

Lamentations 2 - Second Dirge: God's Punishment of Jerusalem's Sin

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Lamentations 2

II. God's punishment of Jerusalem resulting from her sin (Lam 2:1-22)

- (1) God's wrath against Jerusalem (2:1-10)
 - (A) Her strongholds (2:1-5)

1 How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger! He has hurled The glory of Israel from heaven to earth, And has not remembered His footstool In the day of His anger.

1 How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger! He has cast from heaven to earth The glory of Israel, And has not remembered His footstool In the day of His anger.

1 How the Lord in his wrath shamed cherished Zion! He cast down from heaven to earth the glory of Israel, He did not remember his footstool in the time of his anger.

1 How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger!

2 The Lord has destroyed; He has not spared All the settlements of Jacob. In His wrath He has overthrown The strongholds of the daughter of Judah, He has hurled *them* down to the

ground; He has profaned the kingdom and its leaders.

2 The Lord has swallowed up; He has not spared All the habitations of Jacob. In His wrath He has thrown down The strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He has brought *them* down to the ground; He has profaned the kingdom and its princes.

2 The Lord swallowed up without pity all of Jacob's habitations. In his wrath he tore down the strongholds of fair Judah. He cast to the ground in dishonor both her kingdom and its rulers.

2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath brought them down to the ground: he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.

3 In fierce anger He has cut off All the strength of Israel; He has pulled back His right hand From the enemy. And He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire Consuming on all sides.

3 In fierce anger He has cut off All the strength of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand From before the enemy. And He has burned in Jacob like a flaming fire Consuming round about.

3 In his fierce wrath he cut off all the strength of Israel. He withdrew his protection as the enemy approached. He burned Jacob like a blazing fire consumes everything around it.

3 He hath cut off in his fierce anger all the horn of Israel: he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.

4 He has bent His bow like an enemy; His right hand is positioned like an adversary, And He has killed everything that was pleasant to the eye. In the tent of the daughter of Zion He has poured out His wrath like fire.

4 He has bent His bow like an enemy; He has set His right hand like an adversary And slain all that were pleasant to the eye; In the tent of the daughter of Zion He has poured out His wrath like fire.

4 He bent his bow against us as would an enemy, his right hand cocked as would an adversary. He has killed everyone in whom we took pride; in the tent of cherished Zion he poured out his anger like fire.

4 He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew all that were pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

5 The Lord has become like an enemy. He has engulfed Israel; He has engulfed all its palaces, He has destroyed its strongholds And caused great mourning and grieving in the daughter of Judah.

5 The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all its palaces, He has destroyed its strongholds And multiplied in the daughter of Judah Mourning and moaning.

5 The Lord has become like an enemy— he has devoured Israel. He has devoured all of her palaces, destroying her fortresses. He filled cherished Judah with mourning and lament.

5 The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

- God took full responsibility for what Nebuchadnezzar did. God allowed him to destroy the city of Jerusalem. God used him as a rod, just as He had used the Assyrians against Israel for their punishment. [Learn to recognize the hand of God in your life.]

(B) Her temple (2:6-7)

6 And He has treated His tabernacle violently, like a *despised* garden; He has destroyed His appointed meeting place. The LORD has caused The appointed feast and Sabbath in Zion to be forgotten, And He has despised king and priest In the indignation of His anger.

6 And He has violently treated His tabernacle like a garden *booth*; He has destroyed His appointed meeting place. The LORD has caused to be forgotten The appointed feast and sabbath in Zion, And He has despised king and priest In the indignation of His anger.

6 He plowed under his Temple like a garden, spoiling his tent. The LORD abolished in Zion both festivals and Sabbaths. In his fierce wrath he despised both king and priest.

6 And he hath violently taken away his tabernacle, as if it were of a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.

7 The Lord has rejected His altar, He has repudiated His sanctuary; He has handed over The walls of her palaces to the enemy. They have made a noise in the house of the LORD As on the day of an appointed feast.

7 The Lord has rejected His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has delivered into the hand of the enemy The walls of her palaces. They have made a noise in the house of the LORD As in the day of an appointed feast.

7 The Lord rejected his altar, disavowing his sanctuary. He gave up her palace walls to the control of the enemy. They shouted in the LORD's Temple, as though they were attending a day of celebration.

7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast.

- The very temple which God had blessed—He had given the instructions for building it, His very presence had been there at one time—now He says, “The day came that I abhorred that temple.”

(C) Her walls (2:8-9a)

8 The LORD determined to destroy The wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line, He has not restrained His hand from destroying, And He has caused rampart and wall to mourn; They have languished together.

8 The LORD determined to destroy The wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line, He has not restrained His hand from destroying, And He has caused rampart and wall to lament; They have languished together.

8 The LORD planned to destroy the walls of cherished Zion. He measured them with his line. He did not withhold his hand from destruction. He made both ramparts and defensive walls mourn; they languish together.

8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.

(D) Her leaders (2:9b-10a)

9 Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her leaders are among the nations; The Law is gone. Her prophets, too, find No vision from the LORD.

9 Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The law is no more. Also, her prophets find No vision from the LORD.

9 Jerusalem's gates collapsed to the ground; he destroyed and broke the bars of her gates. Both king and prince have gone into captivity. There is no instruction, and the prophets receive no vision from the LORD.

9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

(E) Her virgins (2:10b)

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion Sit on the ground *and* are silent. They have thrown dust on their heads; They have put on sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem Have bowed their heads to the ground.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion Sit on the ground, they are silent. They have thrown dust on their heads; They have girded themselves with sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem

Have bowed their heads to the ground.

10 The leaders of cherished Zion sit silently on the ground; they throw dust on their heads and dress in mourning clothes. The young women of Jerusalem bow their heads in sorrow.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have cast up dust upon their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

- This fulfilled the prophecy given by Ezekiel in Ezek 5:14

(2) Re-visitation of Jerusalem's desolation (2:11-19)

(A) Infant hunger (2:11-12)

11 My eyes fail because of tears, My spirit is greatly troubled; My heart is poured out on the earth Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, When little ones and infants languish In the streets of the city.

11 My eyes fail because of tears, My spirit is greatly troubled; My heart is poured out on the earth Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, When little ones and infants faint In the streets of the city.

11 My eyes are worn out from crying, my insides are churning, My emotions pour out in grief because my people are destroyed— Children and infants faint in the streets of the city.

11 Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers, "Where is grain and wine?" As they faint like a wounded person In the streets of the city, As their lives are poured out In their mothers' arms.

12 They say to their mothers, "Where is grain and wine?" As they faint like a wounded man In the streets of the city, As their life is poured out On their mothers' bosom.

12 They ask their mothers, "Is there anything to eat or drink?" They faint in the streets of the city like wounded men. Their life ebbs away while they lie on their mother's bosom.

12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom.

(B) False prophets (2:13-14)

13 How shall I admonish you? What shall I compare to you, Daughter of Jerusalem? What shall I liken to you as I comfort you, Virgin daughter of Zion? For your collapse is as vast as the sea; Who can heal you?

13 How shall I admonish you? To what shall I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I liken you as I comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is as vast as

the sea; Who can heal you?

13 What can be said about you? To what should you be compared, fair Jerusalem? To what may I liken you, so I may comfort you, fair one of Zion? Indeed, your wound is as deep as the sea— who can heal you?

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?

14 Your prophets have seen for you Worthless and deceptive *visions*; And they have not exposed your wrongdoing So as to restore you from captivity, But they have seen for you worthless and misleading pronouncements.

14 Your prophets have seen for you False and foolish *visions*; And they have not exposed your iniquity So as to restore you from captivity, But they have seen for you false and misleading oracles.

14 Your prophets look on your behalf; they see false and deceptive visions. They did not expose your sins in order to restore what had been captured. Instead, they crafted oracles for you that are false and misleading.

14 Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

- Jeremiah's focus was of false prophets hastening rather than hindering Jerusalem's downfall

— God had threatened to destroy Jerusalem because of her sin, and the prophets were supposed to announce this impending disaster and exhort the people to repent

— Unfortunately, though Jeremiah and Ezekiel were faithful prophets of God, others were tickling the people's ears with rosy predictions of peace and prosperity (Jer 28:1-4,10-11; 29:29-32)

— Jerusalem chose to ignore the true prophets' warnings and to listen to the flattering and therefore misleading lies of the false prophets

(C) Enemies mocking (2:15-17)

15 All who pass along the way Clap their hands *in ridicule* at you; They hiss and shake their heads At the daughter of Jerusalem: "Is this the city of which they said, 'Perfect in beauty, A joy to all the earth?'"

15 All who pass along the way Clap their hands *in derision* at you; They hiss and shake their heads At the daughter of Jerusalem, "Is this the city of which they said, 'The perfection of beauty, A joy to all the earth?'"

15 Everyone who passes by on the road shake their fists at you. They hiss and shake their heads at cherished Jerusalem: "Is this the city men used to call 'The Perfection of Beauty, and 'The Joy of the Entire Earth'?"

15 All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?

16 All your enemies Have opened their mouths wide against you; They hiss and gnash *their* teeth. They say, "We have engulfed *her!* This certainly is the day which we awaited; We have reached *it*, we have seen *it!*"

16 All your enemies Have opened their mouths wide against you; They hiss and gnash *their* teeth. They say, "We have swallowed *her* up! Surely this is the day for which we waited; We have reached *it*, we have seen *it.*"

16 All of your enemies insult you with gaping mouths. They hiss and grind their teeth while saying, "We have devoured her completely. Yes, this is the day that we anticipated! We found it at last; we have seen it!"

16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it.

- The enemy without is elated at the misery of Jerusalem. (The Edomites; Cf. Ps 137:9?!)

17 The LORD has done what He determined; He has accomplished His word Which He commanded from days of old. He has torn down without sparing, And He has helped the enemy to rejoice over you; He has exalted the might of your adversaries.

17 The LORD has done what He purposed; He has accomplished His word Which He commanded from days of old. He has thrown down without sparing, And He has caused the enemy to rejoice over you; He has exalted the might of your adversaries.

17 The LORD did what he planned. He carried out his threat. Just as he commanded long ago, he has torn down without pity; He let the enemy boast about you and has exalted the power of your enemies.

17 The LORD hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.

(D) People wailing (2:18-19)

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord: "You wall of the daughter of Zion, Let *your* tears stream down like a river day and night; Give yourself no relief, Let your eyes have no rest.

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord, "O wall of the daughter of Zion, Let *your* tears run down like a river day and night; Give yourself no relief, Let your eyes have no rest.

18 Cry out from your heart to the Lord, wall of fair Zion! Let your tears run down like a river day and night. Allow yourself no rest, and don't stop crying.

18 Their heart cried unto the Lord, O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.

19 "Arise, whimper in the night At the beginning of the night watches; Pour out your heart like water Before the presence of the Lord; Raise your hands to Him For the life of your little ones Who languish because of hunger At the head of every street.

19 "Arise, cry aloud in the night At the beginning of the night watches; Pour out your heart like water Before the presence of the Lord; Lift up your hands to Him For the life of your little ones Who are faint because of hunger At the head of every street."

19 Get up and cry aloud in the night, at the beginning of every hour. Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord! Lift up your hands toward him for the lives of your children, who are fainting away at every street corner.

19 Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.

(3) Jeremiah's concluding plea to God (2:20-22)

20 "See, LORD, and look! With whom have You dealt this way? Should women really eat their children, The little ones who were born healthy? Should priest and prophet really be killed In the sanctuary of the Lord?

20 See, O LORD, and look! With whom have You dealt thus? Should women eat their offspring, The little ones who were born healthy? Should priest and prophet be slain In the sanctuary of the Lord?

20 Look, LORD, and take note: To whom have you done this? Should women eat their offspring, the children they have cuddled? Should priests and prophets be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

20 Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, and children of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

- This action was predicted in graphic detail by Moses when he warned Israel of the consequences of disobedience to God's Law (Lev 26:27-29; Deut 28:53-57)

— This reprehensible practice surfaced only during the most desperate times (Cf. 2 Kings 6:24-31)

21 "On the ground in the streets Lie young and old; My virgins and my young men Have fallen by the sword. You have put *them* to death on the day of Your anger, You have slaughtered, without sparing.

21 On the ground in the streets Lie young and old; My virgins and my young men Have fallen by the sword. You have slain *them* in the day of Your anger, You have slaughtered, not sparing.

21 Young men and the aged lie on the ground in the streets; my young women and young men have fallen by the sword. You killed them in your anger, slaughtering them without pity.

21 The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger; thou hast killed, and not pitied.

22 "You called as on the day of an appointed feast My terrors on every side; And there was no one who survived or escaped On the day of the LORD'S anger. *As for* those whom I brought forth healthy and whom I raised, My enemy annihilated them."

22 You called as in the day of an appointed feast My terrors on every side; And there was no one who escaped or survived In the day of the LORD's anger. Those whom I bore and reared, My enemy annihilated them.

22 You have invited those who terrorize me to come around, as if today were a festival. No one has escaped or survived the time of the LORD's anger. My enemy has finished off those whom I cuddled and raised.

22 Thou hast called as in a solemn day my terrors round about, so that in the day of the LORD'S anger none escaped nor remained: those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

- When Babylon finally did break through Jerusalem's defenses, its soldiers were angry because Jerusalem had kept them at bay for 30 months. They made no distinction between age and sex; the bloodthirsty Babylonians butchered uncounted thousands.