LIFE-STUDY OF LAMENTATIONS

MESSAGE ONE

THE INTRODUCTION, THE FIRST LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE DESOLATION OF THE HOLY CITY, AND THE SECOND LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOLY CITY

Scripture Reading: Lam. 1—2

In this message we will first give a word of introduction to our life-study of Lamentations, and then we will consider the first and second lamentations.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Writer—Jeremiah

The writer of the book of Lamentations was Jeremiah, the weeping and lamenting prophet (cf. 2 Chron. 35:25).

B. The Subject

The subject of Lamentations is the expression of Jeremiah's sorrow and love over the holy city and the holy people of God.

C. The Contents

The contents of the book of Lamentations are five lamentations of sorrow and love.

D. The Sections

The book of Lamentations has five sections: a lamentation over the desolation of the holy city (ch. 1); a lamentation over the destruction of the holy city (ch. 2); a lamentation over the afflicted prophet identified with his punished people (ch. 3);

a lamentation over the punished people (ch. 4); and a lamentation as a prayer for the holy people as the conclusion of the fourth lamentation (ch. 5).

It is difficult to find anything in Lamentations regarding God's economy. Lamentations 3:22-25 does involve God's economy, although not directly but indirectly through God's compassions. According to God's dealing with Israel, Israel should have been terminated. But Jeremiah said, "It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail" (v. 22). Israel failed, but God's compassions did not fail. Because the compassions of God have kept the remnant of Israel on the earth to carry out God's economy, we dare not say that Lamentations has nothing to do with God's economy. However, there is very little in this book regarding God's economy.

God trusted in Jeremiah to the uttermost. Jeremiah was very faithful to God, but between God and Jeremiah there was some discrepancy, some difference. We may say that there was even some friction between them. We see this discrepancy in Jeremiah's reaction to God's punishment of Israel.

God was indignant and angry with Israel and came in to tell Jeremiah that He would judge this people to the uttermost. When Jeremiah heard the details concerning Jehovah's governmental dealing with Israel, he began to disagree somewhat with God. He thought that God was going too far in His punishment. For this reason, in Jeremiah 15:10 Jeremiah was forced to say, "Woe is me, my mother, because you bore me, / A man of strife and a man of contention to the whole land." This indicates that he was not happy about the prophecy that God wanted him to speak. Thus, Jeremiah found himself in a dilemma. On the one hand, Jehovah pressed Jeremiah to prophesy concerning Israel's destruction, and Jeremiah felt that the suffering of Israel was too great. On the other hand, the people remained evil, and they even began to persecute Jeremiah. This put Jeremiah into a dilemma.

Eventually, God carried out His judgment. He destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, sent the king into exile, and

devastated the entire country. Jeremiah saw all these things take place before his eyes. All these things—the destruction, devastation, contamination, capture, and ruin—remained clearly in the memory of this sorrowful and sympathetic prophet. By God's sovereignty, Jeremiah was free from captivity. History tells us that Jeremiah sat on a hill overlooking Jerusalem, viewing all the ruins below. He began to weep, and he could not avoid writing down his feelings. His five lamentations, written in a very fine way (with the first four lamentations following the sequence of the Hebrew alphabet), were the expression of his feeling of sorrow, pain, and sympathy concerning God's holy people, holy land, holy city, holy temple, and holy vessels.

We know from the book of Jeremiah that Jeremiah, a good and faithful prophet, was persecuted. He was persecuted to such an extent that he prayed, "Let me see Your vengeance on them" (Jer. 11:20; 20:12). This is contrary to the New Testament teaching, which tells us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matt. 5:44). Thus, regardless of how good and faithful Jeremiah was, he was still human. As he walked in the hills above Jerusalem, the more he looked at the destruction, the more the tears came and the more he lamented. Then he wrote his lamentations.

Let us now consider, in the way of a very brief sketch, the first two lamentations.

II. THE FIRST LAMENTATION—A LAMENTATION OVER THE DESOLATION OF THE HOLY CITY

A. Her Distressing Circumstances

In her desolation, the holy city was in distressing circumstances (1:1-11). She had no comfort, rest, or pasture (vv. 2-3, 6, 9) because of her transgressions, sins, impurity, and uncleanness (vv. 5, 8-9).

B. Her Entreating the Sympathy of the Passersby

Verses 12 through 19 speak of her entreating the sympathy of the passersby. Her circumstances were miserable (vv. 13-17)

because of her rebellion against the commandment of Jehovah, who is righteous (v. 18).

C. Her Prayer to Jehovah

Verses 20 through 22 are her prayer to Jehovah. In verses 20 and 21a she begged Him to see her in distress. Then in 21b and 22 she asked Him to deal with those who would not comfort her.

III. THE SECOND LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOLY CITY

A. Jehovah the Lord's Destruction of the Holy City

In 2:1-10 we have a word concerning Jehovah the Lord's destruction of the holy city. This destruction was in His overflowing wrath, in the indignation of His anger (vv. 1-2, 6). The destruction included the temple, the altar, the kings, the priests, the princes, the prophets, and the elders (vv. 6-7, 9-10).

B. The Prophet's Lament

Verses 11 through 19 are the prophet's lament. In verses 11 and 12 we have the prophet's weeping and his inward feeling of pains because of his people's suffering; in verses 13 and 14, the serious "sickness" of the people of Jerusalem; in verses 15 and 16, the hissing and insulting of the passersby; and in verse 17, the fulfillment of Jehovah's commanded punishment. Then verses 18 and 19 tell of the need to cry to the Lord with eyes that weep unceasingly and hands uplifted toward the Lord.

C. Her Prayer to Jehovah

The last three verses of this lamentation are her prayer to Jehovah. She begged Him to see her in her slaughter (v. 20a) and in the killings she had undergone (vv. 20b-22).

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MESSAGE TWO

THE THIRD LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE AFFLICTED PROPHET IDENTIFIED WITH HIS PUNISHED PEOPLE

Scripture Reading: Lam. 3

In this message we will cover Jeremiah's third lamentation. This is a lamentation over the afflicted prophet identified with his punished people. Although Jeremiah himself was not afflicted by God, he was one with God's afflicted people. This indicates that a servant of the Lord must learn how to identify himself with God's people, regardless of the situation, and especially in a situation of affliction. He is afflicted because he is identified with God's afflicted people.

Let us now consider this lamentation as a whole and then pay particular attention to verses 22 through 25.

I. THE PROPHET'S (REPRESENTING HIS PEOPLE'S) AFFLICTION

Verses 1 through 20 are the prophet's (representing his people's) affliction. This affliction was by the rod of Jehovah's wrath (vv. 1-17). Both the prophet's (representing his people's) strength and his hope in Jehovah had perished (v. 18). In verses 19 and 20 the prophet says, "Remember my affliction and my wandering, / The wormwood and the gall. / My soul remembers them well / And is bowed down within me."

The affliction described in all these verses did not happen personally to Jeremiah. God did not afflict Jeremiah directly in this way. However, because Jeremiah was one with God's afflicted people, in his feeling, in his sympathy, he was suffering the same kind of affliction.

II. THE PROPHET'S (REPRESENTING HIS PEOPLE'S) HOPE

In verses 21 through 39 we see the prophet's (representing his people's) hope. The prophet's hope was in the lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness of Jehovah, who was his portion (vv. 21-24). He hoped in Jehovah by waiting on Him and seeking after Him for His salvation (vv. 25-30), while depending on the Lord's doing and judging (vv. 31-39).

III. THE PROPHET'S REQUEST TO HIS PEOPLE

In verses 40 through 54 we have the prophet's request to his people. First, he requests that they would examine their ways and turn again to Jehovah (vv. 40-41). Then he requests that they repent of their transgressions and rebellion that caused the Lord to cover Himself from them and to stir up their enemies to destroy them (vv. 42-54).

IV. THE PROPHET'S (REPRESENTING HIS PEOPLE'S) PRAYER TO JEHOVAH

Finally, in verses 55 through 66 we have the prophet's (representing his people's) prayer to Jehovah. He called upon His name that He would plead their case and judge their cause (vv. 55-62). Then he asked Him to avenge them of their enemies because of their evils (vv. 63-66).

Although this lamentation bears an Old Testament flavor, it is nevertheless in the sphere of the New Testament economy. This is true especially of verses 22 through 25, which we will now consider in some detail.

Lamentations 3:22 and 23 say, "It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail; / They are new every morning. / Great is Your faithfulness." I believe that this word came to Jeremiah as he was contacting the Lord in the morning, reviewing all the afflictions of his people. While Jeremiah was reviewing these afflictions, he must have regretted the sinfulness of Israel. At this juncture the word of Jehovah came to him, that no matter how much He had punished Israel, He had not utterly consumed them. Jeremiah and many others remained. This was God's lovingkindness. Realizing that he and all the others

who remained with him were under God's compassions, Jeremiah praised, saying, "For His compassions do not fail" (v. 22b). The people of Israel had failed, but God's compassions did not fail. His compassions had preserved the remnant of Israel.

Referring to Jehovah's compassions, Jeremiah went on to say, "They are new every morning" (v. 23a). This indicates that Jeremiah contacted the Lord as the compassionate One every morning. It was through his contact with the Lord that he received this word regarding His lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness.

In verse 23b Jeremiah declared, "Great is Your faithfulness." God's compassions do not fail, because He is the faithful One. The faithfulness of God refers to His word. His faithfulness is also related to His covenant. Because He had made a covenant with Abraham and confirmed it with Isaac and Jacob, God had to be faithful to keep His word. God had spoken to Israel's forefathers, and He was faithful to keep His word.

In verses 24 and 25 Jeremiah continued, saying from the depths of his being, "Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; / Therefore I hope in Him. / Jehovah is good to those who wait on Him, / To the soul that seeks Him." This word about Jehovah being our portion and about hoping in Him surely has a New Testament flavor. This indicates that as Jeremiah was writing verses 22 through 25, he was in the New Testament economy.

Jeremiah enjoyed Jehovah as his portion, and he put his hope not in himself nor in the people nor in anything else but only in Jehovah. On the one hand, Jeremiah realized that God is a God of lovingkindness, that He is compassionate, and that His word is faithful. On the other hand, Jeremiah realized that we still need to contact the Lord every morning, put our entire hope in Him, and wait on Him.

In Jeremiah's time, the situation of the people of Israel was not good. It did not seem that God was so loving, kind, compassionate, and faithful. Rather, it looked just the opposite. When we are in a similar situation, what should we do? Like Jeremiah, we need to realize that God is still

our portion and that we should hope in Him, wait on Him, and call upon His name (v. 55). However, even though we do these things, we should not expect the situation to change immediately. Since there may be no immediate change, we need to continue to wait on the Lord.

In Jeremiah's case, the waiting on the Lord has been quite long. The fulfillment of his prophecies concerning the age of restoration has still not come. On the contrary, the situation of Israel today does not seem to be a confirmation of these prophecies. This indicates that we need to learn the lesson of waiting on the Lord. Today is not the time of the ultimate consummation; therefore, we must wait on the Lord.

With us there is the matter of time, the time element. Because we are in time, the time element is very important to us. We are conscious of the time element, and therefore we easily become impatient. But with our God there is no time element.

To wait on the Lord is very crucial. God is our portion; He is full of lovingkindness and compassion; and He is absolutely faithful. Now we need to hope in Him, wait on Him, and call upon Him. However, we should not expect that He will act quickly. A certain Bible teacher pointed out that God acted quickly in saving us, but in many other things He does not act quickly. For example, we know that the Lord answers prayer. We may pray to Him about a particular matter, but He may wait for several months before He answers our prayer. This helps us to realize that our God is true, living, compassionate, and faithful, yet He often does not do things as quickly as we expect.

The reason God delays is that He intends to test us. He will test us to such an extent that we will lose our hope and feel that we are utterly finished. When we feel that the situation is hopeless, that is often the time when God will come in. This is our experience under God's dispensing.

In verse 55 of this lamentation, Jeremiah said, "I called upon Your name, O Jehovah" (v. 55a). In the Lord's recovery we have learned to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. However, many New Testament believers do not know about calling upon the name of the Lord and do not practice it.

Some even criticize us for this practice. What an unfortunate situation this is!

I appreciate the three matters we have emphasized in this message: to have our hope in the Lord, to wait on Him, and to call upon His name. If we practice these things, we will be under God's dispensing in a practical way.

When the situation around us seems to be hopeless, we need to realize that our God can never be defeated. Whatever He has spoken, He will be faithful to fulfill. Therefore, we should believe all that the Bible says. In addition, we need to realize that God is the portion of His people, and we need to put our hope and our trust in Him. We need to trust in Him and wait on Him whether He answers us now or later. Even if He seemingly does not answer our prayer, we should continue to pray and wait on Him. The eventual result will be according to His purpose, and we will be the ones benefited by Him. May we all learn this lesson.

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MESSAGE THREE

THE FOURTH LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE PUNISHED PEOPLE AND THE FIFTH LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION AS A PRAYER FOR THE HOLY PEOPLE

Scripture Reading: Lam. 4—5

In this message we will cover the fourth and fifth lamentations. After considering these lamentations as a whole, we will pay close attention to 5:19-22.

I. THE FOURTH LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION OVER THE PUNISHED PEOPLE

The fourth lamentation—a lamentation over the punished people—is recorded in chapter four.

A. Afflicted with the Lack of Food in Their Siege

The people of Israel were afflicted with a lack of food in their siege (vv. 1-10). The shining "pure gold" and the glittering "sapphire" became "black coal" because of the lack of food (vv. 1-5, 7-9). The compassionate women boiled and ate their own children (v. 10). God's people were afflicted because their iniquity was greater than the sin of Sodom (v. 6).

B. Consumed by the Burning Anger of Jehovah's Wrath

The children of Israel were consumed by the burning anger of Jehovah's wrath (vv. 11-20). Such an anger was not believable to the kings of the earth nor to the inhabitants of the world (v. 12). God's people were consumed because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests

(vv. 13-16). The people looked in vain for a nation's help (vv. 17-20).

C. Their Hope in the Future

Verses 21 and 22 speak of their hope in the future. They hoped that the punishment for their iniquity had been accomplished and that Jehovah would no longer take them into exile (v. 22a). They hoped also that Jehovah would punish the iniquity of Edom (vv. 21, 22b).

Jeremiah wrote this lamentation altogether in a human way. His sympathy, his love, his sorrow, and his weeping were altogether human. Everything uttered by Jeremiah in this lamentation was the issue of his being human. In recalling Israel's past (v. 2) he was human, and in speaking regarding the coming punishment of Edom (v. 22) he was even more human. His human feeling for Israel led him into human jealousy concerning Edom. Jeremiah was unhappy that Edom was enjoying peace while Israel was under God's punishment. Therefore, according to his human feeling, he declared that God would punish the iniquity of Edom and uncover their sins.

II. THE FIFTH LAMENTATION— A LAMENTATION AS A PRAYER FOR THE HOLY PEOPLE AS THE CONCLUSION OF THE FOURTH LAMENTATION

The fifth lamentation, which is a lamentation as a prayer for the holy people as the conclusion of the fourth lamentation, is recorded in chapter five.

A. Asking Jehovah to Remember Their Sufferings

This prayer begins with Jeremiah's asking Jehovah to remember their sufferings and to look and see their reproach (v. 1).

B. Relating Their Miserable Condition

This prayer continues with Jeremiah's relating their miserable condition (vv. 2-6, 8-18).

C. Confessing Their Fathers' Sin and Their Sin

In verses 7 and 16b Jeremiah confessed their fathers' sin and their sin.

D. Concluding with a Petition

This prayer concludes with a petition (vv. 19-22). In his petition, Jeremiah praises Jehovah (v. 19), questions Him (vv. 20, 22), and makes a request of Him (v. 21). Let us now consider the crucial points in these verses.

The books of Jeremiah and Lamentations were written based upon the eternal view of God's economy. But in the book of Lamentations until the end of chapter five, Jeremiah wrote in a very human way, with much human sympathy and compassion for the children of Israel. Although Jeremiah was very human, he was also a man of God. He knew that the problems of the children of Israel could not be solved by merely being human. Therefore, at the end of the fifth lamentation, in verses 19 through 22, he turned to Jehovah.

Verse 19 says, "You, O Jehovah, remain forever; / Your throne is from generation to generation." The phrase "You, O Jehovah, remain forever" refers to God's eternal being, and it indicates that there is no change with Him. In the human realm, changes take place in every way. In particular, many things changed in the situation of the children of Israel. But there was no change with God's eternal being. He remains forever the same.

The phrase "Your throne is from generation to generation" refers to God's eternal and unchanging government. God's throne has no beginning or end; His throne exists from generation to generation. Jeremiah's writing here concerning God's eternal being and His eternal and unchanging government surely is divine.

Although Jeremiah's expression in verse 19 is divine, he reverts to speaking in a very human way in verses 20 through 22. In verse 20 he writes, "Why do You forget us forever / And forsake us for so long a time?" Here Jeremiah is actually complaining to God and challenging Him. After offering the high praise in verse 19, Jeremiah strongly

challenges God in verse 20, asking Him why He had forgotten them and forsaken them. Actually God had neither forgotten nor forsaken His people.

In verse 21 Jeremiah continues, "Turn to us, O Jehovah, and we will be turned; / Renew our days as before." This word, which is expressed as an imperative, indicates that Jeremiah considered that the responsibility for the turning of the children of Israel depended upon Jehovah. He considered that Jehovah was the active one and the children of Israel were the passive ones. This too was an expression of Jeremiah's human feeling. Here Jeremiah seems to be saying, "Jehovah, we cannot turn or be renewed. The responsibility for this is with You. You have to turn to us, and then we will be turned. We cannot be active unless You are active first."

Although Jeremiah spoke in a human way about their needing Jehovah to turn to them, his thought was correct. This is proved by Zechariah 12, a chapter which speaks about Israel's household salvation. When the household of Israel receives the Lord's salvation, who will turn first, Israel or the Lord? Who will take the initiative? This chapter reveals that it is the Lord, not Israel, who will take the initiative and turn. When Jerusalem is besieged by Antichrist, the Lord Jesus will turn to the children of Israel and appear to them. They will then look on Him, the One whom they have pierced, and repent (v. 10). This means that when they see the Lord, they will turn to Him and receive His household salvation.

In verse 22 Jeremiah concluded his writing by asking two questions of Jehovah: "Have You utterly rejected us? / Are You exceedingly angry with us?" Jehovah had not utterly rejected Israel, nor was He exceedingly angry with them. But they needed to wait on Him until the time of restoration, when He will restore the children of Israel to be in His person and in His eternal kingdom to enjoy what He had promised to their forefathers.

As we have pointed out, in the third lamentation Jeremiah spoke of God's lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness, and at the end of the fifth lamentation he appealed to God's eternal being and His eternal throne, His unchanging government. Which do you appreciate more and which do

you consider higher—God's lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness or God's eternal being and eternal throne? God's eternal being and throne are higher than His lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness.

According to the New Testament, God's salvation is a matter of His love (John 3:16), His grace (Eph. 2:8), and His righteousness (Rom. 1:17). God's love and grace may change, but God's righteousness cannot change, because His righteousness is related to His government (Psa. 89:14, ASV). Both love and grace are related to God's heart. God's heart may change, yet He would still be righteous. God's righteousness cannot change, because He must always be righteous. God's lovingkindness and compassions can change, but God's person and His government remain unchanging forever.

Jeremiah ended Lamentations not with God's lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness but with God's eternal being and His throne. This is a strong sign that in writing Lamentations Jeremiah touched God's economy. Although his lamentations were too much in his human feeling, taste, love, and sympathy, at the end he came out of his being human and entered into God's divinity. There, in 5:19, he touched God's person and God's throne.

In the New Jerusalem, God will be fully unveiled in His person and in His government, both of which are the unshakable foundation of His dealing with us. At that time, we will see God Himself as the eternal King with His eternal, unshakable kingdom (Heb. 12:28).

LIFE-STUDY OF LAMENTATIONS

MESSAGE FOUR

JEREMIAH'S DISAPPOINTMENT AND QUESTIONS AND GOD'S ETERNAL BEING AND HIS THRONE

Scripture Reading: Lam. 5:18-22

In this concluding message to the life-study of Lamentations, I would like to give a further word on 5:18-22.

A COMPARISON

At the end of Jeremiah's lamentations, in the last verses of chapter five, we can see a comparison. Lamentations 5:18 and 19 say, "Because of Mount Zion, which is desolate—/ Foxes rove in it. / You, O Jehovah, remain forever; / Your throne is from generation to generation." First, Jeremiah speaks of the foxes roving in Mount Zion, and then he declares that Jehovah and His throne remain forever. The comparison here is between Jeremiah's disappointment over the fact that foxes were roving in Zion and his realization that Jehovah and His throne remain forever.

Jeremiah's Disappointment—Foxes Roving in Mount Zion

When Jeremiah wrote these verses, he was perplexed and disappointed. Because of his background, he knew the writings of Moses, and he knew the covenant which God had made with Abraham and his descendants. Nevertheless, in his five lamentations he did not speak much according to God's word. Rather, he spoke altogether according to his personal, human feeling. At the beginning of his fourth lamentation, he referred to Israel as pure gold which had become dim. "How the gold has become dim! / How the most pure gold has changed!" (v. 1). Then near the end of his last lamentation, he said that foxes were roving in Mount Zion.

This shows Jeremiah's disappointment. Zion was the holy land. To God it was the most holy, sanctified place on earth. How could foxes come into this holy city and even rove on the peak of Zion, where the temple was built? This caused Jeremiah to lament.

Jeremiah's Realization—Jehovah and His Throne Remaining Forever

Prior to 5:19, Jeremiah was writing according to his personal, human feeling, but in this verse he leaps out of his human feeling into God. After speaking of foxes roving in Mount Zion, he suddenly declares, "You, O Jehovah, remain forever." Foxes are not the only thing in the universe. Jehovah, the Lord of the universe, remains to exercise His administration. Jerusalem was overthrown, the temple was burned down, God's people were carried away, but what about our God, Jehovah? Jehovah remains, and His throne has not been overthrown and never will be overthrown.

The divine title Jehovah means "I am." He is the One who was, who is, and who will be forever (Rev. 4:8b). Jerusalem was finished, the temple was finished, and the land of Israel was finished, but Jehovah will never be finished.

When Jeremiah's position and angle were changed from himself to Jehovah, he realized that although everything may be lost, Jehovah remains forever. Today the foxes may rove in Zion, and tomorrow they may be gone, but Jehovah will never be gone. The fact that nothing remains and that everything is finished manifests the truth that Jehovah remains forever. Everything may be lost, but "You, O Jehovah, remain forever; / Your throne is from generation to generation," with no beginning and no ending. Heaven and earth may end, but He will never end. He is the unique source, and all the generations come out of Him.

I appreciate the contrast in these verses, for it shows us what remains and what does not remain. Today certain things may be "roving" in Catholicism, in Protestantism, in Judaism, and in the world. We should not believe that any of these roving things will remain. Eventually, every "ism" will come to an end, yet Jehovah will remain forever.

In dealing with many negative things and evil persons, there is often no need for God to act. Instead of doing something, He does what He teaches us to do—He waits. In particular, He waits for the evil ones to die. We should realize, therefore, that death is a very useful tool in the hand of God. Where are all the evil ones in history? Where is Hitler? Where is Mussolini? One by one, all such evil ones have died. Throughout human history, every evil person eventually has been terminated by death. God, who remains forever, has simply waited for death to take them all away.

JEREMIAH'S QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES AND JEHOVAH'S SILENCE

Although Jeremiah realized that God's being is eternal and His throne remains forever, he still had something within him that caused him to end his lamentations with questions and even with challenges. In 5:20-22 he said to Jehovah, "Why do You forget us forever / And forsake us for so long a time? / Turn to us, O Jehovah, and we will be turned; / Renew our days as before. / Or have You utterly rejected us? / Are You exceedingly angry with us?" Here Jeremiah speaks to Jehovah a challenging word, even a commanding and rebuking word. However, Jehovah did not answer him. Instead of answering Jeremiah or telling him to be quiet, Jehovah remained silent. At the end of Lamentations, the time had not yet come for God to answer Jeremiah's questions.

All Jeremiah's challenges and questions are answered in the following books of the Bible. The consummation of this answer will be the New Jerusalem. There he will see everything clearly. Until then, Jeremiah must wait on Jehovah, just as he said in 3:25: "Jehovah is good to those who wait on Him." Jeremiah must wait until the New Testament age, until the age of the millennial kingdom, and until the New Jerusalem. Then he will be fully satisfied.