

A Tour Through the Divine Library  
(Lamentations)

I. General Introduction to Lamentations

-Title: Hebrew: ‘Alas!’ ‘How!’ ‘Elegies’, ‘Lamentations’; Greek: ‘Dirges’, ‘Laments’—a song expressing grief and mourning for someone who has died; Latin: ‘Tears’, ‘Lamentations’; Vulgate: ‘The Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet’, from which comes the title in our English Bibles

-Author and Date: Jeremiah the prophet, soon after 586 BC (2 Chron. 35:25; Jer. 7:29; Lam. 3:48)

-Theme/Purpose: mourning, confession, hope

-Structure:

- I. Desolation of Jerusalem (ch. 1)
- II. Anger of Jehovah (ch. 2)
- III. Grief of Jeremiah (ch. 3)
- IV. Siege of Jerusalem (ch. 4)
- V. Prayer for Jerusalem (ch. 5)

II. General Overview of Lamentations

-Ch. 1: Desolation of Jerusalem: Lamentation by Jeremiah (vs. 1-11); Lamentation by the Personified Jerusalem (vs. 12-22)

-Ch. 2: Anger of Jehovah: Divine Perspective (vs. 1-10); Human Perspective (vs. 11-19); Jerusalem’s Prayer of Lamentation (vs. 20-22)

-Ch. 3: Grief of Jeremiah: Jeremiah’s Distress (vs. 1-18); Jeremiah’s Hope (vs. 19-39); Jeremiah’s Prayer (vs. 40-66)

-Ch. 4: Siege of Jerusalem (vs. 1-20); Promise of Hope (vs. 21, 22)

-Ch. 5: Prayer for Jerusalem: To Be Remembered by the Lord (vs. 1-18); To Be Restored by the Lord (vs. 19-22)

III. Prominent Themes in Lamentations

-God’s Attributes: wrath (1:5, 12, 15, 18; 2:1, 17, 21, 22); sovereignty (3:37, 38); goodness (3:25); mercy, compassion, faithfulness (3:22, 23-25, 32)

-Divine Judgment Against Sin (1:8, 20; 3:42, 43; 4:6, 13, 22; 5:16)

- Hope in God’s Compassion (3:22-25, 31-33)

IV. Christ in Lamentations

-In the Prophet (Matt. 23:37 ; Luke 13:34; 19:41; Lam. 1:16; 2:11; 3:48)

-In the Prophecy (1:12; 2:15, 16; 3:14, 19, 30; see also Ps. 22; Is. 53)

V. Practical Lessons in Lamentations

- 1) Jeremiah teaches us how to deal with pain and suffering (Lam. 3:20-25, 31-33).
- 2) The judgment of God that fell upon Jerusalem reminds us of the judgment that will fall upon those who refuse to repent of their sins.
- 3) The judgment of God that fell upon Jerusalem reminds us of the judgment that fell upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4) Lamentations reminds us of the faithfulness of God.