

LAMENTATIONS

¹ How sitteth alone the city *that once was* full of people? the lady of folks is made as a widow; the princess of provinces is made under tribute.

² It* weeping wept in the night, and the tears thereof *be* in the cheeks thereof; there is none of all the dear-worthy thereof, that comforteth it; all the friends thereof forsook it, and be made enemies to it.

³ Judah passed from torment and multitude of servage, it dwelled among heathen men, and found no rest; all the pursuers thereof took it among anguishes.

⁴ The ways of Zion mourn, for no men come to the solemnity; all the gates thereof be destroyed, the priests thereof wail; the virgins thereof be defouled, and it is oppressed with bitterness.

⁵ The enemies thereof be made in the head, and the enemies thereof be made rich, for the Lord spake on it. For the multitude of wickednesses thereof the little children thereof be led into captivity, before the face of the troubler.

⁶ And all the fairness of the daughter of Zion went out from the daughter of Zion; the princes thereof be made as rams not finding pastures; and went forth without strength before the face of the pursuer [*or of the follower*].

* **CHAPTER 1:2** Throughout Chapter 1, where the “Later Version” uses the impersonal ‘it’ and ‘thereof’, the “Early Version” and most other translations use ‘she’ and ‘her’.

7 And Jerusalem bethought on the days of her affliction and of trespassing, and on all her desirable things which it had from *[the]* eld *[or old]* days; when the people thereof fell down in the hand of enemies, and none helper was; *[the]* enemies saw it, and scorned the sabbaths thereof.

8 Jerusalem sinned a sin, therefore it was made unsteadfast; all that glorified it forsook it, for they saw the shame thereof; forsooth it wailed, and was turned aback.

9 The filths thereof *be* in the feet thereof, and it had no mind of her end; it was put down greatly, and had no comforter; Lord, see thou my torment, for the enemy is raised *[up]*.

10 The enemy put his hand to all the desirable things thereof; for it saw heathen men entered into thy saintuary, of which thou haddest commanded, that they should not enter into thy church.

11 All the people thereof was wailing and seeking bread, they gave all precious things for meat, to strengthen the soul; *and the city saith*, See thou, Lord, and behold, for I am made vile.

12 A! all ye that pass by the way, perceive, and see, if any sorrow is as my sorrow; for he gathered away *my* grapes from me, as the Lord spake in the day of wrath of his strong vengeance.

13 From on high he sent fire in my bones, and taught me; he spreaded abroad a net to my feet, he turned me aback; he setted me desolate, meddled together all day with mourning.

14 The yoke of my wickednesses watched in the hand of him, those be folded together, and put on my neck; my strength is made feeble; the Lord gave me in the hand, from which I shall not be able to rise.

15 The Lord took away all my worshipful men from the midst of me; he called time against me, that he should all-foul my chosen men; the Lord stamped a presser [*or the press trod*] to the virgin, the daughter of Judah.

16 Therefore I *am* weeping, and mine eye is leading down water; for a comforter, converting my soul, is made far from me; my sons be made lost, for the enemy had the mastery.

17 Zion spread abroad his hands, none is that comforteth it; the Lord sent against Jacob enemies thereof, in the compass thereof; Jerusalem is made as defouled with unclean blood among them.

18 *And the city saith*, The Lord is just [*or rightwise*], for I stirred his mouth to wrathfulness [*or wrath*]; all peoples, I beseech, hear ye, and see my sorrow; my virgins and my young men went forth into captivity.

19 I called my friends, and they deceived me; my priests and mine eld [*or old*] men in the city be wasted; for they sought meat to themselves, to comfort their life [*or refresh their soul*].

20 See thou, Lord, for I am troubled, my womb is disturbed; mine heart is destroyed in myself, for I am full of bitterness; [*the*] sword slayeth without-forth, and like death is at home.

²¹ They heard, that I make inward wailing, and none is that comforteth me; all mine enemies heard *of* mine evil, they be glad, for thou hast done *it*; thou hast brought a day of comfort, and they shall be made like me.

²² All the evil of them enter before thee, and gather thou grapes away from them, as thou hast gathered grapes away from me, for my wickednesses; for my wailings *be* many, and mine heart is mourning.

CHAPTER 2

¹ How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with darkness in his strong vengeance? he hath cast down from heaven into earth the noble *city* of Israel; and bethought not on the stool of his feet, in the day of his strong vengeance.

² The Lord casted down, and spared not, all the fair things of Jacob; he destroyed in his strong vengeance the strengths *or strongholds* of the virgin of Judah, and casted down into [*the*] earth; he defouled the realm, and the princes thereof.

³ He brake in the ire [*or the wrath*] of his strong vengeance all the horn of Israel; he turned aback his right hand from the face of the enemy; and he kindled in Jacob, as fire of flame devouring in compass.

⁴ He as an enemy bent his bow, he as an adversary made steadfast his right hand; and he killed all thing that was fair in sight in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion; he shedded [*or poured*] out his indignation as fire.

⁵ The Lord is made as an enemy; he casted down Israel, he casted down all the walls thereof; he des-troyed the strengths thereof, and filled in the daughter of Judah a man made low, and a woman made low.

⁶ And he scattered his tent as a garden, he destroyed his tabernacle; the Lord gave to forgetting in Zion a feast day, and sabbath; and *put* the king and priest into shame, and into the indignation of his strong venge-ance.

⁷ The Lord putted away his altar, he cursed his hallowing; he betook into the hands of the enemy the walls of the towers thereof; they gave voice in the house of the Lord, as in a solemn day.

⁸ The Lord thought to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion; he stretched forth his cord, and turned not away his hand from perdition; the forewall, *either the outerward*, mourned, and the wall was destroyed altogether.

⁹ The gates thereof be pitched in the earth, he lost and all-brake the bars thereof; the king thereof and the princes thereof *be* among heathen men; the law is not, and the prophets thereof found not of the Lord a vision, *either revelation*.

¹⁰ They sat in [*the*] earth, the eld [*or old*] men of the daughter of Zion were still; they besprinkled their heads with ashes, the elder men of Judah be girt with hair-shirts; the virgins of Judah casted down to the earth their heads.

¹¹ Mine eyes failed for tears, mine entrails were troubled or disturbed; my maw was shed [*or poured*] out in [*the*] earth upon the sorrow

of the daughter of my people; when a little child and *[the]* sucking *infant* failed in the streets of the city.

¹² They said to their mothers, Where is wheat, and wine? when they failed as wounded men in the streets of the city; yea, when they sent out their souls in the bosom of their mothers.

¹³ To whom shall I comparison thee? either to whom shall I liken thee, thou daughter of Jerusalem? to whom shall I make thee even, and shall I comfort thee, thou virgin, the daughter of Zion? for why thy sorrow is great as the sea; who shall do medicine to thee?

¹⁴ Thy prophets saw to thee false things, and fond *[or foolish]*; and *they* opened not thy wickedness, that they should stir thee to penance; but they saw to thee false takings, and castings out.

¹⁵ All men passing on the way clapped with hands on thee; they hissed, and moved their head on the daughter of Jerusalem; and said, This is the city of perfect fairness, the joy of all earth.

¹⁶ All thine enemies opened their mouth on thee; they hissed, and gnashed with their teeth, and said, We shall devour; lo! this is the day which we abided, we found, we saw.

¹⁷ The Lord did those things which he thought, he *[ful]* filled his word which he had commanded from *[the]* eld *[or old]* days; he destroyed, and spared not; and made glad the enemy on thee; and enhanced the horn of thine enemies.

18 The heart of them cried to the Lord, on the walls of the daughter of Zion; lead thou forth tears as a strand [*or a stream*], by day and night; give thou not rest to thee, neither the apple of thine eye be still.

19 Rise thou together, praise thou in the night, in the beginning of *the wakings* [*or watches*]; shed [*or pour*] out thine heart as water, before the sight of the Lord; raise thine hands to him for the souls of thy little children, that failed for hunger in the head of all meetings of ways.

20 See thou, Lord, and behold, whom thou hast made so bare; therefore whether women shall eat their fruit, *their* little children at the measure of an hand? for a priest and prophet is slain in the saintuary of the Lord.

21 A child and an eld [*or old*] man lie on the earth withoutforth; my virgins and my young men fell down by sword; thou hast slain them in the day of thy strong vengeance, thou smotest and didest no mercy.

22 Thou calledest, as to a solemn day, them that made me afeared of compass; and none was that escaped in the day of the strong vengeance of the Lord, and was left; mine enemy wasted them, which I fed, and nourished up.

CHAPTER 3

1 I *am* a man seeing my poverty in the rod of his indignation.

2 He drove me, and brought into darkneses, and not into light.

³ Only he turned into me, and turned altogether his hand all day.

⁴ He made old my skin, and my flesh; he all-brake my bones.

⁵ He builded in my compass, and he encompassed me with gall and travail.

⁶ He setted me in dark places, as everlasting dead men.

⁷ He builded about against me, that I go not out; he aggrieved my gyves *or fetters*.

⁸ But and when I cry and pray, he hath excluded my prayer.

⁹ He enclosed altogether my ways with square stones; he destroyed my paths.

¹⁰ He is made *like* a bear setting ambush to me, *like* a lion in hid places.

¹¹ He destroyed my paths, and brake me; he setted me desolate.

¹² He bent his bow, and setted me as a sign to an arrow.

¹³ He sent in my reins the daughters of his arrow case.

¹⁴ I am made into scorn to all the people, the song of them all day.

¹⁵ He filled me with bitternesses; he greatly filled me with wormwood.

¹⁶ He brake at number my teeth; he fed me with ashes.

¹⁷ And my soul is put away; I have forgotten goods.

¹⁸ And I said, Mine end perished, and mine hope, from the Lord.

¹⁹ Have thou mind on my poverty, and going over, and on wormwood and gall.

20 By mind I shall be mindful; and my soul shall fail in me.

21 I bethink these things in mine heart, I shall hope in God.

22 The mercies of the Lord *be* many, for we be not wasted; for why his merciful doings failed not.

23 I knew in the morrowtide; thy faith is much [*or much is thy faith*].

24 My soul said, The Lord is my part; therefore I shall abide him.

25 The Lord is good to them that hope into him, to a soul seeking him.

26 It is good to abide with stillness the health of God.

27 It is good to a man, when he hath borne the yoke of his youth.

28 He shall sit alone, and he shall be still; for he raised himself above himself.

29 He shall set his mouth in dust, if peradventure hope is.

30 He shall give the cheek to a man that smiteth him; he shall be filled with shames.

31 For the Lord shall not put away without end.

32 For if he casted away, and he shall do mercy after the multitude of his mercies.

33 For he maked not low of his heart; and casted not away the sons of men.

34 That he should all-foul under his feet all the bound men of [*the*] earth.

35 That he should bow down the doom of a man, in the sight of the cheer of the Highest.

36 That he should pervert a man in his doom, the Lord knew not.

³⁷ Who is this that said, that a thing should be done, when the Lord commandeth not?

³⁸ Neither goods neither evils shall go out of the mouth of the Highest.

³⁹ What grutched a man living, a man *punished* for his sins?

⁴⁰ Search we our ways, and seek we, and turn we again to the Lord.

⁴¹ Raise we our hearts with hands, to the Lord into heavens.

⁴² We have done wickedly, and have stirred *thee* to wrath; therefore thou art not able to be prayed.

⁴³ Thou coveredest in strong venge-ance, and smitedest us; thou killedest, and sparedest not.

⁴⁴ Thou settedest a cloud to thee, that prayer pass not.

⁴⁵ Thou settedest me, drawing up by the root, and casting out, in the midst of [*the*] peoples.

⁴⁶ All [*the*] enemies opened their mouth on us.

⁴⁷ Inward dread and snare is made to us, prophecy and defouling.

⁴⁸ Mine eyes led down partings of waters, for the defouling of the daughter of my people.

⁴⁹ Mine eye was tormented, and was not still; for no rest was.

⁵⁰ Until the Lord beheld, and saw from heavens.

⁵¹ Mine eye robbed my soul in all the daughters of my city.

⁵² Mine enemies took me without cause, by hunting *me* as a bird.

⁵³ My life slid into a pit; and they putted a stone on me.

54 Waters flowed over mine head; I said, I perish.

55 Lord, I called to help thy name, from the last pit.

56 Thou heardest my voice; turn thou not away thine ear from my sobbing and cries.

57 Thou nighedest to me in the day, wherein I called thee to help; thou saidest, Dread thou not.

58 Lord, again-buyer of my life, thou deemedest the cause of my soul.

59 Lord, thou sawest the wickedness of them against me; deem thou my doom.

60 Thou sawest all the strong vengeance, all the thoughts of them against me.

61 Lord, thou heardest the shames of them; all the thoughts of them against me.

62 The lips of men rising against me, and the thoughts of them against me all day.

63 See thou the sitting and rising again of them; I am the psalm of them.

64 Lord, thou shalt yield while to them, by the works of their hands.

65 Thou shalt give to them the shield of heart, thy travail.

66 Lord, thou shalt pursue them in thy strong vengeance, and thou shalt defoul them under heavens.

CHAPTER 4

1 How is gold made dark, the best colour is changed? the stones of the saintuary be scattered in the head of all streets.

² The noble sons of Zion, and clothed with the best gold, how be they are reckoned into earthen vessels, into the work of the hands of a potter?

³ But also lamias *or lamiae* made naked their teats, gave milk to their whelps; the daughter of my people *is* cruel, as an ostrich in desert.

⁴ The tongue of the sucking child cleaved to his palate in thirst; little children asked *for* bread, and none was that brake to them.

⁵ They that ate lustfully, perished in ways; they that were nourished in cradles, embraced turds.

⁶ And the wickedness of the daughter of my people is made more than the sin of men of Sodom, that was destroyed in a moment, and hands took not therein.

⁷ Nazarites thereof were whiter than snow, shininger than milk; ruddier than eld [*or old*] ivory, fairer than sapphire.

⁸ The face of them was made blacker than coals, and they were not known in streets; the skin cleaved to their bones, it dried, and was made as a stick.

⁹ It was better to men slain with sword, than to men slain with hunger; for these men waxed rotten, they were wasted of the barrenness of [*the*] earth.

¹⁰ The hands of merciful women seethed their children; they were made the meats of those *women* in the sorrow of the daughter of my people.

¹¹ The Lord [*ful*] filled his strong vengeance, he shedded out the ire [*or he poured out the wrath*] of his indignation; and the Lord kindled a fire in Zion, and it devoured the foundations thereof.

12 The kings of *[the]* earth, and all the dwellers of the world believed not, that an adversary and *[the]* enemy should enter in by the gates of Jerusalem.

13 For the sins of the prophets thereof, and for *[the]* wickednesses of priests thereof, that shedded out the blood of just *[or rightwise]* men in the midst thereof.

14 Blind men erred in streets, they were defouled in blood; and when they might not go, they held their hems.

15 They cried to them, Depart away, ye defouled men, depart ye, go ye away, do not ye touch; forsooth they chided, and were stirred; they said among heathen men, *God* shall no more add to, that he dwell among them.

16 The face of the Lord parted them, he shall no more lay to, that he behold them; they were not ashamed of the faces of priests, neither they had mercy on eld *[or old]* men.

17 The while we stood yet, our eyes failed to our vain help; when we beheld attentive to a folk, that might not save us.

18 Our steps were slidery in the way of our streets; our end nighed, our days were *[ful]* filled, for our end came.

19 Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of heaven; they pursued us on *[the]* hills *[or mountains]*, they setted ambushments to us in desert.

20 The spirit of our mouth, Christ the Lord, was taken in our sins; to whom we said, We shall live in thy shadow among heathen men.

21 Thou daughter of Edom, make joy, and be glad, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup shall come also to thee, thou shalt be made drunken, and shalt be made bare.

22 Thou daughter of Zion, thy wickedness is [*ful*] filled; he shall not add more, that he make thee to pass over *again into captivity*; thou daughter of Edom, he shall visit thy wickedness, he shall uncover thy sins.

CHAPTER 5

1 Lord, have thou mind what befell to us; see thou, and behold our shame.

2 Our heritage is turned to aliens, our houses *be turned* to strangers.

3 We be made fatherless children without a father; our mothers *be* as widows.

4 We drank our water for money, we bought our wood for silver.

5 We were driven by our heads, and rest was not given to faint men.

6 We gave hand to Egypt, and to Assyrians, that we should be [*ful*] filled with bread.

7 Our fathers sinned, and be not, and we bare the wickednesses of them

8 Servants were lords of us, and none was, that again-bought from the hand of them.

9 In our lives we brought bread to us, from the face of [*the*] sword in desert.

10 Our skin is burnt as a furnace, of the face of tempests of hunger.

11 They made low women in Zion, and virgins in the cities of Judah.

¹² Princes were hanged [*up*] by the hand; they were not ashamed of the faces of eld [*or old*] men.

¹³ They misused young waxing men unchastely, and children fell down in tree.

¹⁴ Eld [*or Old*] men failed from [*the*] gates; young men *failed* from the quire *or choir* of singers.

¹⁵ The joy of our heart failed; our song is turned into mourning.

¹⁶ The crown of our head fell down; woe to us! for we sinned.

¹⁷ Therefore our heart is made sorrowful, therefore our eyes be made dark.

¹⁸ For the hill of Zion, for it perished; foxes went in it.

¹⁹ But thou, Lord, shalt dwell without end; thy seat *shall dwell* in generation and into generation.

²⁰ Why shalt thou forget us without end, shalt thou forsake us into [*the*] length of days?

²¹ Lord, convert thou us to thee, and we shall be converted; make thou new our days, as at the beginning.

²² But thou casting away hast cast away us; thou art wroth against us greatly.

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Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling, was made in response to requests from readers who wanted my Wycliffe's Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha in one volume. Printing limitations dictated the number of pages available to me and the letter size. In my previous books, Wycliffe's Bible, Wycliffe's Old Testament, Vols. 1 amp 2, Wycliffe's New Testament, and Wycliffe's Apocrypha, I have tens of thousands of rewritten verses, presented in parentheses "()", to provide help in comprehending the 14th century Middle English vocabulary and grammar. In this present volume, with space at a premium, those "helps" had to be eliminated, to make room for the text of the Apocrypha.

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