

**This book contains the account
of Jeremiah's sorrow because of
God punishing Israel. We call
this book
Lamentations**

The sorrows of the people of Jerusalem

- ¹ Jerusalem was *once* full of people,
but now it is deserted.
Once it was honored by people all over the world,
but now it is *grieving/abandoned* like [SIM] a
widow.
Once it was *honored like* [MET] a princess is
honored among the nations,
but now *we who live here* have become
slaves.
- ² We [PRS] weep bitterly *all* night long,
with tears flowing down our cheeks.
Among *the people in all the nations* that loved
Jerusalem
there are none that comfort us *now*.
All the rulers of those nations that were previously
our allies have betrayed us,
and they are all now enemies *of the people*
of Jerusalem.
- ³ *The people of Judah* have been ◀exiled/forced
to go to other countries▶
and caused to suffer greatly as slaves.
They live in *other* nations

where they do not have peace/safety.
Their enemies seized them,
and there was no way for them to escape.

⁴ The roads to Zion *Hill* are empty [PRS]
because no one comes *here* to *celebrate* the
sacred festivals.
The city gates are deserted,
and the priests groan.
The young women *of Jerusalem* cry
because they are suffering greatly.

⁵ Our enemies have conquered the city,
and *now* they prosper.
Yahweh has punished *the people of Jerusalem*
because of all the sins that they have com-
mitted.
The children *of Jerusalem* have been captured
and taken *to other countries*.

⁶ Jerusalem was a beautiful city,
but it is not beautiful now.
The leaders *of the city* are like [SIM] deer that are
starving
because of being unable to find any grass *to*
eat.
They are very weak,
with the result that they are unable to run
from their enemies.

⁷ *The people of Jerusalem* are sad and scattered,
and they think about the previous greatness
of the city.
But now our enemies have captured the city,

and there is no one to help the people.
Our enemies destroyed the city
and laughed while they were doing that.

⁸ *The people of* [PRS] Jerusalem have sinned very
much;
it is as though [MET] the city has become *like*
a filthy rag.

All those who *previously* honored the city *now*
despise it,
because they see that it has become very
disgraced [MET].

Now *the people of* the city groan,
and they cover their faces *because they are*
very ashamed.

⁹ The city has become filthy because of [PRS] the
sins that the people have committed;
they did not think about what could happen
to the city.

Now the city has been destroyed,
and there is no one to comfort *the people.*
The people cry out saying, "Yahweh, look at how
we are suffering
because our enemies have defeated us!"

¹⁰ Our enemies have taken away all our trea-
sures,
all the valuable things that we owned.
We have seen *soldiers from other nations, men*
who do not worship Yahweh, enter our
sacred temple,

the place where foreigners/non-Israelis were
◀forbidden/not allowed▶ to enter.

11 The people of the city groan
while they search for food;
they have given their treasures
to get food *to eat* to remain alive.
They say, "Yahweh, look at us,
and see that we are despised!"

12 You people who pass by,
you do not [RHQ] seem to care at all *about*
what has happened to us.

Look around and see
that there are no other [RHQ] people who
are suffering like we are.

Yahweh has caused us to suffer
because he was extremely angry *with us.*

13 *It is as though* he sent a fire from heaven [MTY]
that burned in our bones;
it is as though [MET] he has placed a trap for our
feet,
and has prevented us from walking any
further.

He has abandoned us;
we are weak/miserable *every day*, all day
long.

14 He caused the sins that we have committed to
be *like* a heavy load for us to carry;
it is as though [MET] he tied them around
our necks.

Previously we were strong,
but he has caused us to become weak.

He has allowed our enemies to capture us,
and we were not able to do anything to resist
them.

15 Yahweh looked at our mighty soldiers
and laughed at them.

He has summoned a great army
to *come and* crush our young soldiers.
It is as though [MET] Yahweh has trampled on *us*
people of Judah
like [SIM] *people trample* on grapes in a pit
to *make wine*.

16 I weep because of *all* those things;
my eyes are filled with tears.
There is no one to comfort me;
those who could encourage me are far away.
Our enemies have conquered *us*,
so our children have nothing good to ◀hope
for/expect to happen▶.

17 *We people of* [PRS] Jerusalem reach out our
hands to *get help*,
but there is no one to comfort us.
Yahweh has decided concerning *us descendants*
of Jacob
that the people in nearby nations will be-
come our enemies;
so they consider that
Jerusalem has become *like* [MET] a filthy rag.

18 But what Yahweh has done *to us* is fair,
because we have rebelled against obeying
the commands that he gave *us*.

You people everywhere, listen *to us*;
look and see that we are suffering *greatly*.

We had *many* sons and daughters,
but they have been captured and forced to
go to distant countries.

19 We pleaded with our allies *to help us*,
but they *all* refused.

Our priests and our leaders
have died *from hunger* in the city
while they were searching for food
to eat to remain alive.

20 Yahweh, see that we are suffering very much.
It is as though our inner beings are tor-
mented.

We are sad [SYN]
because we have rebelled *against you*.

Our enemies kill people in the streets with their
swords;
people are dying *because they have no food*
to eat.

21 People have heard us while we groaned,
but no one *came to* comfort us.

Yahweh, you caused us to experience this *disas-*
ter,

and our enemies are happy to see what you
have done *to us*.

But cause it soon to be the time that you have
promised,
when our enemies will suffer like we have
suffered!

22 *Yahweh*, see all the evil things that they have
 done
 and punish them!
Punish them like you have punished us
 for all the sins that we committed!
We say this to you because we suffer and groan
 very much,
 and we ◀faint/are very sad▶.

2

Yahweh punished Jerusalem

1 *Yahweh* was extremely angry *with us*;
 as a result, *it was as though* [MET] he
 covered Jerusalem with a dark cloud.
 Previously it was a beautiful/glorious city,
 but he has caused it to become a ruins.
 At the time he punished [MET] Israel,
 he *even* abandoned his temple [MET] *in*
Jerusalem.

2 *Yahweh* destroyed the homes of *the people of*
 [PRS] Judah;
 he did not act mercifully.
 Because he was very angry,
 he broke down the fortresses of Judah.
 He has caused our kingdom and our rulers to
 become disgraced,
 and he has gotten rid of them.

3 Because he was extremely angry,
 he has caused Israel to not be powerful
 [MET] any more.
 He has refused to assist us

when our enemies attacked us.
He has destroyed Israel
like [SIM] a raging fire destroys everything.

⁴ He bent his bow *to prepare to shoot us, his people,*
as though we were his enemies.
He *prepared to* kill the people whom we love the
most [MET],
members of our own families.
He is extremely angry [MTY] with us people of
Jerusalem;
his anger is like [SIM] a fire.

⁵ Yahweh has become like an enemy
to *us* Israelis;
he has destroyed our palaces
and caused our fortresses to become ruins.
He has gotten rid of many people in Jerusalem,
and caused us to mourn and weep *for those
who were killed.*

⁶ He has caused his temple to be smashed
as easily as [SIM] if it was a shelter in a
garden.
He has caused *us, his people,* to forget
all our sacred festivals and Sabbath days.
He has caused *our* kings and priests to be
rejected
because he was extremely angry with them.

⁷ Yahweh has rejected his own altar
and abandoned his temple.

He has allowed *our* enemies to tear down the
walls
of *our temple and* our palaces.

They shout *victoriously* in the temple of Yahweh,
like we *previously shouted* during our sacred
festivals.

⁸ Yahweh was determined
to cause the walls of our city [MTY] to be torn
down.

It was as though he measured the walls
and *then he completely* destroyed [MTY]
them.

It was as though he caused the towers and walls
to lament/weep,
because they were now ruins.

⁹ The city gates have collapsed;
the bars that fastened the gates shut have
been smashed.

The king and his officials have *been forced to go*
to other countries.

No longer does anyone teach the people the
laws *that God gave to Moses.*

The prophets do not receive any visions
because Yahweh does not give them any.

¹⁰ The old men of Jerusalem [MTY] sit on the
ground,
and they say nothing.

They wear rough sackcloth
and throw dust on their heads *to show that*
they are sad.

The young girls of Jerusalem bow down *sorrowfully*,
 their faces touching the ground.

11 My eyes are very tired because of my tears;
 I am very grieved in my soul.
 Because *very many of* my people have been
 killed,
 I grieve and am exhausted.
Even children and babies are fainting
and dying in the streets *because they have no*
food.

12 They cry out to their mothers,
 "We need [RHQ] something to eat and
 drink!"
 They faint like wounded men
 in the streets of the city.
 They slowly die
 in the arms of their mothers.

13 You people of Jerusalem [MTY, DOU],
 ◀what can I/there is nothing that I can▶ say
to help you.
 No people have [RHQ] suffered like you are
 suffering;
 I do not know what I can do to comfort you.
 The disaster [MET] that you have experienced is
 as great
 as the ocean is deep;
 there is no one [RHQ] who can restore your
city.

14 The prophets among you claimed that they had
seen visions *from Yahweh*,
but what they said was false and worthless.
They did not save you from being ◀exiled/forced
to go to other countries▶,
because they did not proclaim that you had
sinned.
Instead, the messages that they gave you de-
ceived you
because they were not true.

15 All those who pass by you
make fun of [IDM] you;
they shake their heads
and they hiss/sneer at you.
They say, “Is this that great city of Jerusalem?
Is it the city that was the most beautiful city
in the world,
the city that caused all *the people on the*
earth to be joyful?”

16 *Now* all our enemies scoff [IDM] at you;
they hiss/sneer *at you* and gnash their teeth
to show that they hate you.
They say, “We have destroyed them!
This is what we longed/waited for,
and now it has happened!”

17 Yahweh has done what he planned;
long ago he threatened to destroy you,
and *now* he has done it.
He has destroyed *your city* without acting merci-
fully *toward you*;

he has enabled your enemies to be happy
about defeating you;
he has enabled your enemies to *continually*
become stronger.

¹⁸ I wish/desire that the walls of Jerusalem [APO]
would cry out to Yahweh!

You people of Jerusalem [MET],
Cry day and night!
Let your tears flow like rivers.

Do not stop grieving;
do not stop crying.

¹⁹ Get up *every* night and cry out;
tell Yahweh what you are feeling.

Raise your arms to plead to him
to act mercifully to prevent our children
from dying;

they are fainting on the street corners
because they have no food to eat.

²⁰ Yahweh, look, and think *about it!*
Have you ever [RHQ] caused people to suffer
like this before?

It is certainly not right that [RHQ] women are
eating the flesh of their own children,
the children whom they have always taken
care of!

It is not right that [RHQ] priests and prophets are
being killed
in your own temple!

21 *The corpses of* people of all ages lie in the streets;
there are even corpses of young men and young women who have been killed by *our enemies'* swords.

Because you were very angry,
you caused them to be killed;
you have slaughtered them
without pitying them *at all*.

22 You summoned our enemies to attack us from every direction,
as though you were calling/inviting them to come to a feast.

At that time when *you showed that* you were very angry,
no one escaped.

Our enemies murdered *our little children*,
ones whom we took care of and reared/
brought up.

3

Hope in the midst of distress

1 I , *the one who am writing this*, am a man who has been afflicted/punished [MTY] by Yahweh because he was angry.

2 *It was as though* he caused me to walk in a very dark place without any light *at all*.

3 He has punished [IDM] me many times, all day, *every day*.

- 4 He has caused my skin and my flesh to become old.
He has broken my bones.
- 5 He has surrounded me [DOU]
with bitterness and suffering.
- 6 *It is as though* he has buried me in a dark place
like [SIM] *the graves of* those who have been
dead for a long time.
- 7 *It is as though* [MET] he has built a wall around
me,
and fastened/tied me with heavy chains,
and I cannot escape.
- 8 Although I call out and cry out for him to help
me,
he does not pay attention to my prayers.
- 9 *It is as though* he has blocked my path with a
high stone wall
and has caused my path to become crooked.
- 10 He has waited to attack me
like [SIM] a bear or a lion hides and waits to
attack other animals.
- 11 *It is as though* he has dragged me off the path
and ◀mauled me/torn me into pieces▶,
and left me without help.
- 12 *It is as though* [MET] he bent his bow and
caused me to become the target
at which he shot his arrows.
- 13 *It is as though* he shot his arrows deep into my
body.
- 14 All my relatives laugh at me;

- all day, *every* day they sing songs that make fun of me.
- 15 He has filled me with ◀bitterness/great suffering▶,
like [MET] someone who drinks a very bitter liquid suffers.
- 16 *It is as though* he has caused me to chew gravel that broke my teeth,
and he has trampled me in the dirt.
- 17 Things no longer go well for me;
I no longer remember being prosperous.
- 18 I *continued to say to myself*, "I no longer expect to live much longer;
I no longer confidently expect *to receive good things* from Yahweh!"
- 19 When I think about my suffering and my wandering *away from home*,
it is like drinking a very bitter [DOU] liquid.
- 20 I will never forget this time
when I feel very depressed/ discouraged [IDM].
- 21 However, I confidently expect *Yahweh to do good things for me again*
when I think about this:
- 22 Yahweh never stops faithfully loving *us*,
and he never stops being kind to us.
- 23 *He is the one whom we can* always trust/lean on.
Every morning he is merciful *to us again*.
- 24 *So* I say to myself, "Yahweh is all that I need;

so I will confidently wait for him *to do good things for me.*"

- 25 Yahweh is good to *all* those who depend on him,
to those who seek his *help*.
- 26 So it is good for us to wait quietly
for Yahweh to save/rescue *us*.
- 27 And it is good for us to *patiently* endure
suffering
while we are young.
- 28 Those *who seek his help* should sit by themselves, silently,
knowing that it is Yahweh who has allowed/
caused them to suffer.
- 29 They should lie in the dirt, with their faces on the ground,
because they can still hope *that Yahweh will help them*.
- 30 If someone strikes us on one cheek,
we should turn the other cheek toward that person *in order that he may strike it, too*,
and accept/endure it when we are insulted.
- 31 Yahweh does not abandon *us his people* forever.
- 32 Sometimes he causes us to suffer,
but sometimes he is kind *to us*
because he continually and faithfully loves *us*.
- 33 And he is not happy about causing human beings to suffer
or to be sad.

- 34 If people ◀mistreat all the prisoners/crush all the prisoners under their feet▶
- 35 or if they rebel against God
by refusing to give to people the things that
it is right for them *to receive*,
- 36 or if they cause judges to decide matters
unjustly,
◀does Yahweh not see all those things?/
Yahweh certainly sees all those things!▶
[RHQ]
- 37 No one can [RHQ] command something to
happen *and then cause it to happen*
if Yahweh has not already decided that it
should happen.
- 38 God in heaven [MTY] is [RHQ] the one who
causes disasters to happen,
and he *also* causes good things to happen.
- 39 So it is certainly not [RHQ] right for us, who
are only humans, to complain
when he punishes us for the sins that we
have committed.
- 40 Instead, we should ◀examine/think carefully
about▶ our behavior;
we should turn back to Yahweh.
- 41 We should pray [IDM] sincerely and lift up our
arms
toward God in heaven, *and say*,
- 42 “We have sinned and rebelled *against you*,
and you have not forgiven us.
- 43 You have surrounded us with your anger and
pursued us;

- you have slaughtered *us* without pitying us.
44 You have hidden yourself in a cloud,
with the result that you do not hear *us* when
we pray.
45 You have caused *the people of other* nations to
consider us
to be only garbage [DOU].
46 All our enemies have insulted us.
47 We are constantly afraid [DOU],
because we have experienced disasters and
ruin [DOU].”
- 48 I cry a lot
because my people have been destroyed.
49 My tears continually flow;
they will not stop
50 until Yahweh looks down from heaven and
sees *us*.
51 I am very grieved
because of *what has happened* to the women
of my city.
- 52 Those who are my enemies hunted for me
like [SIM] *people hunt for a bird to kill it*
even though there was no reason for them to do
that.
53 They threw me into a pit to kill me,
and they threw stones on top of me.
54 The water *in the pit* rose above my head,
and I said *to myself*, “I am about to die/
drown!”
55 But from the bottom of the pit I cried out to
you [MTY],

“Yahweh, *help me!*”

- 56 I pleaded with you,
“Do not refuse to heed [MTY] me while I cry
out to you!”
- 57 Then you answered me
and said, “Do not be afraid!”
- 58 Yahweh, you defended me;
you did not allow me to die.
- 59 *Now*, Yahweh, you have seen the evil things
that my enemies have done to me,
so decide my case and show that I am right!
- 60 You know the evil things
that they have planned to do to me.
- 61 Yahweh, you have heard them insult *me*
and what they have planned to do to me.
- 62 Every day they whisper and mutter things
about me,
all day long.
- 63 Look at them! Whether they are standing or
sitting
they make fun of me with the songs that they
sing.
- 64 Yahweh, cause them to suffer
in return for their causing *me* to suffer!
- 65 Curse them [IDM]
for their being very stubborn [IDM].
- 66 Because you are angry with them, pursue them
and get rid of them,
until none of them remain on the earth.

4

What happened when Jerusalem was destroyed

¹ *Previously our people were like [MET] pure gold,
but now they are worthless.*

*Like [MET] the sacred stones in the temple have
been scattered,
our young men have been scattered.*

² *The young men of Jerusalem were as valuable
as [MET] large amounts of gold,
but now people consider that they are as
worthless as ordinary clay pots.*

³ *Even the female jackals/wolves feed their pups,
but my people act cruelly toward their chil-
dren;
they are like [SIM] ostriches in the desert that
abandon their eggs.*

⁴ *My people's infants' tongues cling to the roofs/
tops of their mouths
because they are extremely thirsty;
the children plead for some food,
but no one gives them any.*

⁵ *People who previously ate fine food
are now starving in the streets;
those who previously lived luxuriously [MTY]
now paw/dig through rubbish heaps to find
some food.*

⁶ *The people of Sodom were struck with a disaster
very suddenly,*

and there was no one to rescue them;
but my people have been punished
more severely than *the people of Sodom* were
punished.

⁷ Our leaders' *behavior* was *previously* very pure,
whiter *and brighter* than snow and milk;
their bodies were redder than *red coral/stones*;
they were very strong and healthy [MET].

⁸ But now their faces are blacker than soot,
and no one recognizes them in the streets.
Their skin has shriveled on their bones,
and it has become as dry as [SIM] a wooden
stick.

⁹ It is better to die in a battle [MTY]
than to die of hunger.
There was no food to harvest in the fields,
so the people slowly starved until they died.

¹⁰ Women who *usually/previously* were very kind
have *killed and cooked* their own children;
they ate them *when there was no other food*,
when Jerusalem was surrounded *by enemy*
soldiers.

¹¹ Yahweh has shown that he was extremely
angry;
it is as though he started/ignited a fire in
Jerusalem
that burned everything to ashes.

¹² None of the kings on the earth or anyone else

- believed that any of our enemies could enter
the gates of Jerusalem.
- 13 *But that is what happened;*
it happened because the prophets sinned;
and the priests *also* sinned
by causing innocent people to be executed
[MTY].
- 14 The prophets and priests wandered through
the streets
as though they were blind.
No one would touch them
because their clothes were stained with the
blood *of people who had been killed*.
- 15 The people *who were alive* shouted, "Stay
away *from us* [DOU]! You are defiled/
untouchable!
Do not touch us!"
So the prophets and priests fled *from Israel*,
and they wandered around from one coun-
try to another,
because people *in each country* kept saying
to them, "You cannot stay here!"
- 16 It is Yahweh himself who has scattered them;
he no longer is concerned about them.
People do not respect *our* priests or leaders.
- 17 We [SYN] continued to look for someone to
help *us*,
but it was useless.
We continued to watch to see if one of our allies
would save us,

but none of the nations that we were waiting
for could help us.

18 Our enemies were hunting for us,
so we could not *even* walk in our streets *lest*
they seize us.

We were about to be captured;
it was time for us to be killed.

19 Those who pursued us were faster than eagles
flying in the sky.

Even if we fled to the mountains
or hid in the desert,
they went there ahead of us and waited to
attack us.

20 Our king, whom Yahweh appointed,
was the one who enabled us to remain alive
[MTY];

he was the one whom we trusted to protect us
[IDM]
from *the armies of* other nations.

But he was *captured*
like animals are [MET] caught in a pit.

21 You people of [IDM] Edom and Uz,
you may be happy about what is happening
to us now,

but *Yahweh* will be punishing [MTY] *you also.*
You will become drunk and will be ashamed
because your enemies will have stripped off
your clothes.

22 You *people of* [APO] Jerusalem,

the time of your being punished will end;
 Yahweh will not allow you to continue to live in
 ◀exile/foreign countries▶.

But *you people of [APO] Edom*, Yahweh will
 punish you;
 he will reveal the wicked things that you
 have done.

5

A prayer for God's mercy

- 1 Yahweh, think about what has happened to us.
 See that we have been disgraced.
- 2 Foreigners have seized our property,
and now they live in our homes.
- 3 *Our enemies* have killed our fathers;
 they caused our mothers to become widows.
- 4 *Now* we are required to pay for water to drink,
 and we must pay *a lot of money* for firewood.
- 5 *It is as though* those who pursue us are at our
 heels;
 we are exhausted, but they do not allow us
 to rest.
- 6 In order to get enough food *to remain alive*,
 we went to Egypt and Assyria and offered to
 work *for the people there*.
- 7 Our ancestors sinned, and now they are dead,
 but we are being punished for the sins that
 they committed.
- 8 *Officials from Babylon* who were *previously*
 slaves *now* rule over us,
 and there is no one who can rescue us from
 their power.

- 9 When we roam around in the desert searching for food, we are in danger of being killed, because people there kill strangers with their swords.
- 10 Our skin has become hot like [SIM] an oven, and we have a very high fever because we are extremely hungry.
- 11 *Our enemies* have raped the women in Jerusalem, *and they have done that to* the young women in *all* the towns of Judea.
- 12 *Our enemies* have hanged our leaders, and they do not respect our elders.
- 13 They force our young men to grind *flour* with millstones, and boys stagger while they *are forced to* carry *heavy* loads of firewood.
- 14 *Our* elders no longer sit at the city gates to *make important decisions*; the young men no longer play their musical *instruments*.
- 15 We [SYN] are no longer joyful; instead of dancing *joyfully*, we now mourn.
- 16 The wreaths *of flowers* have fallen off our heads. Terrible things have happened to us because of the sins that we committed.
- 17 We [SYN] are tired and discouraged [IDM], and we cannot see well because our eyes are *full of tears*.
- 18 Jerusalem is *completely* deserted, and jackals/wolves prowl around it.
- 19 But Yahweh, you rule forever!

You continue to rule [MTY] from one generation to the next generation.

²⁰ So why [RHQ] have you forgotten us?

Why [RHQ] have you abandoned us for a very long time?

²¹ *Please* enable us to return to you,
and enable us to prosper [MTY] as we did previously.

²² Please do that, because we hope that [RHQ] you have not rejected us forever
and that [RHQ] you do not continue to be extremely angry with us!

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