

SHOWNOTES

Podcast Episode: 2nd of 8 in Mini-Series 8

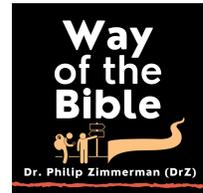
Episode #058

Something to Cry About | Jeremiah and Lamentations

Mini-Series 8

Major and Minor Prophets

Isaiah to Malachi



Welcome to Episode #058 of Way of the Bible podcast. This is our second of eight episodes in our mini-series entitled, Major and Minor Prophets | Isaiah to Malachi. On this episode we're going to tackle the two Major Prophet books by Jeremiah, the book by his name, Jeremiah, and the book of Lamentations.

On our last episode we looked at the Major prophet Isaiah who prophesied in Judah during the time during the reigns of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. During the later portion of his tenure, the northern kingdom was being dispersed by Assyria. Hezekiah's son Manasseh was the wickedest king of Judah who for 52 years practiced apostasy and idolatry to the max; even more wicked than the kings of Israel to the north.

The field of vision into the future varies with the prophets. Typically, the prophets in the land were speaking of things in a lifetime future. With the Major and Minor prophets the vision God provided extends well into the future. Significant far future prophetic events prophesied include the birth, life, and death of Jesus Christ, the rise of the anti-Christ as ruler of the world, Jesus Christ's second coming to judge the world and establish the Millennial Kingdom, and the final rebellion and establishment of the Eternal State. The eternal state begins after Jesus Christ reconciles all things in heaven and on earth to God, the final judgment, creation of a new heaven and new earth, and the appearance of a heavenly Jerusalem above the earth where God will dwell with humans into eternity.

The prophecies of Isaiah extend to the eternal state with the earth being renovated by fire and a new heaven and a new earth created. The prophecies of Jeremiah extend to the Millennial Kingdom. The prophecies of Ezekiel extend to the Millennial Kingdom. The prophecies of Daniel extend to the second coming of Christ.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel are all key books in the study of eschatology. While the prophets were addressing events happening within a generation of their lifetime, they also foresaw events happening well into the future. The fulfillment of many of their prophecies still have not been fulfilled and will not be until they are; by the will and timing of God. So as you read prophecies of God promising times when Israel will have no more wars, Jerusalem will never again be destroyed, a descendant of David will rule in Jerusalem, Israel will rule the world and others like this, understand those refer to real historical events that are yet to occur.

To put an exclamation point on literal fulfillment, the glorified Jesus Christ revealed to the Apostle John how the unfulfilled prophecies we find in Scripture are all tied together at the eschaton in the book of Revelation. We'll devote an entire mini-series to Revelation

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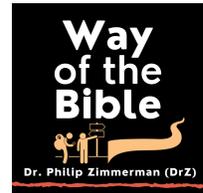
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at the end of our Bible overview series. The key to understanding the Bible as a whole and God's plan for mankind

Now to Jeremiah. Jeremiah followed Isaiah as a Major Prophet in Judah during the reigns of Kings Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. His tenure lasted beyond the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon and included being forcefully taken to Egypt by escaping Judeans.

The book of Jeremiah is 52 chapters and Lamentations is 5 chapters which means getting into any level of detail in these books on one episode is not feasible. We'll focus on key overarching themes and passages to get a flavor for the books and save getting down to tree in later mini-series.

What you'll see when you read the first 45 chapters of Jeremiah is a running conversation between Jeremiah and God and Jeremiah proclaiming to the people what God tells him to say. Initially, Jeremiah questions God's seemingly harsh intentions to destroy his own people and devastate the land as surely the people can be turned and reformed.

God is patient with Jeremiah but unrelenting in his decrees. On several occasions God demonstrates to Jeremiah the extent of the Judeans wickedness by having Jeremiah offer to the people some pretty simple opportunities to demonstrate repentance and a turn back to God. God commits to withhold judgment if the people respond. The people totally reject repentance and begin to turn on Jeremiah for even suggesting such things.

When Jeremiah realizes the people, including his own family, are against him with some planning his murder, Jeremiah has a change of heart. He sees the extent of the people's wickedness and is devastated by their headlong rush into destruction knowingly forsaking God and choosing to pursue idolatrous practices. Jeremiah begins to weep knowing God in his righteousness will do exactly what he's been prophesying to the people. He sees the priests and false prophets supporting the rebellion, saying God will not destroy but protect and deliver the people and land from the Babylonian hoards.

Jeremiah begins to fear for his life as God turns the prophetic heat up in his proclamations and considers drifting back into the shadows. God warns Jeremiah not to relent and turn aside or face the consequences. He tells Jeremiah that he would protect Jeremiah's life against any attempts to take it. Jeremiah remained faithful and God interceded on several occasions to deliver Jeremiah.

God lets Jeremiah know that he will preserve the remnant who are taken captive into Babylon (either involuntarily or voluntarily) for a period of 70 years. And while in the land

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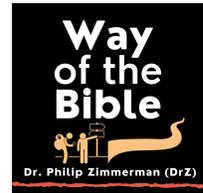
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they are to settle down, buy land and houses, multiply, and pray for the land to be blessed. Following the 70 years they will be released and are to return to their own land. As we saw in Ezra and Nehemiah, while offered a fully funded return trip to live and reestablish the land after the 70 years were completed, only a remnant of the Judeans in Babylon returned.

There are several iterations of Babylonian invasion of Judea. With each iteration many are killed and a remnant taken back to Babylon. Eventually only Jerusalem is left standing. Jeremiah tells the people to willingly surrender to Babylon and live; otherwise, those not taken captive will be killed. **2 Kings 21:13** - *And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria, and the plumb line of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a **dish**, wiping it and turning it upside down.*

Jeremiah lives beyond the Babylonian invasion and is given carte blanche by Nebuchadnezzar to live where he likes. Jeremiah stays with the appointed governor of the land living with the poor left behind. Following an attempt to kill the remaining Judeans by the Ammonites, the surviving Judeans ask Jeremiah to find out what God wants them to do. Jeremiah tells them God wants them to stay in Jerusalem and live. If they go to Egypt they will die. They choose Egypt, take Jeremiah with them, and openly worship and serve their gods. Babylon invades Egypt and kills the Judeans.

Beginning with chapter 41, Jeremiah reveals God's coming judgment on the nations surrounding Israel who too practiced idolatry and apostasy with false gods. Included in judgment were Egypt, the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Elam, and finally Babylon. God promises to restore the fortunes of Egypt, Moab, Ammonites, and Elam but not the others. The book ends with details concerning the final fall of Jerusalem when the walls were compromised, the invading army entered the city, King Zedekiah flees with his family and is captured, and exiled to Babylon.

With that as an overview let's look at some key passages. Jeremiah's call from God to be a Prophet of the LORD came in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign. Three years earlier the book of the law was found in the temple and read to Josiah who called Judah to repent.

Jeremiah 1:4-10 – *Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." 6 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." 7 But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.*

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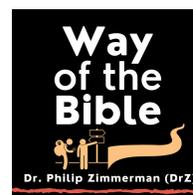
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8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD." 9 Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

And that's exactly what we see happening in the remainder of the book.

As Jeremiah begins his prophetic ministry God fills his mouth a message of God's jealous anger for the people's unfaithfulness as they pursue worshiping and serving the gods of the nations. **Jeremiah 2:8-13** – *The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who handle the law did not know me; the shepherds transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal and went after things that do not profit. 9 "Therefore I still contend with you, declares the LORD, and with your children's children I will contend. 10 For cross to the coasts of Cyprus and see, or send to Kedar and examine with care; see if there has been such a thing. 11 Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. 12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, 13 for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jeremiah goes into some detail about Judah's apostasy and wickedness.*

To demonstrate his fierce anger at Judah, God has Jeremiah call out to the remnant of faithless Israel to the north who have been dispersed by Assyria to repent and be restored to God. Judah, seeing what God did to Israel, only honored God in heartless pretense, while doubling down on idolatry well beyond even dispersed Israel.

God makes a promise early in the book to return a remnant of both Israel and Judah to the land where God will give them shepherds after God's heart who will feed them with knowledge and understanding. **Jeremiah 3:16-18** – *And when you have multiplied and been fruitful in the land, in those days, declares the LORD, they shall no more say, "The ark of the covenant of the LORD." It shall not come to mind or be remembered or missed; it shall not be made again. 17 At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart. 18 In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers for a heritage. With that image in mind, Jeremiah counsels Judah to return to God and circumcise the foreskin of their hearts or face imminent disaster from the north.*

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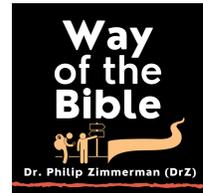
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Jeremiah tells Judah to look to the north in Israel at the torrent being unleashed by Babylon. And that torrent was on its way to make Judah and Jerusalem a desolation. The Lord gives Jeremiah a vision of the torrent and it's destruction with the fruitful land a desert and the cities in ruins. While horrific, God is going to totally end Judah and tells Jeremiah to search for justice and truth of which he finds none. **Jeremiah 5:3** – *O LORD, do not your eyes look for truth? You have struck them down, but they felt no anguish; you have consumed them, but they refused to take correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.*

Jeremiah complained that these were just simple people, certainly the great people knew better. Yet when Jeremiah looked at the great, they too had broken the yoke with God. So, God asks Jeremiah if he should not punish them or avenge himself against the nation? Especially considering the prophets in the land telling the people God will do nothing, no disaster, sword, and famine will come upon them.

God says he's going to use the prophet's own words as a fire to consume the people who are the wood to be torched by a nation coming from the north. But he will spare a remnant in captivity to serve foreigners in a land not their own. Hearing all this from Jeremiah, the people pay no attention and continue in ever increasing wickedness.

Jeremiah observes, **Jeremiah 5:30-31** – *An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: 31 the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?*

As Jeremiah tells the people of their apostasy and why destruction is coming they refuse to listen and scorn the word of the LORD. Jeremiah then tells of the wrath of the LORD about to be poured out in the streets. God is going to test them as if they were metals fiercely burned in fire. And that the refining does not remove their wickedness. All are rejected by the LORD.

God has Jeremiah stand in the gate of the LORD's house and tell the people to amend their ways and return to God. If not, God is going to take away the house of the LORD as he took away the former house that was in Shiloh. Jeremiah seemingly pleads with the people to turn back to God and he will let them continue to live in the land, but they refuse to listen. **Jeremiah 7:16-20** – *“As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. 17 Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 18 The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven. And they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to*

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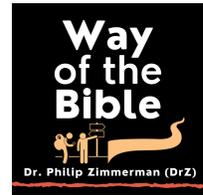
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provoke me to anger. 19 Is it I whom they provoke? declares the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own shame? 20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched."

The horde of Babylon has ravished Dan and is heading south. Their approach to Jerusalem is in view and Jeremiah senses God is really going to let them destroy the city, so he intercedes for them. **Jeremiah 8:18-22; 9:1-3** – *My joy is gone; grief is upon me; my heart is sick within me. 19 Behold, the cry of the daughter of my people from the length and breadth of the land: "Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not in her?" "Why have they provoked me to anger with their carved images and with their foreign idols?" 20 "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." 21 For the wound of the daughter of my people is my heart wounded; I mourn, and dismay has taken hold on me. 22 Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of the daughter of my people not been restored? 9:1-3 – Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! 2 Oh that I had in the desert a travelers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men. 3 They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me, declares the LORD.*

God continues to decry the wickedness of the people and their continued refusal to let go of false gods and practices. **Jeremiah 9:23—24** – *Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."*

If the people would only repent, God would act in this character, but they refuse to give up their idols and friendship with the surrounding nations. Jeremiah lets the people know after Judah falls, the destroyer is then going to uproot all who are merely circumcised in the flesh – Egypt, Edom, Ammon, and Moab. With special emphasis on the house of Israel who are all uncircumcised in heart.

God mocked the idols of wood covered with precious metals and then reminded the people of the covenant they made with God after their Exodus from Egypt. The Israelites in the desert heard the voice of God and agreed to obey his commands and God agreed they would be his people and He would be their God. **Jeremiah 11:6-8** – *And the*

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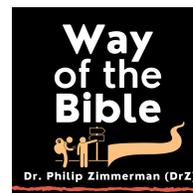
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LORD said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the words of this covenant and do them. 7 For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice. 8 Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not." (See Deut. 28:15 to the end, and you will see prophetic fulfillment about to occur).

Jeremiah 11:9-13 – Again the LORD said to me, "A conspiracy exists among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10 They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. 11 Therefore, thus says the LORD, Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape. Though they cry to me, I will not listen to them. 12 Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they cannot save them in the time of their trouble. 13 For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to shame, altars to make offerings to Baal.

Jeremiah spoke all of God's words to the people and then their attitude changed, but not for the good. **Jeremiah 11:18-20** – The LORD made it known to me and I knew; then you showed me their deeds. 19 But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. I did not know it was against me they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name be remembered no more." 20 But, O LORD of hosts, who judges righteously, who tests the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.

The LORD then let Jeremiah know that he will bring disaster upon those who are threatening him. As death threats continue to swirl, Jeremiah starts to complain to God that he has allowed the wicked to prosper and the treacherous to thrive. To which God answers their judgement is coming as well as judgement of the surrounding nations that corrupted his inheritance.

Much of Jeremiah's problems originated with lying prophets, **Jeremiah 14:13-16** – Then I said: "Ah, Lord GOD, behold, the prophets say to them, 'You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.'" 14 And the LORD said to me: "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds. 15 Therefore thus says the

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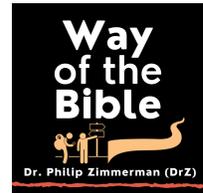
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LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name although I did not send them, and who say, 'Sword and famine shall not come upon this land': By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed. 16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword, with none to bury them—them, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out their evil upon them.

Jeremiah intercedes to the LORD for Judah once again and the LORD responds. **Jeremiah 15:1-4** – Then the LORD said to me, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my heart would not turn toward this people. Send them out of my sight, and let them go! 2 And when they ask you, 'Where shall we go?' you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "'Those who are for pestilence, to pestilence, and those who are for the sword, to the sword; those who are for famine, to famine, and those who are for captivity, to captivity.' 3 I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers, declares the LORD: the sword to kill, the dogs to tear, and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. 4 And I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.

The LORD tells Jeremiah that although he will destroy them, he will return them once again to the land. **Jeremiah 16:14-15** – "Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' 15 but 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers.

One of the priests who was a son of the chief officer in the house of the LORD had Jeremiah beaten for prophesying destruction of the city. Jeremiah responds to the LORD, **Jeremiah 20:7-12** - O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all the day; everyone mocks me. 8 For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. 9 If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. 10 For I hear many whispering. Terror is on every side! "Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" say all my close friends, watching for my fall. "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we can overcome him and take our revenge on him." 11 But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble; they will not overcome me. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never

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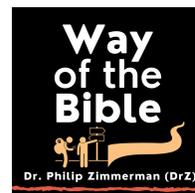
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be forgotten. 12 O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous, who sees the heart and the mind, let me see our vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause.

Jeconiah was the son of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah and king of Judah. Jehoiakim sinned against God and his family line was cursed by God never to have a descendant sit on the throne of David (see Jehoiakim's curse in Jeremiah 36:30). **Jeremiah 22:30** Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah." (see also Jeremiah 36:30). The significance of this is Jeconiah is in the line of Joseph the husband of Mary. However, since Joseph is not Jesus' father, but his incarnation was of the Holy Spirit through Mary, Mary's genealogy to David does not include Jeconiah.

Jesus is the righteous branch spoken of in **Jeremiah 23:5-6** – "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

This is what the Jews in Jesus' day were expecting a ruling king. But as Isaiah pointed out, the redeemer first came as the suffering servant. Jesus is coming back as king in the future, and he will rule.

The LORD reveals to Jeremiah that the Babylon will be destroyed in 70 years. **Jeremiah 25:11-12** – *This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste.*

The LORD established Babylon for this purpose, to devote to destruction Judah and the surrounding nations. **Jeremiah 28:14** – *For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put upon the neck of all these nations an iron yoke to serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they shall serve him, for I have given to him even the beasts of the field.'"*

Jeremiah sent a letter to the remnant in Babylon telling them to settle-in until. **Jeremiah 29:10-14** – *"For thus says the LORD: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will*

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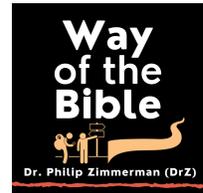
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be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

Jeremiah starts prophesying about the restoration of Judah after their captivity and their coming prince. **Jeremiah 30:21-22** – *Their prince shall be one of themselves; their ruler shall come out from their midst; I will make him draw near, and he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me? declares the LORD. 22 And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.*"

Jeremiah tells the people of a new covenant coming. **Jeremiah 30:31-34** – *"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."* This will finally be fulfilled after the great tribulation.

Jeremiah 32:37-41 – *Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. 38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 39 I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. 40 I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. 41 I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.*

Jeremiah 33:8-9; 14-18 – *I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. 9 And this city shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them. They shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it... "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall*

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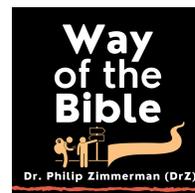
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execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.' 17 "For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, 18 and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to make sacrifices forever."

We do not see these things yet fulfilled, they will be fulfilled in the Millennial kingdom.

Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern and rescued. He counsels king Zedekiah to surrender to Babylon and live and save the city. **Jeremiah 38:17-18** – *Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If you will surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. 18 But if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand."* Zedekiah refused and was captured and the city burned.

Jeremiah remains in the burned out city after it's capture with the poorest people under an appointed governor by Nebuchadnezzar. Later Jeremiah is forced to go to Egypt with the Judeans left in the land who disregarded Jeremiah's warning that if they went to Egypt God would destroy them there. Once there the people returned to their idolatries. When Jeremiah again warned them to stop they had a reply. **Jeremiah 44:15-19** – *Then all the men who knew that their wives had made offerings to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, all the people who lived in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah: 16 "As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you. 17 But we will do everything that we have vowed, make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we did, both we and our fathers, our kings and our officials, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no disaster. 18 But since we left off making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." 19 And the women said, "When we made offerings to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands' approval that we made cakes for her bearing her image and poured out drink offerings to her?"* God later destroyed them with the hordes of Babylon sacked Egypt.

From chapters 46 to 49 Jeremiah pronounces the destruction of the nations surrounding Israel. And chapters 50 and 51 concern the destruction of Babylon both in the near term following the seventy years, and in the latter days when Babylon will once again emerge

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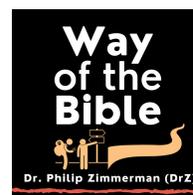
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under the leadership of the anti-Christ and rule the world. We'll see more of this in the book of Daniel.

The book ends with a recounting of the fall of the city, the burning of the temple, and a summary of the captives taken to Babylon. The total number of the remnant from Judea taken to Babylon was only 4600.

The book of Lamentations is just what the title suggests. It is Jeremiah's weeping over the Jerusalem as he recounts the horror of the siege, starvation of the residents, raping, pillaging, and killing in the streets by the Babylonian hordes, the tearing down of the city wall, and the burning of the city. I'll share a select number of passages from the book.

Lamentations 1:1-3; 16-18 – *How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow has she become, she who was great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces has become a slave. 2 She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies. 3 Judah has gone into exile because of affliction and hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations, but finds no resting place; her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress... 16 "For these things I weep; my eyes flow with tears; for a comforter is far from me, one to revive my spirit; my children are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed." 17 Zion stretches out her hands, but there is none to comfort her; the LORD has commanded against Jacob that his neighbors should be his foes; Jerusalem has become a filthy thing among them. 18 "The LORD is in the right, for I have rebelled against his word; but hear, all you peoples, and see my suffering; my young women and my young men have gone into captivity.*

Lamentations 2:1-3, 11-12, 17 – *How the Lord in his anger has set the daughter of Zion under a cloud! He has cast down from heaven to earth the splendor of Israel; he has not remembered his footstool in the day of his anger. 2 The Lord has swallowed up without mercy all the habitations of Jacob; in his wrath he has broken down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he has brought down to the ground in dishonor the kingdom and its rulers. 3 He has cut down in fierce anger all the might of Israel; he has withdrawn from them his right hand in the face of the enemy; he has burned like a flaming fire in Jacob, consuming all around... 11 My eyes are spent with weeping; my stomach churns; my bile is poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babies faint in the streets of the city. 12 They cry to their mothers, "Where is bread 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... 17 The LORD has done what he*

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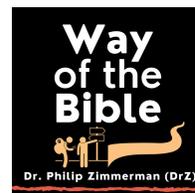
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purposed; he has carried out his word, which he commanded long ago; he has thrown down without pity; he has made the enemy rejoice over you and exalted the might of your foes.

Lamentations 3:19-42, 55-60, 64 – *Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! 20 My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. 21 But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: 22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. 26 It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. 27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. 28 Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him; 29 let him put his mouth in the dust—there may yet be hope; 30 let him give his cheek to the one who strikes, and let him be filled with insults. 31 For the Lord will not cast off forever, 32 but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; 33 for he does not afflict from his heart or grieve the children of men. 34 To crush underfoot all the prisoners of the earth, 35 to deny a man justice in the presence of the Most High, 36 to subvert a man in his lawsuit, the Lord does not approve. 37 Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it? 38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come? 39 Why should a living man complain, a man, about the punishment of his sins? 40 Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD! 41 Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven: 42 "We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven... 55 "I called on your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit; 56 you heard my plea, 'Do not close your ear to my cry for help!' 57 You came near when I called on you; you said, 'Do not fear!' 58 "You have taken up my cause, O Lord; you have redeemed my life. 59 You have seen the wrong done to me, O LORD; judge my cause. 60 You have seen all their vengeance, all their plots against me... 64 "You will repay them, O LORD, according to the work of their hands.*

Lamentations 4:12-14 – *The kings of the earth did not believe, nor any of the inhabitants of the world, that foe or enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem. 13 This was for the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who shed in the midst of her the blood of the righteous. 14 They wandered, blind, through the streets; they were so defiled with blood that no one was able to touch their garments.*

Lamentations 5:15-22 – *The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning. 16 The crown has fallen from our head; woe to us, for we have sinned! 17 For*

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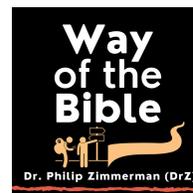
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this our heart has become sick, for these things our eyes have grown dim, 18 for Mount Zion which lies desolate; jackals prowl over it. 19 But you, O LORD, reign forever; your throne endures to all generations. 20 Why do you forget us forever, why do you forsake us for so many days? 21 Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old—22 unless you have utterly rejected us, and you remain exceedingly angry with us.

In the book of Isaiah, we had the prophetic message from God for Israel to cease its idolatry and apostasy, return in obedience to God's covenantal commands, and trust God to protect them from invasion. The people reject Isaiah's message so God gives a hopeful message for the remnant that will be taken into Babylonian captivity. God is not done with Israel, but will return her to become the world center where foreigners will come to learn the law of God and worship him in his glory.

Jeremiah is commissioned by God as a prophet to be a witness to the people why God was devoting Judah and Jerusalem to destruction by Babylon, and that the destruction would be complete, leaving the land desolate and uninhabited. Initially Jeremiah is sympathetic to his people until he himself recognizes their wickedness is to the core and that God's judgment is righteous and somewhat delayed in coming. Jeremiah proclaims the way to life preservation is surrender and be taken captive back to Babylon where they will remain for seventy years. After which God will allow them to return to the land. God preserves Jeremiah's life, though threatened many times, through the destruction of Jerusalem and beyond until the last remnant left in Judea were destroyed when they fled to Egypt.

Lamentations is Jeremiah's aftermath account as eyewitness to God's righteous judgment of the people for their wickedness. In the midst of his lament, Jeremiah is encouraged and hopeful. **Lamentations 3:22-23** – *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

And that ends our overview of the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Having read and studied these books multiple times in preparing this episode I could not help but consider the state of our culture in this country. We are not Israel, yet at one time we were a nation ruled by biblical principles. Those principles have been displaced in all aspects of our culture by atheistic secularism. And I believe that I was one amongst the Baby Boomers both in and out of the church, including our political and religious leaders, who said nothing about idolatry and apostasy running ramped and unhindered as we chased wealth and fame, sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

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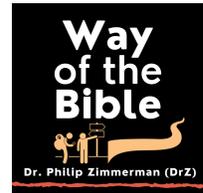
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That is why I'm urging Boomers everywhere to join me to get on our faces and repent earnestly in light of Jeremiah's lament in **Jeremiah 3:39-42** – *Why should a living man complain, a man, about the punishment of his sins? 40 Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD! 41 Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven: 42 "We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.* It doesn't take much to look around and see we sowed the wind and are about to reap the whirlwind.

On our next episode we'll look at the book of Ezekiel and discover what God revealed to the people in Babylonian about the future of Israel. They are destined by God for global dominion with David serving as prince of Israel and Jesus Christ as king of the world.

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