

# Jeremiah/Lamentations

**In a word:** Wrath

**In a sentence:** Jeremiah is an examination of God's wrath in light of his love, his commitment to holiness, and his desire to right all things in the end.

**Themes**

- **Land**

- The land was intended to be a "firstfruits" of God's kingdom spread over the whole earth, but with the people's sin the land will vomit them out.

- **Dwelling/Temple/Relationship**

- With the destruction of the temple there is a formal rupture in the relationship between Yahweh and his people. This does not mean that he will forsake them forever, but they have been an unfaithful wife and the destruction of the temple is the visible representation of the ripping apart of the relationship between Yahweh and apostate Israel- but he will rescue a remnant.

- **Royal Priesthood, Image of God & Redemption**

- God's people were led by selfish wicked priests and officials, but in the end he will raise up a new David who will in turn provide true shepherds for God's people. (This is why the NT uses the language of pastor)

- **Royal Seed & War of the Seeds**

- The center of Jeremiah looks forward to the hope of the people being the seed of the line of David (messiah) who will restore all things.

- **Blessing/God is With Us/God Fights for Us**

- Despite the intensity of God's wrath, it is a purifying wrath intending to bring blessing in the end. It is the wrath of a father rescuing his child from danger.

- **Covenant & Faith**

- It is those who are of faith who are God's people- not simply the physical descendants of Abraham.

Application Comments

- Can our theology handle Jeremiah and Lamentations? (mostly from Erik Raymond article on Gospel Coalition)
  - A God who gets really angry and shows it. "The Lord gave full vent to his wrath; he poured out his hot anger, and he kindled a fire in Zion that consumed its foundations." ([Lam. 4.11])
  - A God who allows the righteous to suffer even as he punishes the wicked.

- A humanity that is deeply corrupt. "And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind." Jeremiah 7:31 (there but by the grace of God go I)
- A Grace that is really powerful- a grace that welcomes child-sacrificers- Jephthah is in Hebrews 11.
- A God who disciplines, but holds a tender heart.

## Structure

- 1- Prologue Jeremiah's Call
  - 2-12:13 (Yahweh's Case Against Israel and Judah)
    - 13-20 (Jerusalem- Exile is coming)
      - 21-29 (Prophet Priest King - Babylon is at the gates)
        - 30-33 The Pivot (The new covenant)
      - 34-39 (Prophet Priest King- Babylon is at the gates)
    - 40- 45 (Out of Jerusalem- Exile is here)
      - 43:11 there is a pattern in prophecy that is played out in history too where Israel is judged first and then the nations (this pattern becomes important for understanding the NT and its view of history)
  - 46- 51 (Yahweh's Case Against the Nations, Especially Babylon)
- 52- Epilogue- Exile and Hope

## Exegetical Notes

- Jeremiah is like the blaring air raid siren warning to people to get inside.
- 1- Prologue Jeremiah's Call
  - 1:5 Jeremiah a prophet "to the nations"
  - 1:10 God rules through his word (delivered by prophets)
  - 1:10 Jeremiah's job is destruction and planting (this is linked to Isaiah's destruction of Old Jerusalem and building of New Jerusalem)
  - 1:11-19 Jeremiah will become a city within the city and he will be besieged but will stand and Jerusalem will be besieged by the nations and will fall.
  - 2:3 Israel was always about the nations- firstfruits implies they were the beginning of what God would harvest
  - 2:1-13 The problem in Israel is spiritual adultery- they have turned away from Yahweh and loved idols- which v.13 describes as **seeking satisfaction in other sources**.
  - 2:20 note continued theme of marital unfaithfulness
  - 2:21 note same vine imagery as Isaiah
  - 2:30 this is one of many places where Jesus is compared by people to Jeremiah- Jeremiah's message is essentially that the people are hopelessly corrupt and they should not hope for rescue because their sin is so great- with special emphasis on the fact that Jerusalem is "drunk with the blood of the prophets" thus when Jesus also

prophesies the destruction of the temple because of the blood of the prophets he is likened to Jeremiah.

- 2:35 the people likely thought that because of the reforms of Josiah everything would be okay
- 3:1-3 continued sexual immorality imagery- note especially the reference to the name of a whore on the forehead and refusal to be ashamed- c.f. Revelation 17:4-7
- 3:6-4:4 (center appears to be 3:15-18) key word: return
  - 3:14 The regathering place of the remnant is Zion/the temple mount
  - **3:15-18 this is a key passage** to understand what God is going to do...the ark and the temple system will be done away with (no longer remembered), the nations will be gathered in, and Israel and Judah will be reunited. (This is why the gospels and Acts each emphasize these things)
- 4:5- 5:30 (center appears to be 4:23-26) key: the land will be uncreated
- 6:1-6:30 (Yahweh speaks 7 times and Yahweh is named 10 times) key: the act of uncreation
- 9:1- don't let anyone ever tell you Yahweh is only wrathful or doesn't feel the pain.
- **9:12-16 and 9:23-26 are key**
- 10:25 this appears to be Jeremiah's prayer- destruction is coming both for Judah and Israel but also let it come on the nations
- 11 Yahweh calls them back to the very original covenant wording but Jeremiah starts getting death threats
- 12:12 it is important to see that in biblical language they can say it is Yahweh's sword but from a "history book" perspective it was the Babylonians that took out Jerusalem.
- 12:14 Now we turn to the nations
- 2-12:13 (Yahweh's Case Against Israel and Judah)
- 13-20 (Jerusalem- Exile is coming)
  - 16:16 this and Jonah are probably why Jesus picks fisherman
  - 17:1 we have seen uncreation now we see an anti-ten commandments
  - 17:25 "this city shall be inhabited forever" - this is the hope for Jerusalem
  - 18:8 it's like he is begging them to get it right- almost like when you give the kid the answer and then ask them the question again
  - 20 a bit of a climax Jeremiah is put in prison for prophesying against Jerusalem but he doesn't let up
  - 20:4 this is the first time in the book that the place of exile "Babylon" is mentioned
- 21-29 (Prophet Priest King - Babylon is at the gates)
  - 21:4 note: Chaldeans- the ancient term for where Abraham came
  - 21:8-10 this is a satire of the covenant wording, but now the call is to go surrender
- 30-33 The Pivot (The new covenant)
- 34-39 (Prophet Priest King- Babylon is at the gates)
- 40- 45 (Out of Jerusalem- Exile is here)

- 43:11 there is a pattern in prophecy that is played out in history too where Israel is judged first and then the nations (this pattern becomes important for understanding the NT and its view of history)
- 46- 51 (Yahweh's Case Against the Nations, Especially Babylon)
- 52- Epilogue- Exile and Hope

## **Lamentations**

### **• Structure**

- she—Zion—is desolate and devastated (Lam 1:1-11)
  - I—Zion—was betrayed and defeated (Lam 1:12-22)
    - he—Yahweh—has caused this in his anger (Lam 2:1-8)
      - they—princes, maidens, nurslings, children, mothers—suffer (Lam 2:9-12)
        - you—Zion—should cry out to God (Lam 2:13-22)
          - he—Yahweh—has afflicted (Lam 3:1-20)
            - CLIMAX: Yahweh's great love! (Lam 3:21-32)
          - he—Yahweh—afflicts humans (Lam 3:33-39)
        - you—Yahweh—to you I cry out (Lam 3:40-66)
      - they—princes, maidens, nurslings, children, mothers—suffer (Lam 4:1-10)
        - he—Yahweh—has caused this in his anger (Lam 4:11-16)
    - we—the people of Zion—were betrayed and defeated (Lam 4:17-22)
  - we—the people of Zion—are desolate and devastated (Lam 5:1-22)

### **• Thematic Comments**

- Exegetical Notes