

## THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

### Conversational Yahveh Covenant

#### **Jerusalem Deserted**

**1:1**How lonely the city sits that used to bustle with people!

She's like a widow that was once great among the nations!

The princess among the provinces has become a slave!

**2**She cries bitterly at night; tears are on her cheeks.

Nobody among her lovers is there to comfort her.

Her friends have betrayed her

and become her enemies.

**3**Judah has gone into exile in affliction and hard servitude;

she's spread out among the nations now

with no resting place.

Her pursuers have caught up with her in the middle of her distress.

**4**The roads to Zion are in mourning,

because nobody attends the appointed festivals.

Her gates are desolate, her priests groan,

her virgins suffer, and she suffers bitterly herself.

**Lam 1:1-4**

**5**Her adversaries have become her masters; her enemies prosper.

Yahveh has made her suffer for her many sins.

Her children have gone away captive to the foe.

**6**The majesty is gone from Zion;

her officials are like bucks that can't find pasture;

they've fled away weak before their pursuers.

**7**In her time of suffering and homelessness,

Jerusalem remembers her treasured things from before;

when her people fell to her adversaries and nobody helped her,

the enemies gloated over her and mocked her downfall.

**8**Jerusalem sinned grievously, so she's become filthy.

Everybody that honored her before despises her now,

because they've seen her nakedness.

She groans and turns away.

**Lam 1:5-8**

**9**Her uncleanness was in her skirts;

she didn't give any thought for her doom;

so she's fallen terribly with no comforter.

**10**The foe has reached out for her treasured things;

she has watched the nations invade her sanctuary,

people you commanded not to enter your community.

**11**The people are groaning as they look for bread;  
they've given their treasured things for food to stay alive;  
“Look, Yahveh, I'm despised.

**12**Is it nothing to you that go by?

*Look and see if there's any pain like my pain  
that was severely dealt out to me,  
that Yahveh inflicted in his fierce anger.*

**Lam 1:9-12**

**13**He sent fire from on high into my bones, and it descended on them.

*He spread a net for my feet and turned me back;  
he left me desolate and faint all day long.*

**14**He has tied my sins together into a yoke around my neck;  
he has made my strength fail,  
and turned me over to those I can't withstand.

**15**The Lord has rejected the strong men that are with me;  
he has called an appointed time against me to crush my young men;  
like a winepress he has trodden down the young virgin Judah.

**16**I weep for those things; my eyes run down with tears,  
because there's no comforter near to restore my soul.  
My children are desolate because the enemy has prevailed.” **Lam 1:13-16**

**17**Zion holds out her hands, but there's no one to comfort her;  
Yahveh has commanded against Jacob  
that his neighbors would be his enemies;  
Jerusalem has become something filthy in their minds.

**18**“Yahveh is good; I've rebelled against his command;  
listen now, all you nations, and look at my pain;  
my virgins and young men have gone into captivity.

**19**I called to my lovers, but they deceived me;  
my priests and elders perished in the city  
as they looked for food to stay alive.

**20**Look, Yahveh, because I'm in distress; my soul is in turmoil.  
My heart's upset because I've been rebellious.  
The sword bereaves in the street; it's like death in the house. **Lam 1:17-20**

**21**They've heard that I'm groaning with nobody to comfort me.  
My enemies have heard about my trouble;  
they're glad you've done it.  
Bring the time you've promised  
and let them be like me.

**22***Pay attention to their sinfulness,  
and deal with them like you've dealt with me for my sins.  
I groan a lot, and my heart is faint."*

**Lam 1:21-22**

### **Destruction for Sin**

**2:1**How the Lord in his anger has covered Zion under a cloud!  
He has thrown down Israel's splendor from heaven to earth;  
he hasn't remembered his footstool in his wrath.  
**2**Without mercy the Lord has swallowed up the residents in Jacob.  
In his anger he has thrown down Judah's fortresses  
and leveled the kingdom and its officials to the ground in dishonor.  
**3**In his fury he has cut down Israel's power  
and stopped restraining the enemy.  
He has burned like a fire in Jacob  
and consumed it everywhere.

**4**He has bent his bow like an enemy;  
he has set his right hand like an adversary  
and killed everybody we took pride in.  
He has poured out his anger like fire in the tent of Zion.

**Lam 2:1-4**

**5**The Lord has become like an enemy;  
he has swallowed up Israel,  
laid its palaces in ruins,  
destroyed its fortresses,  
and multiplied mourning and groaning in Judah.

**6**He's violently treated his Tabernacle like a garden shed  
and laid in ruins his appointed meeting place.  
Yahveh has stricken from memory

the appointed festivals and Sabbaths in Zion,  
and deposed king and priest in his angry indignation.

**7**The Lord has rejected his altar, disowned his sanctuary,  
and delivered to the enemy the walls of its palaces.  
A clamor was raised in Yahveh's Temple  
like that of an appointed festival day.

**8**Yahveh decided to destroy the wall around Zion.  
He stretched out a line  
and didn't restrain his destroying.  
He made rampart and wall mourn;  
they've broken down together.

**Lam 2:5-8**

**9**Its gates have sunk into the ground;

he has ruined and broken its bars  
and *scattered* its king and officials among the nations.

There's no law anymore;  
prophets don't have visions from Yahveh.

**10**The elders of Zion sit silent on the ground;  
they've thrown dust on their heads  
and wrapped themselves in burlap.

The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed their heads to the ground.

**11**My eyes are worn out from crying;  
my spirit is in turmoil;  
my heart is poured out on the ground  
because my people have been destroyed;  
the little ones and babies pass out in the street.

**12**They ask their mothers, “*Where is the bread and wine?*”  
as they faint like wounded men in the city streets,  
as their life dies out on their mother's chest.

**Lam 2:9-12**

**13**What can I say for you?  
What can I compare you to, young woman in Jerusalem?  
What can I liken you to, as I comfort you, young virgin in Zion?  
Your ruin is as wide as the sea; who can restore you?

**14**Your prophets have deceived you with false visions;  
they haven't exposed your iniquity to restore you from sin;  
they've seen false, misleading oracles for you.

**15**Everybody that goes by claps their hands at you;  
they gasp and shake their heads at Jerusalem,  
“*Is this the city they used to say was 'perfectly beautiful,  
a delight to the whole world'?*”

**16**Your enemies mock you;  
they scoff and snarl,  
and shout, “*We've swallowed you up!*  
*That's what we've been waiting for;*  
*at last it's here to see.*”

**Lam 2:13-16**

**17**Yahveh has accomplished his purpose  
and carried out the threat he ordained long ago.  
He has destroyed without pity  
and enabled your enemies to celebrate over you  
and increased the power of your adversaries.

**18**Their heart appealed to the Lord,  
“*Resident of Zion, let your tears run down like a river day and night;*

*don't give yourself any relief or let your eyes rest.*

**19** *Get up, cry out loud at the beginning of the night watches;  
pour your heart out like water to the Lord;  
lift your hands up to him for the life of your little ones  
who are faint from hunger at the end of every street."*

**20** See, Yahveh, look! Who else have you ever dealt with this way?

Should women eat their offspring, little babies born healthy?

Should prophet and priest be killed in your sanctuary?

**Lam 2:17-20**

**21** Young and old lie on the ground in the streets;  
my virgins and young men have fallen by the sword.  
You've slain them in your anger,  
slaughtered them without mercy.

**22** You invited terrors on every side of me as to an appointed festival.

Nobody escaped or survived your anger.

My enemy destroyed the ones I cared for and raised.

**Lam 2:21-22**

### Hope in Yahveh's Faithfulness

**3:1** I have seen suffering  
under the rod *God* used in his anger.

**2** He has driven me out and made me walk in the dark;  
**3** he has turned his hand against me repeatedly all day.

**4** He made my skin and body waste away,  
and broke my bones.

**Lam 3:1-4**

**5** He besieged me with bitterness and hardship.

**6** He made me live in dark places  
like the dead from long ago.

**7** He walled me in so I couldn't escape  
and put heavy chains on me.

**8** Even when I call for help,  
he shuts out my prayer.

**Lam 3:5-8**

**9** He has blocked my road with hewn stones  
and made my paths crooked.

**10** He's like a bear lying in wait for me,  
like a lion in unexpected places.

**11** He dragged me off the road, tore me to pieces;  
and made me desolate.

**12** He bent his bow and made me a target for his arrow;  
**13** he shot deep into me the arrows from his quiver.

**Lam 3:9-12**

<sup>14</sup>I'm a laughingstock to my people,  
mocked in musical ditties all day.

<sup>15</sup>He filled me with bitterness  
and made me drink wormwood.

<sup>16</sup>He cracked my teeth with gravel  
and made me grovel in the dust.

**Lam 3:13-16**

<sup>17</sup>I've been set apart from peace  
and forget what happiness is like.

<sup>18</sup>So I say, "*My strength is gone,*  
*and so is my hope in Yahveh.*"

<sup>19</sup>Remember my suffering and homelessness.

<sup>20</sup>I certainly remember  
and am humbled within.

**Lam 3:17-20**

<sup>21</sup>I recall this and have hope *from it*:

<sup>22</sup>Yahveh love never stops *coming*;  
his mercies don't end.

<sup>23</sup>His faithfulness is great;  
it's renewed every morning.

<sup>24</sup>I say to myself, "*Yahveh is my portion;*  
*so I have hope in him.*"

**Lam 3:21-24**

<sup>25</sup>Yahveh is good to those who depend on him,  
people that look for him.

<sup>26</sup>They do well to wait silently for his salvation.

<sup>27</sup>It's good for people to bear the yoke when they're young,

<sup>28</sup>to sit alone in silence, since *God* has laid it on them,

<sup>29</sup>to put their mouth in the dust—maybe there's hope,

<sup>30</sup>to turn their cheek to their abuser,  
to be filled with disgrace;

<sup>31</sup>because Yahveh won't reject forever.

**Lam 3:25-31**

<sup>32</sup>If he causes grief, he'll have mercy

according to his enduring love;

<sup>33</sup>because he doesn't willingly hurt people or grieve them.

<sup>34-36</sup>God doesn't approve

of crushing every prisoner in the land under his feet,

of depriving people of justice in the presence of the Most High,

of defrauding people in his lawsuit.

<sup>37</sup>Who is there that speaks and it happens  
unless the Lord has commanded it?

<sup>38</sup>Don't both good and bad come from the Most High? Lam 3:32-38

<sup>39</sup>Why should we complain in light of our sins?

<sup>40</sup>Let's examine our ways and return to Yahveh.

<sup>41</sup>Let's lift up our heart and hands toward God in heaven;  
<sup>42</sup>we've sinned and rebelled; you haven't pardoned us.

<sup>43</sup>You've covered yourself with anger and chased us;  
you've slain without pity.

<sup>44</sup>You've wrapped yourself in a cloud  
so no prayer can get to you.

Lam 3:39-44

<sup>45</sup>You've made us residue and refuse among the nations.

<sup>46</sup>Our enemies rail out against us.

<sup>47</sup>Panic and pitfall descend on us, devastation and destruction.

<sup>48</sup>My eyes run with streams of tears  
because my people are being destroyed.

<sup>49</sup>My eyes will keep pouring out  
<sup>50</sup>till Yahveh looks down from heaven and sees.

<sup>51</sup>My eyes bring pain to my soul  
because of all the residents in my city.

<sup>52</sup>For no reason my enemies hunted me down like a bird;

<sup>53</sup>they've silenced me in the pit, and put a stone over me;

<sup>54</sup>water closed over my head; I said, "*I'm lost.*"

<sup>55</sup>I called to you, Yahveh, from down in the pit.

Lam 3:45-55

<sup>56</sup>You heard my plea,  
and didn't hide from my prayer for relief, my call for help.

<sup>57</sup>You came and said, "*Don't be afraid!*"

<sup>58</sup>Lord, you pled my case and redeemed my life.

<sup>59</sup>Yahveh, you've seen my oppression; judge my case.

<sup>60</sup>You've seen their revenge, their schemes against me.

<sup>61</sup>You've heard their taunts.

<sup>62</sup>My assailants' whispers aim at me all day.

<sup>63</sup>Look at their sitting and rising;

I'm what they mock in their song.

<sup>64</sup>Pay them back, Yahveh, according to what they've done;

**65**harden their heart so your curse will fall on them.  
**66**Chase them in anger and destroy them from under the sky! **Lam 3:56-66**

### **Yahveh's Anger Satisfied**

**4:1**How the gold has tarnished; how pure gold has changed!  
     The holy stones lie scattered at the beginning of every street.  
**2**The precious sons of Zion, worth their weight in gold,  
     are treated like clay pots that potters make!  
**3**Even jackals nurse their young,  
     but my people have become cruel like wild ostriches.  
**4**The infant's tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth for thirst;  
     little ones beg for bread, but nobody gives them any.  
**5**People that used to eat delicacies sit desolate in the streets;  
     the ones brought up in purple lie on ash heaps.  
**6**The iniquity of my people is worse than the sin of Sodom,  
     which was overthrown without hands in one moment.  
**7**Zion's Nazirites were purer than snow, whiter than milk,  
     healthier looking than corals, like polished lapis lazuli. **Lam 4:1-7**

**8**Now they're darker than soot, not recognizable in the streets;  
     their skin is shriveled on their bones, withered like wood.  
**9**Those killed with the sword are happier than those slain by hunger;  
     they pine away, stricken for lack of crops in the field.

**10**Merciful women boiled their own children;  
     they became their food because my people were being destroyed.

**11**Yahveh has accomplished his wrath,  
     poured out his hot anger  
     and sparked a fire in Zion that has consumed its foundations.

**12**The kings of the earth and inhabitants of the region  
     didn't believe enemies could get in the gates of Jerusalem. **Lam 4:8-12**

**13**Because of its prophets' sins and its priests' iniquities—  
     who shed the blood of good people in it—  
**14**they wandered in the streets, blind and defiled with blood  
     so nobody would *even* touch their clothes.  
**15**They shouted at them, “*Get away! Unclean! Don't touch!*”

So they fled and wandered.  
People in the nations said, “*They can’t stay here anymore.*”

**16**Yahveh has scattered them;  
he won’t continue to care *especially* about them;  
they didn’t honor the priests or bless the elders. **Lam 4:13-16**

**17**Our eyes failed *us*; looking for help was useless;  
we certainly watched for a nation that couldn’t save.

**18**People dogged our steps so we couldn’t walk in the streets;  
our end came near, our days failed, we were through. **Lam 4:17-18**

**19**Our pursuers were faster than eagles in the sky;  
they chased us on the mountains and ambushed us in the desert.

**20**Our very breath, Yahveh’s anointed, was captured in their pits;  
we’d said about *him*, “*In his shadow we’ll live among the nations.*”

**21**Celebrate and be happy, Edom that lives in Uz;  
the cup will come around to you as well; you’ll be drunk and naked.

**22***The punishment for* your sinfulness is finished, Zion;  
he won’t exile you any longer.  
But he’ll punish your iniquity, Edom;  
he’ll expose your sins! **Lam 4:19-22**

### Prayer for Restoration

**5:1**Yahveh, remember what’s happened to us;  
look at our disgrace!

**2**Our inheritance has been turned over to foreigners,  
and our houses *belong* to aliens.

**3**We’ve become orphans without fathers;  
our mothers are like widows.

**4**We have to pay for drinking water and buy wood.

**5**Our drivers *put yokes* on our necks;  
we’re worn out; we can’t get any rest. **Lam 5:1-5**

**6**We’ve submitted to Egypt and Assyria to get enough bread.

**7**Our fathers sinned, and they’re gone;  
*but* we have to suffer for their sins.

**8**Slaves rule us; nobody can deliver us from them.

<sup>9</sup>We risk our lives *just* getting bread  
because of the sword in the open country.

<sup>10</sup>Our skin is hot like an oven,  
because of the burning heat of famine.

<sup>11</sup>They rape the women in Zion,  
and the virgins in the towns in Judah.

**Lam 5:6-11**

<sup>12</sup>They hang up officials by their hands,  
and show no respect for old men.

<sup>13</sup>Young men work at the grinding mill;  
and stagger under loads of wood.

<sup>14</sup>Elders are gone from the city gate,  
young men *have quit* their music.

<sup>15</sup>The joy in our hearts is gone;  
our dancing has turned into mourning.

<sup>16</sup>The crown has fallen from our head;  
misfortune awaits us because we've sinned!

<sup>17</sup>Our heart is faint because of it;  
our eyes are weak.

<sup>18</sup>Jackals prowl in desolate Zion.

**Lam 5:12-18**

<sup>19</sup>Yahveh, you rule forever;  
your throne goes on for endless generations.

<sup>20</sup>Why don't you keep us in mind forever?  
Why abandon us so long?

<sup>21</sup>Restore us to yourself, Yahveh, so we can be restored;  
renew our days as of old,

<sup>22</sup>unless you've completely rejected us,  
and are really angry with us.

**Lam 5:19-22**