

OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

Introduction:

Last week we studied Jeremiah's prophetic words regarding the harsh reality of the Fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Captivity. God's justice was displayed in His terrible judgments against His own people who had degenerated into apostasy and idolatry. Today in the Book of Lamentations we see the heart of the prophet exposed and broken as he weeps over the rubble of the destroyed city and the desecrated temple. No wonder that Jeremiah earned the reputation of "*the weeping prophet*" -- Not just because he cried, but because his entire prophetic ministry was marked by **compassionate sorrow**, **personal suffering**, and **emotional vulnerability** in the face of a collapsing nation. His tears were for both the people and the God whose love they rejected.

"Oh, that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for the slain of my people." — **Jeremiah 9:1**

J. Sidlow Baxter: This pathetic little five-fold poem, the Lamentations, has been called "an elegy written in a graveyard." It is a **memorial dirge** written on the destruction and humiliation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 B.C. It is a cloudburst of grief, a river of tears, a sea of sobs.

Like the Song of Solomon, this is another book that has largely been neglected in evangelical preaching circles – but for vastly different reasons. We have a natural aversion to dwell on the topic of **suffering**. At least in the book of Job you have a happy resolution with Job being abundantly blessed and restored to health, family life and prosperity. But here Jeremiah is left in his cave overlooking the ruined city with only a glimmer of future hope based on the unchanging character of God.

Walter Kaiser Jr.: Our generation's neglect of this volume has meant that our pastoral work, our caring ministry for believers, and our own ability to find direction in the midst of calamity, pain, and suffering have been seriously truncated and rendered partially or totally ineffective.

We need the message of this book to help those struggling with pain and suffering; those mourning some great loss and overwhelmed with grief. The **nugget of hope** that the prophet highlights comes at the center of these five chapters as the point of emphasis:

"This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. ²² The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness."

Big Idea: THE HEAVY HAND OF THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE FOR SIN BRINGS CATASTROPHIC DEVASTATION AND INTENSE GRIEF BUT STILL A WINDOW FOR HOPE AND RESTORATION

Reasons to study this book:

- To find comfort when experiencing extreme times of sorrow and grief and suffering as we reflect on the character of God

- To understand the workings of the Lord's heavy hand of discipline upon His own people because of their sin
- To motivate us to confession of sin and repentance
- To appreciate the abundant fountain of the Lord's lovingkindnesses, compassions and faithfulness – no matter how bleak our circumstances might look
- To be confronted with how seriously God takes sin and the awful consequences of His anger
- To be reminded of God's Sovereignty over all of the nations and His future promises yet remaining for the nation Israel

Structure of the Book:

The 5 chapters represent **5 songs of lament**.

Chaps. 1, 2, 4 are funeral dirges written as acrostics;

Chap. 3 at the center of the book has 3 times as many verses = triple acrostic: aaa / bbb / etc.;

Chap. 5 is not an acrostic.

Chaps. 1&2 have 3 lines per verse;

Chap. 4 has 2 lines;

Chaps. 3&5 have 1 line per verse.

This elaborate structure stands in contrast to the passionate outpouring of grief and emotion.

Lamentations was in regular use in the synagogues by the time the NT came to be written; It is still read publicly by orthodox Jews on the day the temple was destroyed by the Romans under the emperor Titus in 70 AD (a later destruction of the temple).

Jeremiah probably wrote this eyewitness account not long after the destruction of the city and right before he was taken captive to Egypt.

(1:1) PRELUDE: GRIEF VS JOY

I. (CHAP 1) FIRST DIRGE: SORROWS WITHOUT COMFORT

II. (CHAP 2) SECOND DIRGE: GOD'S ALL-CONSUMING ANGER

III. (CHAP 3) THIRD DIRGE: REKINDLING OF HOPE

IV. (CHAP 4) FOURTH DIRGE: ANGRY JUDGMENT

V. (CHAP 5) FIFTH DIRGE: APPEAL FOR RESTORATION

(1:1) PRELUDE: GRIEF VS JOY

3 STARK CONTRASTS BETWEEN SPIRITUAL GRIEF AND SPIRITUAL JOY

A. CONTRAST #1: LONELINESS VS COMMUNITY

*“How lonely sits the city
That was full of people!”*

Steven Smith: Jerusalem was once lovely and vivacious, the center of the nation that was central to God’s plan. Was there a more envied place in the whole world? She was God’s bride! This is the place where David ruled with imperial, military gravitas. This is the place where Solomon built palaces so grand that the queen of Sheba came to visit. Jerusalem was spectacular, magnificent, marvelous! The beauty is important to remember because it makes **Lamentations 1:1** more provocative. She went from epicenter to wasteland.

B. CONTRAST #2: HELPLESSNESS VS GREATNESS

*“She has become like a widow
Who was once great among the nations!”*

Psalm 146:9 *“The Lord protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, but He thwarts the way of the wicked.”*

C. CONTRAST #3: SLAVE VS ROYALTY

*“She who was a princess among the provinces
Has become a forced laborer!”*

John 8:36 *“If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”*

(1:2-22) FIRST DIRGE: SORROWS WITHOUT COMFORT

JERUSALEM LIES DEVASTATED WITH NO ONE TO COMFORT

5 CRIES OF DESPAIR: (organized around the repetition of the same refrain)

A. (:2-6) THE DESPAIR OF EXILE AND CAPTIVITY

Refrain: (:2) *“She has none to comfort her”*

B. (:7-11) THE DESPAIR OF HUMILIATION AND DEFILEMENT

Refrain: (:9) *“She has no comforter”*

C. (:12-16) THE DESPAIR OF PAIN AND REJECTION

Refrain: (:16) *“Because far from me is a comforter”*

D. (:17-19) THE DESPAIR OF ISOLATION AND POWERLESSNESS

Refrain: (:17) *“There is no one to comfort her”*

E. (:20-22) THE DESPAIR OF PROLONGED AND INTENSE SUFFERING

Refrain: (:21) *“There is no one to comfort me”*

Ray Stedman: Each chapter stresses and develops a particular aspect of sorrow. Chapter one gives us a description of the utter depths of sorrow, the desolation of spirit that sorrow makes upon the human heart, the sense of abandonment, of complete loneliness. Here

you can see how vividly the prophet has captured this feeling as he pours out the feelings of his own heart. The people have been vanquished and taken into captivity; the city has been set on fire and totally destroyed.

Walter Kaiser Jr.: Jerusalem is personified as a woman who has been forsaken by her friends, massacred by her enemies, left bereft of her former glory, and now stands comfortless and without any “*resting place*.” Zion in her stateless, friendless, hopeless, godless, and Messiahless condition was without a “*resting place*,” her condition was the reverse situation of the Moabitess, Ruth, who found a **place of rest** in Jehovah and Judah (**Ruth 1:9; 3:1**).

II. (CHAP 2) SECOND DIRGE: GOD’S ALL-CONSUMING ANGER -- POURED OUT UPON JERUSALEM – MOURNING AND MOANING THE DAY OF THE LORD’S ANGER CONSUMES JERUSALEM WITH TOTAL DESTRUCTION

This chapter should be a wake-up call to those who minimize or overlook the extent and severity of God’s wrath. Sin must be taken seriously. If God would so fiercely discipline His chosen nation Israel with such all-consuming anger, what will be the end of those who reject His authority and rebel against His commands? This **day of the Lord’s anger** is but a foretaste of that great and awful Day of the Lord that awaits. Read this chapter through twice: the first time noting every reference to God’s anger and the second time underlining every description of the totality of destruction unleashed by God’s wrath.

A. (:1-10) THE PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT THE LORD HAS DONE TO HIS PEOPLE – GOD HAS POURED OUT HIS WRATH IN TOTAL DESTRUCTION

1. (:1) The Removal of Israel’s Glory

*“How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger!
He has cast from heaven to earth the glory of Israel,
And has not remembered His footstool in the day of His anger.”*

2. (:2-3) The Destruction of Israel’s Strength and Defenses

*“The Lord has swallowed up; He has not spared all the habitations of Jacob.
In His wrath He has thrown down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah;
He has brought them down to the ground;
He has profaned the kingdom and its princes.
In fierce anger He has cut off all the strength of Israel;
He has drawn back His right hand from before the enemy.
And He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire consuming round about.”*

3. (:4-5) The Role Reversal so that the Defender of Israel Now Destroys Like Her Enemy

*“He has bent His bow like an enemy;
He has set His right hand like an adversary
and slain all that were pleasant to the eye;
In the tent of the daughter of Zion He has poured out His wrath like fire.
The Lord has become like an enemy.*

*He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all its palaces.
He has destroyed its strongholds and multiplied in the daughter of Judah
mourning and moaning.”*

4. (:6-7) The Rejection of All Ritualistic Worship and Religious Celebration

*“And He has violently treated His tabernacle like a garden booth;
He has destroyed His appointed meeting place.
The Lord has caused to be forgotten the appointed feast and sabbath in Zion.
And He has despised king and priest in the indignation of His anger.
The Lord has rejected His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary;
He has delivered into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces.
They have made a noise in the house of the Lord as in the day of an appointed
feast.”*

5. (:8-9) The Obliteration of Israel’s Unique Identity as the People of God

*“The Lord determined to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion.
He has stretched out a line, He has not restrained His hand from destroying,
And He has caused rampart and wall to lament; They have languished together.
Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars.”
Her king and her princes are among the nations;
The law is no more.
Also her prophets find no vision from the Lord.”*

**B. (:11-19) THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE IMPACT OF THAT SCENE OF
DESTRUCTION ON THE PROPHET – GOD’S PEOPLE LIE DEVASTATED –
CRYING OUT TO THE LORD WHILE THEIR ENEMIES EXULT**

1. (:11-12) Unmitigated Sorrow with the Echoes of Pitiful Cries

*“My eyes fail because of tears, my spirit is greatly troubled;
My heart is poured out on the earth,
because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
When little ones and infants faint in the streets of the city.
They say to their mothers, ‘Where is grain and wine?’
As they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city,
As their life is poured out on their mothers’ bosom.”*

2. (:13) Unprecedented Ruin with no Savior in Sight

*“How shall I admonish you?
To what shall I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem?
To what shall I liken you as I comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your ruin is as vast as the sea; Who can heal you?”*

3. (:14) Unchecked False Prophets with their Failure to Reprove Sin

*“Your prophets have seen for you false and foolish visions;
And they have not exposed your iniquity so as to restore you from captivity,
But they have seen for you false and misleading oracles.”*

4. (:15-16) Unabashed Mocking with Derisive Exultation

*“All who pass along the way clap their hands in derision at you;
They hiss and shake their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem:
‘Is this the city of which they said,
The perfection of beauty, a joy to all the earth’?”
All your enemies have opened their mouths wide against you;
They hiss and gnash their teeth.
They say, ‘We have swallowed her up!
Surely this is the day for which we waited; We have reached it, we have seen it.’”*

5. (:17) Unrelenting Discipline with the Sovereign and Faithful Lord Exalting Israel’s Enemies

*“The Lord has done what He purposed;
He has accomplished His word which He commanded from days of old.
He has thrown down without sparing,
and He has caused the enemy to rejoice over you;
He has exalted the might of your adversaries.”*

Steven Smith: Anyone with any sympathy whatsoever is disturbed by this image of a city destroyed at the hands of God. What are we to make of this? How do we explain God’s action? First, remember the **uniqueness** of this situation. This nation is the (singular, definite article) chosen people of God. They are unique. They were to have a love relationship with God like a bride to her groom. As such, God would use them to be a blessing to the nations and to fulfill all his covenant promises. Their rejection of their groom/God was serious because their responsibility to their God was great.

6. (:18-19) Unceasing Crying with Pleas for Mercy and Compassion

*“Their heart cried out to the Lord,
‘O wall of the daughter of Zion,
let your tears run down like a river day and night;
Give yourself no relief, let your eyes have no rest.
Arise, cry aloud in the night at the beginning of the night watches;
Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord;
Lift up your hands to Him for the life of your little ones
Who are faint because of hunger at the head of every street.’”*

C. (:20-22) THE APPEAL TO THE LORD FOR COMPASSION

Change of perspective indicator: “See, O Lord and look”

1. (:20A) Desperate Appeal

*“See, O Lord, and look!
With whom hast Thou dealt thus?”*

2. (:20B-21A) Four Devastated Groups

a. Mothers / Infants

*“Should women eat their offspring,
The little ones who were born healthy?”*

b. Priests / Prophets

“Should priest and prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?”

c. Young / Old

“On the ground in the streets lie young and old”

d. Virgins / Young Men

“My virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword.”

3. (:21B-22) Summary of Destruction:

The Lord Has Consumed Jerusalem in Anger with Total Destruction

“Thou hast slain them in the day of Thine anger,

Thou has slaughtered, not sparing.

Thou didst call as in the day of an appointed feast my terrors on every side;

And there was no one who escaped or survived in the day of the Lord’s anger,

Those whom I bore and reared, my enemy annihilated them.”

III. (CHAP 3) THIRD DIRGE: REKINDLING OF HOPE

THE JOURNEY FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE HINGES ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD – HIS LOVINGKINDNESS, COMPASSION AND FAITHFULNESS

Everyone faces situations of suffering, grief, and trial. It is important to remember that this context in Lamentations arises from the sin of God’s people and His corresponding judgment – different than the unprovoked trials faced by Job at the hand of Satan. The tone of hopelessness and despair that weighs heavily throughout these dirges is broken here by the ray of sunshine of the character of God. His lovingkindness and compassion can never be exhausted. We wake up every morning to find new resources to encourage us. Because God is faithful we can cling to His promises and hope in His deliverance and restoration. Note the structure of this chapter. It is still an acrostic – but now you have 3 consecutive verses starting with the same Hebrew letter – so the total number of verses = 22 X 3 = 66.

A. (:1-18) THE STARTING POINT -- NO STRENGTH . . . NO HOPE FOR THE PROPHET – VIEWED AS THE SUFFERING SERVANT

1. **(:1-6)** No Light for the Afflicted Prophet Because the Life-Giver is Against Him
2. **(:7-12)** No Help Because the Helper Has Become the Hunter
3. **(:13-18)** No Peace or Happiness or Strength or Hope – Instead Pain and Derision and Bitterness and Fear and Rejection are His Lot

B. (:19-42) THE TURNING POINT -- THE CHARACTER OF GOD REKINDLES HOPE FOR THE NATION ISRAEL – GOD’ LOVINGKINDNESS, COMPASSION AND FAITHFULNESS

1. (:19-21) A Broken Spirit is the Foundation for Hope
2. (:22-24) The Character of God is the Basis for Hope = Key to the entire book

a. Unceasing Lovingkindnesses

“The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease.”

b. Unexhausting Compassions

"For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning."

c. Unchanging Faithfulness

"Great is Your faithfulness."

These words were the inspiration for a hymn first introduced during the 1954 Billy Graham Crusade in Great Britain. The words were written by **Thomas Chisholm**, a man born in a Kentucky log cabin, a man who never even received a high school education.

*"Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness;
morning by morning new mercies I see.
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided,
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me."*

William Wyne: God's Unfailing Faithfulness

God's unfailing faithfulness means that everything He says and does is certain, and that we can be certain that He will always be one hundred percent God, one hundred percent of the time, or He will not be God at all.

- Jeremiah discovered in **verse 22a** that His faithfulness is never partial, but He has an unfailing fullness of faithfulness. . .
- Finally, His faithfulness is not stale, He has an unfailing freshness of faithfulness.

<http://sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=77252>

d. Unlimited Inheritance

"The Lord is my portion, ' says my soul."

e. Rekindling of Hope

"Therefore I have hope in Him."

Ray Stedman: In many ways, this is one of the most beautiful passages in all the Bible. It reveals the compassion of the heart of God. Judgment, as Isaiah says, is his **strange work**. He does not like to do it. He does not willingly afflict or grieve the sons of men. His mercies are fresh every morning. In his own pain Jeremiah remembers this: that behind all the desolation is the work of love. God destroyed Jerusalem because it was heading the wrong way. He destroyed it so that he could restore it later, and build it up again in joy and peace and blessing. The Lord does not cast off forever; though he causes grief, he will have compassion.

3. (:25-27) Patient Endurance is the Blessed Pathway to Hope

a. (:25) Patiently Seek the Lord

*"The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,
To the person who seeks Him."*

b. (:26) Silently Wait for the Lord's Deliverance

"It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord."

- c. (:27) Meekly Accept the Lord's Nurturing Discipline and Providential Direction
"It is good for a man that he should bear the yoke in his youth."

4. (:28-30) The Loneliness of Rejection and Reproach is the Training Ground for Hope (the Fertile Soil for Hope)

- a. (:28) Sit Alone in Silence – Submitting to God's Discipline
"Let him sit alone and be silent since He has laid it on him."
- b. (:29) Shut Your Mouth – No Rebuttals – but Glimmers of Hope
"Let him put his mouth in the dust, perhaps there is hope."
- c. (:30) Surrender Your Cheek – Accept Attacks and Reproach
"Let him give his cheek to the smiter; let him be filled with reproach."

5. (:31-33) The Restorative Goal of Discipline is the Perspective of Hope

- a. (:31) Ultimate Rejection is not the Goal of Discipline
"For the Lord will not reject forever,"
- b. (:32) Restoration (according to the Lord's abundant compassion and lovingkindness) is the Goal of Discipline
*"For if He causes grief, then He will have compassion
According to His abundant lovingkindness."*
- c. (:33) Blessing Rather Than Cursing Delights the Lord
"For He does not afflict willingly or grieve the sons of men."

6. (:34-36) The Justice of the Lord is the Encouragement of Hope --
3 Injustices Condemned by the Lord – "Of these things the Lord does not approve":

- a. (:34) Oppression (or Cruel mistreatment)
"To crush under His feet all the prisoners of the land."
- b. (:35) Inequity
"To deprive a man of justice, in the presence of the Most High."
- c. (:36) Cheating (defrauding a man of his legal rights)
"To defraud a man in his lawsuit"

7. (:37-39) The Vindication of God's Judgment is the Grounds for Repentance (Leading to Hope)

- a. (:37) God is Sovereign Over All
*"Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass,
Unless the Lord has commanded it?"*
- b. (:38) God Dispenses Both Blessing and Cursing
*"Is it not from the mouth of the Most High
That both good and ill go forth?"*

- c. (:39) Man Can Offer No Complaint in Light of His Sinfulness
*“Why should any living mortal, or any man,
offer complaint in view of his sins?”*

8. (:40-42) The Response of Repentance is the Prerequisite for Hope

- a. (:40) Call for Examination and Repentance
“Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the Lord.”
- b. (:41) Posture of Repentance and Appeal
“We lift up our heart and hands toward God in heaven”
- c. (:42) Confession of Sin and Rebellion
“We have transgressed and rebelled; Thou hast not pardoned.”

**C. (:43-66) THE DESTINATION POINT -- THE EXPECTATION OF
DELIVERANCE FOR ISRAEL AND VENGEANCE ON HER ENEMIES --**

IV. (CHAP 4) FOURTH DIRGE: ANGRY JUDGMENT

**THE ANGER OF THE LORD HAS PUNISHED HIS PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR SIN –
TRANSFORMING THEIR FORMER GLORY INTO DEVASTATION – AND THIS WRATH
WILL FALL UPON THEIR GLOATING ENEMIES AS WELL**

God is always justified and righteous in His judgments. Here we have another account of the horrors of the siege and devastation of Jerusalem. The contrast between the former glory of God’s people and their present distress is striking. But the emphasis is on the culpability of the nation – especially due to the corruption of its leadership. The cup of God’s wrath needed to be drunk in full. And the nations round about like Edom who were presently gloating would soon be forced to drink the cup they deserve as well. Sin cannot go unpunished. This intense passage highlights the mercy of our Lord Jesus who willingly drank the cup of God’s wrath for us and made a complete end of our guilt and sin so that we never have to fear God’s wrath. We still may experience His loving and nurturing discipline in our lives, but Christ has been made the propitiation for our sins.

**A. (:1-10) DEVASTATION OF THE SIEGE DETAILED IN EYEWITNESS
ACCOUNT – CONTRAST BETWEEN FORMER GLORY AND CURRENT
HUMILIATION**

Howard Tillman Kuist: The most striking feature of this poem is the contrast drawn between the former glory of the Holy City and its present desolation. The city itself is like tarnished gold, and its precious stones, once devoted to a holy purpose, are scattered. As for the sons of Zion, once esteemed to be of great worth, they are now debased like earthen sherds. Mothers, deranged by suffering, have become inhuman. Their nursings are parched, their children are unfed. Those who were accustomed to delicacies are faint with hunger, while those who were clad royally now

grovel in ashes. The sufferings of the heinous sinners of Sodom were momentary as compared to the prolonged chastisement now justly inflicted upon the Covenant people. The nobles of Zion, once renowned for their healthy appearance, are now blacker than soot and shriveled like a stick. Under these conditions it would be better far to be slain by the sword than to be consumed by hunger. The hands of the women, accustomed to practice kindly deeds, now, under torments of famine, have boiled their own children for food. Prophets and priests who condemned just persons to death now are defiled with blood. Once they were honored people. Now as unclean men they are compelled to flee away as though leprous.

B. (:11) Key Verse – DEVASTATION ACCOMPLISHED BY THE ANGER OF THE LORD

*“The Lord has accomplished His wrath,
He has poured out His fierce anger;
And He has kindled a fire in Zion which has consumed its foundations.”*

C. (:12-20) DEVASTATION SHOCKS THE WATCHING WORLD AND ISRAEL’S CORRUPT LEADERS

D. (:21-22) DEVASTATION AWAITS THE GLOATING ENEMIES OF ISRAEL

**V. (CHAP 5) FIFTH DIRGE – APPEAL FOR RESTORATION
THE LORD’S UNCHANGING DOMINION AND PROMISE OF ULTIMATE RESTORATION
SHOULD GIVE HOPE EVEN IN THE MIDST OF DESOLATION AS WE CONTINUE TO
APPEAL TO HIS MERCY**

Deliverance and restoration have not yet arrived. The prophet continues to be burdened with the reality of the pain and suffering he witnesses. The hand of the Lord’s discipline has been heavy. It seems like the Lord needs to be awakened to action. The litany of indignities seems unbearable. Ultimately it is the Lord’s name that is at stake. He needs to respond to the pleas of His repentant people. Each verse in this chapter must be looked at as a separate unit with parallelism in thought between the two different members.

A. (:1) THE WAKEUP CALL – REMEMBER . . . LOOK . . . SEE

*“Remember, O Lord, what has befallen us;
Look, and see our reproach!”*

B. (:2-16) THE LITANY OF 14 INDIGNITIES (major section of this chapter)

[In studying this list, take the opposite positive blessing and meditate on all of the riches we enjoy in union with and fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.]

1. **(:2) Bankrupt – Possessions Appropriated by Foreigners**

*“Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,
Our houses to aliens.”*

2. (:3) Destitute Like Orphans and Widows
*"We have become orphans without a father,
Our mothers are like widows."*
3. (:4) Held Hostage for Basic Necessities
*"We have to pay for our drinking water,
Our wood comes to us at a price."*
4. (:5) Worn Out
*"Our pursuers are at our necks;
We are worn out, there is no rest for us."*
5. (:6) Enslaved
"We have submitted to Egypt and Assyria to get enough bread."

(:7) Refrain of Confession – Emphasis on the Sins of the Fathers

*"Our fathers sinned, and are no more;
It is we who have borne their iniquities."*

6. (:8) Oppressed
*"Slaves rule over us;
There is no one to deliver us from their hand."*
7. (:9) At Risk
*"We get our bread at the risk of our lives
Because of the sword in the wilderness."*
8. (:10) Starved
*"Our skin has become as hot as an oven,
Because of the burning heat of famine."*
9. (:11) Ravished
*"They ravished the women in Zion,
The virgins in the cities of Judah."*
10. (:12) Disrespected / Humiliated
*"Princes were hung by their hands;
Elders were not respected."*
11. (:13) Overworked
*"Young men worked at the grinding mill,
And youths stumbled under loads of wood."*
12. (:14) Leaderless
*"Elders are gone from the gate,
Young men from their music."*

13. (:15) Reduced to Mourning

*"The joy of our hearts has ceased;
Our dancing has been turned into mourning."*

14. (:16A) Fallen from Glory to Derision

"The crown has fallen from our head."

C. (:17-18) THE OVERALL IMPACT:

- HOPE ALMOST EXTINGUISHED

- JERUSALEM LIES DESOLATE

1. (:17) Hope Almost Extinguished

*"Because of this our heart is faint,
Because of these things our eyes are dim;"*

2. (:18) Jerusalem Lies Desolate

*"Because of Mount Zion which lies desolate,
Foxes prowl in it."*

D. (:19-22) THE FINAL APPEAL

1. (:19) Dominating Principle: God is Always in Charge

*"You, O Lord, rule forever;
Your throne is from generation to generation."*

2. (:20) Perception of Being Forgotten

*"Why do You forget us forever?
Why do you forsake us so long?"*

3. (:21) Plea for Restoration

*"Restore us to You, O Lord, that we may be restored;
Renew our days as of old."*

4. (:22) Possibility of Ultimate Rejection

*"Unless You have utterly rejected us
And are exceedingly angry with us."*