

Lamentations.

1. The Book of Lamentations consists of five separate poems on the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.
2. These funeral songs and prayers describe both the horrors of the extended siege (e.g. **Lamentations 4:4-5**) and the destruction itself.
3. No other book captures so vividly the despair of seeing Zion destroyed, of seeing the holy city and its temple become a mockery to the nations.
4. Lamentations is traditionally attributed to Jeremiah, which explains its usual placement after the Book of Jeremiah, but the book itself does not name an author.
5. Whether by Jeremiah or an unknown poet, the book is surely an eyewitness account of those wretched days.
6. The five poems were penned, probably not long after Jerusalem's fall in 586 B.C., by someone who had seen the slaughter of many of his people, the enslavement of others, and the abject despair of the few survivors.

TEMPLE AFIRE (Lamentations 2:5-7)

1. Temples were the focal point of civic life and the target for invaders.
2. The patron deities of the city were believed to dwell in the temples.
2. Festivals were held around temples, and valuables were deposited in them: they were the earliest banks.
3. For invaders, the capture of the central temple served several purposes, not the least of which was obtaining the wealth stored there.
4. To take the temple was also to show that the gods of the city had chosen the conquerors over the local inhabitants. This meant that the conquerors were now the legitimate rulers of the people, land, and any possessions.
5. The burning of the central temple was a declaration of unconditional victory.
6. The captors were understood to have free rein with the city and its populace. The defeated city had no gods to whom they might appeal for mercy and no hope for a change in their fate. Their gods were believed to have moved to the capital of the victors, where they became patrons of the kings of that city.
7. The Book of Lamentations says the same thing about Nebuchadnezzar II burning
8. Jerusalem and its temple in 586 B.C. (**II Kings 25:9**). Yahweh Himself had become Judah's enemy (Lamentations 2:5) and destroyed His own temple His "tabernacle" and "place of assembly" (**Lamentations 2:6**). With Yahweh's permission, Judah's enemy now "made a noise in the house of the LORD" (**Lamentations 2:7**).

II Chronicles 36:1-23

1. The author of Chronicles, called the "Chronicler," invokes the prophetic literature against his countrymen, via appealing to Wisdom literature by accusing them of mockery (Hebrew: mal'bim) , contempt (Hebrew: bozim), and scoffing (Hebrew: mitta 't'im) -

IIChronicles 36:16

"But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy."

1. Thus, is to say, the leaders of Judah have proved themselves to be the consummate "fools" who not only refuses to receive instruction but treat with malice those who would instruct than. Against such as these, says the "Chronicler," there is no remedy