

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

Lamentations 3

The Prophet Speaks:*Aleph*

- 1 I am the man who has seen affliction
Because of the rod of His wrath.
- 2 He has driven me and made me walk
In darkness and not in light.
- 3 Surely against me He has turned His hand
Repeatedly all the day.

Beth

- 4 He has caused my flesh and my skin to waste away,
He has broken my bones.
- 5 He has besieged and encompassed me with bitterness and hardship.
- 6 In dark places He has made me dwell,
Like those who have long been dead.

Gimel

- 7 He has walled me in so that I cannot go out;
He has made my chain heavy.
- 8 Even when I cry out and call for help,
He shuts out my prayer.
- 9 He has blocked my ways with hewn stone;
He has made my paths crooked.

Daleth

- 10 He is to me like a bear lying in wait,
Like a lion in secret places.
- 11 He has turned aside my ways and torn me to pieces;
He has made me desolate.
- 12 He bent His bow
And set me as a target for the arrow.

He

- 13 He made the arrows of His quiver
To enter into my inward parts.
- 14 I have become a laughingstock to all my people,
Their *mocking* song all the day.
- 15 He has filled me with bitterness,
He has made me drunk with wormwood.

Waw

- 16 He has broken my teeth with gravel;
He has made me cower in the dust.
- 17 My soul has been rejected from peace;
I have forgotten happiness.
- 18 So I say, "My strength has perished,
And *so has* my hope from the LORD."

Zayin

- 19 Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness.
- 20 Surely my soul remembers
And is bowed down within me.
- 21 This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have hope.

Heth

- 22 The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.

- 23 *They are new every morning;*
Great is Your faithfulness.
- 24 “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,
“Therefore I have hope in Him.”

Teth

- 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,
To the person who seeks Him.
- 26 *It is good that he waits silently*
For the salvation of the LORD.
- 27 *It is good for a man that he should bear*
The yoke in his youth.

Yod

- 28 Let him sit alone and be silent
Since He has laid *it* on him.
- 29 Let him put his mouth in the dust,
Perhaps there is hope.
- 30 Let him give his cheek to the smiter,
Let him be filled with reproach.

Kaph

- 31 For the Lord will not reject forever,
32 For if He causes grief,
Then He will have compassion
According to His abundant lovingkindness.
- 33 For He does not afflict willingly
Or grieve the sons of men.

Lamed

- 34 To crush under His feet
All the prisoners of the land,
- 35 To deprive a man of justice
In the presence of the Most High,
- 36 To defraud a man in his lawsuit—
Of these things the Lord does not approve.

Mem

- 37 Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass,
Unless the Lord has commanded *it*?
- 38 *Is it* not from the mouth of the Most High
That both good and ill go forth?
- 39 Why should *any* living mortal, or *any* man,
Offer complaint in view of his sins?

Nun

- 40 Let us examine and probe our ways,
And let us return to the LORD.
- 41 We lift up our heart and hands
Toward God in heaven;
- 42 We have transgressed and rebelled,
You have not pardoned.

Samech

- 43 You have covered *Yourself* with anger
And pursued us;
You have slain *and* have not spared.
- 44 You have covered Yourself with a cloud
So that no prayer can pass through.
- 45 *You have made us mere* offscouring and refuse

In the midst of the peoples.

Pe

- 46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.
47 Panic and pitfall have befallen us,
Devastation and destruction;
48 My eyes run down with streams of water
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Ayin

- 49 My eyes pour down unceasingly,
Without stopping,
50 Until the LORD looks down
And sees from heaven.
51 My eyes bring pain to my soul
Because of all the daughters of my city.

Tsade

- 52 My enemies without cause
Hunted me down like a bird;
53 They have silenced me in the pit
And have placed a stone on me.
54 Waters flowed over my head;
I said, "I am cut off!"

Qoph

- 55 I called on Your name, O LORD,
Out of the lowest pit.
56 You have heard my voice,
"Do not hide Your ear from my *prayer for relief*,
From my cry for help."
57 You drew near when I called on You;
You said, "Do not fear!"

Resh

- 58 O Lord, You have pleaded my soul's cause;
You have redeemed my life.
59 O LORD, You have seen my oppression;
Judge my case.
60 You have seen all their vengeance,
All their schemes against me.

Shin

- 61 You have heard their reproach, O LORD,
All their schemes against me.
62 The lips of my assailants and their whispering
Are against me all day long.
63 Look on their sitting and their rising;
I am their mocking song.

Taw

- 64 You will recompense them, O LORD,
According to the work of their hands.
65 You will give them hardness of heart,
Your curse will be on them.
66 You will pursue them in anger and destroy them
From under the heavens of the LORD!