



Week 22 Lamentations

Every Sunday evening at [Bible Explorer](#) we will explore the question '**What does this book from the Bible mean for us today?**

General Background information:

- 1) Traditionally referred to as the **Lamentations of Jeremiah**, but scholars are divided on whether he is the author, as some think the style is not consistent with his other writings.
- 2) The Lamentations are written as ACROSTICS i.e. the lines start with the different letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There are 5 laments, each of which is an acrostic poem. Other biblical books contain laments but this is the only one to be composed entirely of them.
- 3) The laments describe the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC so this is the earliest date they could have been written, although the date is possibly as late as 516 BC, when the re-built temple was dedicated.
- 4) The Babylonians were understood to be the agents of God in the overthrow of Jerusalem – it was God Himself who had decided the city must fall because the Jews had so blatantly rebelled against Him; thus the book starts with laments but ends with a recognition of the people's sin and repentance. In the middle section are some wonderful texts affirming God's goodness and the hope we find in His consistent love (see ch 3 vv21-33).
- 5) The book is read today by Orthodox Jews during the festival of Av, to remind them of the destruction of Solomon's temple in 586 and also of Herod's temple in AD 70. Traditional Roman Catholic liturgy includes Lamentations in Holy Week.

Points for us to explore:

1. The role of prophecy and corporate repentance. Listening for God's breaking heart and praying over what He reveals to us.
2. Writing our own acrostic poem.

Listen to **Lamentations of Jeremiah** by Thomas Tallis sung by Fagiolini.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjAmQ-F6-jA>