

A Lament for Jerusalem – Part 2 (c. September 587 BC)

Lamentations 3

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

- 1 I am a man who has seen misery,
under the rod of his wrath.
- 2 He has driven me along, he brought
darkness and not light.
- 3 Surely he has turned his hand against me,
all day long.

Beth

- 4 He has worn out my flesh and skin,
he has broken my bones.
- 5 He has besieged and engulfed me
with bitterness and hardship.
- 6 In darkness he has let me dwell
like *the* dead of long ago.

Gimel

- 7 He has built a wall around me, I cannot go out;
he has made my bronze fetters heavy.
- 8 Though I cry out for help,
he shuts out my prayers.
- 9 He has blocked my ways with dressed stones;
he has made my paths crooked.

Daleth

- 10 To me he *is* like a bear lying in wait,
a lion in hiding.
- 11 He has forsaken my way and torn me to pieces;
he has caused me desolation.
- 12 He has bent his bow and set me
as the target for the arrow.

He

- 13 He shot the arrows of his quiver
into my kidneys.
- 14 I have become a laughingstock for all the people,
their mocking song all day long.
- 15 He has filled me with bitterness,
he has drenched me *with* wormwood.

Waw

- 16 He has broken my teeth on grit,
he has trampled me down in ash.
- 17 My life has been removed from peace,
I have forgotten goodness.
- 18 And I have said, "My glory is ruined,
my expectation from Yahweh."

Zayin

- 19 Remember my misery and bitterness,
the wormwood and venom!
- 20 Surely my soul remembers
and bows down within me.
- 21 This I have reminded myself,
therefore I will hope.

Heth

- 22 The loyal love of Yahweh does not cease;

his compassions do not come to an end.

23 *They* are new in the morning,
great is your faithfulness.

24 “Yahweh is my portion,”
says my soul,
“Thus I will hope on him.”

Teth

25 Yahweh is good to those who wait on him,
to the person that seeks him.

26 *It is* good to wait in silence
for the salvation of Yahweh.

27 *It is* good for a man who carries
the yoke of his childhood.

Yod

28 Let him sit alone and be silent
when he has laid it on him.

29 Let him put his mouth in the dust;
perhaps there is hope.

30 Let him give a cheek to his smiter,
let him be filled with disgrace.

Kaph

31 For the Lord will not reject
forever.

32 For even though he causes grief he has compassion
according to the greatness of his royal love.

33 He does not afflict willingly,
or grieve anyone.

Lamed

34 To crush under his feet
all *the* prisoners of *the* earth;
35 to deprive one of justice
before the face of the Most High;
36 to subvert a person in a legal dispute—
the Lord has not found delight *in these things*.

Mem

37 Who can speak and it will happen
if the Lord has not commanded *it*?

38 *Is* it not from the mouth of the Most High
that disaster and good will come?

39 Why should any living person complain
about his sin?

Nun

40 Let us test and examine our ways;
let us return to Yahweh.

41 Let us lift up our hearts with our hands
to God in the heavens.

42 We ourselves have transgressed and rebelled,
you have not forgiven.

Samech

43 You have covered *yourself* in anger and pursued us,
you have slain and not shown mercy.

44 You have covered yourself in a cloud
so that prayer cannot pass through.

45 You have made us scum and refuse
in the midst of the nations.

Pe

46 All our enemies
have opened their mouth against us.
47 Fear and a pit have come upon us,
desolation and destruction.
48 Channels of water run down my eyes
because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Ayin

49 My eyes have poured down unceasingly
without respite,
50 until Yahweh looks down
and sees from heaven.
51 My eyes inflict my soul
because of all the daughters of my city.

Tsade

52 My enemies hunt me without cause,
like a bird.
53 They have silenced me in a pit,
they have thrown a stone at me.
54 Water has flown over my head,
I said, "I am cut off."

Qoph

55 I have called your name, O Yahweh,
from the depths of the pit.
56 You have heard my cry, "Do not shut your ear
to my cry for help, for my relief!"
57 You came near on a day *when* I called you,
you said, "Do not fear!"

Resh

58 O Lord, you have pleaded for my cause,
you have redeemed my life.
59 You have seen my injustice, O Yahweh;
judge my case.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
all their plans against me.

Shin

61 You have heard their disgrace, O Yahweh,
all their plans against me.
62 The lips and meditation of my assailants
are against me all day long.
63 Look at their sitting and their standing,
I *am* their mocking song.

Taw

64 Return to them what is deserved, O Yahweh,
according to the work of their hands.
65 Give them a stubborn heart;
curse them!
66 Pursue them in anger and destroy them
from under the heavens of Yahweh.