anger at SIN*

- ↳ King Solomon's temple / God's tabernacle is a place that represented God's presence with the people.
- ↳ 1 Kings 8:1-11 The temple was the central place of worship. God destroying the temple is a sign of His rejection of His people.

A Church is NOT a building

- ↳ A church building may be beautiful but if its people do not genuinely follow God, the church will decay from within. Worship songs will just turn out as a mocking lie.
- ↳ Four powerful symbols and sources of security were lost:
 - Protection of the Gates
 - Leadership of Kings & Princes
 - Guidance of the Law
 - Vision of the Prophets

NEVER substitute God to Symbols

- ↳ Jeremiah mourns for the people of Jerusalem. We are sometimes just watching & waiting of what might happen next instead of doing something about it. We are facing moral decay if left unresolved.
- ↳ False prophets were rampant and it misleads people.
- ↳ Lamentations 2:14 Jeremiah actually gave another warning to the people of the destruction and lengthy captivity.
- ↳ Jeremiah 14:14-16 As if of Jeremiah's words came true because he was a true prophet of God.
- ↳ Chapter 1: Jerusalem's desolation and calls for God's revenge on his enemies.
- ↳ Chapter 2: Call for God's people to pour their hearts.

Sin's consequences affected everyone

- ↳ Whenever we commit a sin, an apology alone won't help. We all need to repent on our sins and only Christ's blood can clean us like brand new without any blemishes.
- ↳ Sin has a way of causing destruction, great sorrow and devastation to many.
- ↳ Consequences like these can be avoided if we only listen to His commandments and prophecies.

CHAPTER 3 *Hope in the midst of Affliction*

- ↳ Jeremiah knew that the Lord is faithful and whatever happens, He will always continue to be faithful.
- ↳ In this book we can witness God's judgement and unfailing love.

God's Love is Unfailing

- ↳ God is always listening to our pleas, His love and compassion towards us are endless even if we take it for granted and even if we fail.
- ↳ With what Judah experienced, God really does what He says He will do — punishment for our sins. However, God also promises restoration and blessing.

Way-Maker.

Miracle Worker.

Promise-Keeper.

- ↳ We must trust God on all of His promises not because we deserve it but because that is His very nature. He fulfills His promises no matter what generation we are in.
- ↳ When we REPENT, we are REDEEMED and we are RESTORED.
- ↳ Trusting God can easily help us get through our day to day especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ↳ "to bear one's yoke"
 - silent reflection on God's desires
 - Repentant humility
 - Self-control despite the adversities
 - confidence in patience
- ↳ Matthew 5:39 is a parallel verse for Lamentations 3:30
- ↳ Parents are to discipline their children to correct the wrong behavior.

Be Thankful in Discipline. Do not Complain.

Lamentations

CHAPTER 4

God's Anger Satisfied

- ↳ The leaders and priests of Jerusalem committed sins that were said greater than of Sodom because theirs were known and prolonged.
- ↳ What did they do?
 - Priests and prophets did evil and defiled the temple or before worshipping God.
 - Jeremiah already warned them not to ally itself with Egypt and just rely on God but they refused to listen. → King Zedekiah
 - God's Anointed leader failed to trust God and refused to listen to God's true prophet, Jeremiah. → King Zedekiah
 - He preferred to listen to false prophets and the people trusted and followed him. (2 Chronicles 36:11-23)
 - They chose a path of complacency and confidence instead of endure and follow God's instructions through Jeremiah.
- ↳ How is God's Anger satisfied?
 - Lamentations 4:1-10 The whole city was sieged and the enemies are looting their temple's gemstones, people were treated as of no value, the people starved and even the rich ones turned into beggars, it is said that those who were killed by sword were better than of those who survived. → King Zedekiah got captured
 - Lamentations 4:11 The Lord kindled a fire to them that consumed their foundations.
 - Lamentations 4:12-13 The Lord broke their complacency and confidence; they have not seen themselves being conquered and sieged by anyone.
- ↳ God is known for His faithfulness and He never failed to deliver any of His words. He is and will always hate SIN. Both Acts of Commission and Omission of sin are equally weighed. God makes sure we feel and experience the consequences of our actions when we abuse our gifted freedom. Just like a Father to us, He aims to correct and rebuke us out of Love in order to redeem and restore us again.
- ↳ If a consequence/s of our sin/s were not yet executed to us, NEVER BE COMPLACENT. God never sweeps our sins under the rug and just lets us slide.
- ↳ We will get what we deserve on His perfect time and plans; not to harm us but to help us prosper.

CHAPTER 5

Jeremiah Pleads for Restoration

- ↳ Despite the defiance and deliberate disobedience of Jerusalem, Jeremiah still pleads to God for forgiveness and restoration.

Pray without ceasing

- ↳ Jeremiah showed how a true believer should face times of adversities, challenges, and consequences — these are not to make ourselves more distant to God but to depend on Him more.
- ↳ Micah 7:19 Always remember God and His nature; He does not retain His anger forever because He delights in His unchanging love.
- ↳ A lot of things may change in the course of time and because of God's perfect plans but He remains the same.
- ↳ God will always rebuke us and even though we know that it is out of love, it may still bring us pain; because things did not go our way.
- ↳ God may turn away from us because of our hardened / calloused hearts but He will never abandon us.
- ↳ No matter how wretched and sinful our past, God always would want to restore us so that we can return to Him.
- ↳ Jesus Christ is our hope and way to get back again to God's loving arms.

But Lord, you remain the same forever!
Your throne continues from generation to generation

Lamentations 5:19 NASB

Lamentations