

## **Key to LAMENTATIONS**

### **1. STATISTICS:**

Writer, Jeremiah; date written, presumably during the three months period between the destruction of Jerusalem and the expedition into Egypt (589 B.C.); key thought, destruction, desolation; key verse, 1:1.

### **2. THEME:**

This is a series of funeral hymns composed by the weeping prophet, Jeremiah, following the brutal destruction he had witnessed. He was overcome with grief even though he had been predicting this judgment for many years.

### **3. OUTLINE:**

There are 5 chapters or poems. The first 2 and the 4th are composed of 22 verses as an acrostic; the 3rd has 66 verses or 22 triplets, each triplet with the same initial letter. The last chapter has 22 verses as an acrostic but not in alphabetical form.

### **4. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:**

This book is mostly remarkable for the great variety of pathetic images it presents, expressing the deepest sorrow. On the other hand, it is rich in expressions of penitence and trust which are offered to GOD by the afflicted one.

As Jeremiah, stunned and heartbroken, viewed the destruction of the city, he understood fully that the judgment had been overwhelmingly justified on GOD's part (3:22) but he pleaded for a return of GOD's mercy (3:32, 33).

### **5. INTERESTING FEATURES:**

Lamentations is read in Jewish synagogues on the ninth day of the fourth month (July), which is the day of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 52:6, 7).

Following the captivity, Jerusalem was rebuilt and again became a great and powerful city. But the needed lesson was not learned, and in A.D. 70 it was again destroyed.

### **6. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING:**

Just as these words are not only Jeremiah's, but GOD's, so the grief is not only the prophet's, but GOD's grief.

~ end of Lamentations ~

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