

# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

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This week we continue our survey of the Old Testament by taking a look at the book of Lamentations, written by Jeremiah, the "weeping prophet". During the last days of the Southern Kingdom, just prior to the fall of that kingdom in 586 BC, Jeremiah warned of the coming judgment previously foretold by the Prophet Isaiah. Now Jeremiah mourns the fall of Jerusalem and the effects of sin on the people of Israel, as God's judgment is carried out.

As we learned in [Lesson 5](#) of our study, siege warfare was long and brutal, as the attacking army surrounds the city walls and cuts off its source of water and supplies until the population within the city either dies of starvation or becomes completely incapable of defending itself. As we noted in the [previous lesson](#), Jeremiah witnessed this firsthand, as the Babylonian army laid siege to Jerusalem for thirty months until the city and the kingdom fell in October of 586 BC.

In this lesson, rather than look at the effects of that siege and God's judgment on the people of Israel, I would like us to take a more contemporary look at this book as it relates to us as followers of Christ. What does it tell us about our need to repent of our sins and to hold our country accountable to God's standards -- or face judgment? What can we learn about our own lives and the country we live in today through the lessons that God's chosen people learned back then? Let's pray that God will open our eyes and hearts during our study of this powerful and insightful book.

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*Read the five chapters of Lamentations. As you read through the book, try reading the word "Christ" in the place of the word "Jehovah" or "LORD", and see if this enables you understand the ways in which these passages would apply to us today. Then consider the following:*

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1. Read Chapter 5, and list some of the effects that a nation and a people who live a life of sin, injustice and rebellion against God bring on themselves.
  - a. ANSWER 1: Their land and their homes will be turned over to foreigners.
  - b. ANSWER 2: They will pay dearly for the basic necessities of life.
  - c. ANSWER 3: They will have no rest, and their enemies constantly pursue them.
  - d. ANSWER 4: The punishment resulting from the sins of their fathers will fall on them.
  - e. ANSWER 5: Society will completely fall apart; there will be no morality, no respect, and no civilized way of life will exist. Chaos, hunger, and fear will be the watchwords of the day.
  - f. ANSWER 6: The people will be subjected to a total lack of leadership without direction, and a complete lack of purpose.
2. In Chapter 5, who does Jeremiah call out as the only hope of the fallen? (see Lam. 5:21)
  - a. ANSWER: Only Christ can save us, and only God can redeem us, if we are willing to repent of our sins and follow Him completely.
3. In accordance with the instructions above, what would our "contemporary" reading of Lamentations 3:22 tell us today? What does it tell us about Christ?
  - a. ANSWER: It assures us that through God's great grace and Christ's great sacrifice we are forgiven of our sins, and we are "not consumed"; we are passed from judgment.

4. We have hope in the Lord, even in great times of trial. What does Jeremiah tell us in Chapter 3 regarding this hope? (see Lam. 3:21-26)
- a. ANSWER 1: That God does have compassion for us.
  - b. ANSWER 2: That His mercies are new every morning.
  - c. ANSWER 3: That it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
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Let's pray this week for God to show us the sin in our lives that we need to repent of. Additionally, let's begin to pray in a mighty way for the leadership in our church and in our nation, praying that in all that we and they do, we follow God.

When we adopt a lifestyle of self-dependence, of reliance on other gods and sources of strength apart from God, we sin greatly. We can easily slide into a lifestyle and way of thinking that runs counter to God's will; one that fools us into thinking we do not need God, or that He is somehow not aware of our actions. Clearly, however, God is always aware. He sees and knows all that we do and think; and we as individuals and as a nation, will be judged for it.

Finally, let's commit this week to "wait quietly" for the salvation of the Lord, and not to become dependent on ourselves or others for our salvation. God is very much on His throne, and seated to his right is Christ Jesus, the coming Messiah. Surely, He is worthy of our commitment to put all of our hope and faith in Him, as our one-and-only true Savior.

Thanks for studying with us. Have a great week everyone!

In Christ,

**Wes**

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