

# Intro to Lamentations

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אָבֵל, אָבֵל [’abal/aw·bal/]; Lament = to mourn

**Authorship and Date.** The book does not name its author, but Jewish tradition attributes it to Jeremiah.<sup>1</sup> The occasion for such a book is most assuredly the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and therefore the date of the writing could not have been many months afterward.<sup>2</sup>

**Historical Setting:** This is a collection of five “lamentations” or “funeral dirges” commemorating the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Jeremiah was witness to this tragic event. His heart was broken as he saw Jerusalem and the temple destroyed, the people slain, and the prisoners taken off to captivity in Babylon. We can see the prophet’s tears all through the book.<sup>3</sup>

**Theme:** Sadness over the Fall of Jerusalem

**Outline:**

1. Jerusalem’s Desolation (1:1-22)
2. God’s Wrath Against the People (2:1-22)
3. The Reason for Comfort (3:1-66)
4. Jerusalem’s Past Glory and Present Misery (4:1-22)
5. A Prayer for God’s Mercy (5:1-22)

**Place in Scripture:** Protestant Christians, one regrets to say, have too often neglected the reading of these solemn poems. Yet in these days of personal, national, and international crises (and disaster) the message of this book is a challenge to repent of sins personal, national, and international, and to commit ourselves afresh to God’s steadfast love.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Walvoord, John F. ; Zuck, Roy B. ; Dallas Theological Seminary: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1983-c1985, S. 1:1207

<sup>2</sup>Pfeiffer, Charles F.: *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago : Moody Press, 1962, S. La 1:1

<sup>3</sup>Wiersbe, Warren W.: *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*. Wheaton, IL : Victor Books, 1993, S. La 1:1

<sup>4</sup>Pfeiffer, Charles F.: *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago : Moody Press, 1962, S. La 1:1