

LAMENTATIONS

A Self-Study Guide

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LAMENTATIONS

GOALS OF THE LESSON:

1. Remind us of the consequences of sin.
2. Visualize the sadness of Jeremiah and the people of Judah.

Introduction: The book of Lamentations begins almost where the book of Jeremiah left off. The city of Jerusalem has been destroyed by Babylon. The once great city with its mighty walls now lays in a pile of stones, ashes, and rubble. Jerusalem has been looted and burned. Not even the temple of the Lord has escaped this disaster. The great, gold-laid temple that Solomon had built where the Lord had dwelled was also a pile of rubble. Nothing remained of the great city Jerusalem. In the midst of these ruins sits the prophet Jeremiah as he laments for the city.

Lamentations is a warning sign to mankind that sin does not pay. The people of Judah were very rich and believed that they could live how they wanted to. Now there is nothing left. This book is left as a reminder to all that there will be a day when the Lord will judge. The Lord God does not tolerate sin.

The book of Lamentations is written entirely in poetic form. Each of the first four chapters are written in the form of alphabetic acrostic. This means that the author begins each verse with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

Chapter 1: In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

1. What was the crowning act of humiliation for Zion in 1:10?

Chapter 2: In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

2. Explain the imagery found in 2:10-11.

3. Notice the depiction of Babylon's assault on Jerusalem found in 2:20-22.

Chapter 3: In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

Chapter 4: In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

4. Explain why Jeremiah compares the people to an ostrich in 4:3?

5. Noticing 4:6, in what respect was the punishment of Zion greater than that of Sodom?

Chapter 5: In the space below and left, write your own thoughts about what you found interesting and questions you have. Be prepared to share your findings in class.

6. From 5:4-6, what did the people have to do in order to have the necessities of life?

7. What is meant by “the sword in the wilderness” in 5:9?

8. For what is the prophet praying for in 5:19-22?

MAIN POINTS TO REMEMBER FROM THE LESSON:

1. "My eyes are spent with weeping; my stomach churns." (2:11)
2. "Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude." (1:3)