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SPEAKERS

Intro Voice, Baruch Korman

Intro Voice 00:03

Shalom and welcome to via hafte yesrael, a Hebrew phrase, which means you shall love Israel. We hope you'll stay with us for the next 30 minutes, as our teacher, Dr Baruch, shares his expository teaching from the Bible. Dr Baruch is the senior lecturer at the Zera Avraham Institute based in Israel. Although all courses are taught in Hebrew at the institute, Dr Baruch is pleased to share this weekly address in English. To find out more about our work in Israel, please visit us on the web@loveisrael.org That's one word, loveisrael.org Now here's Baruch with today's lesson.

Baruch Korman 00:42

We are ready to begin a very exciting journey, a journey through what is commonly referred to as the book of Lamentations. And in my opinion, this book, although it's rather short, just five chapters, is one of the most spiritual books in the Hebrew Bible, or we could say the Old Testament. And what we see here is a time of trouble that came upon, primarily Judah, that Southern Kingdom, and the capital of that kingdom, Jerusalem. We know that the city of Jerusalem, including the temple, was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire. And we know that other nations, according to what we read in the book of Jeremiah, join with the Babylonians in order that they might too afflict the Jewish people, and we see here a great example of how the world does not want Jerusalem to fulfill its call, because when Jerusalem gets right with the Lord, we find that the outcome of that is going to be the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and the world, and the prince of this world does not want the kingdom of God. Now, many people believe that it's Jeremiah who authored this book called lamentations, but we do not know that that is a tradition, a mere tradition. We do not know for certain who was the author of this book. And let me say that when we look at the Hebrew name, it is called Echa, which means how. That is the primary word EK, meaning how. And then we have at the end of that word, the letter Hey, which oftentimes relates to God. So it might be better understood to simply ask the question, how, O Lord, this, in my opinion, is what the book of Echa Lamentations is asking. How, oh God, could Jerusalem fall? How could the temple be destroyed? And with its destruction came great sadness, great suffering and confusion among the people. Well, with that said, take out your Bible and look with me to this book of aha, or lamentations, chapter one. Now let me say that in many places, the grammar and the vocabulary are difficult, so it's not an easy book to translate, and we're going to look at it in a very literal way, so that we understand what God is communicating to us. And as I said, in

my opinion, this is one of the most spiritual books in all the Old Testament. So let's begin. We read in verse one that first word there is where we get the name of the book, called Echa, which means how O Lord, and the focus of this book is the city of Jerusalem. And notice what it says. It speaks about the city that set, and now it has set lonely. It is no longer what Jerusalem had been in the past. And why was that? Well, we know the reason why Jerusalem was destroyed, why the temple was burnt down, and the reason is simple, idolatry. The people fell into idolatry and went after other gods. God was displeased, and therefore he brought about a temporary, and I want to emphasize that, a temporary end to that southern kingdom called Judah, and we see that Jerusalem was destroyed. Mind. But we also know something. We know from the prophecy of Jeremiah that this punishment was limited to 70 years, and when those 70 years came to a conclusion, then God was going to regather the people and bring them back to the land of Judah, and we know that eventually the temple was rebuilt and worship returned to the city of Jerusalem. And one of the things that we can learn from that is that our God is a God of restoration, and that's good news for us. Look at verse one again. It begins with that expression, aha, how, O Lord. And then we focus in on the city. Obviously, the city of Jerusalem that sat and it's speaking about this is not something that that was short lived, but it has sat in in loneliness by itself, this city that at one time was abundant with people, and now it has become as a widow, meaning it is synonymous with death. Death has plagued Jerusalem, this city that should be a symbol of life is now as a widow. It says, if we keep reading abundant among the nations, meaning desired among the nations, the nations looked at it and saw that it was an abundant city. It was also known as a princess among the countries. But now what does it become? Notice how verse one concludes haita lemas, which means it has become a place of tribute, meaning it has to now pay its tax. It is in bondage to other empire, other nations, where they they exact a tax from Jerusalem. So Jerusalem is suffering. It has suffered shame, it has suffered destruction, and now it is suffering financially because of its idolatrous practices. Move on to verse two. The first thing that is said in verse two is how this city is weeping bitterly. Now we find there's two words placed side by side for crying or weeping. And when we find that construction in the Hebrew Bible, it speaks about utterly or or totally weeping. There's no joy left in Jerusalem. When Jerusalem considers itself its current condition, all that she does is to weep and weep bitterly. It says, this is done in the night. So it's crying throughout the night, meaning it does not have rest. There is no peace in the city. And then we read on and says her tears are upon her cheek, there's no one to comfort her and all of her lovers. And this is a reference to idolatry, all of these false gods that the people went after, and they loved them, and they served them, it says all of her lovers and all of her friends have betrayed her, and it says they have become to her four enemies. And this is the condition. Israel is plagued by her enemies, and we find that there is no longer deliverance. There is no longer hope. There is simply pain and sorrow and suffering and death and destruction everywhere you look in this nation or kingdom of Judah, in other words, it is a dire situation. Look now to verse three, we see what has happened there. We are told that Judah has gone into exile from the affliction. And again, we have a very strong word here that emphasizes pain and suffering that Jerusalem, this holy city, the city that bore the name of God and the presence of God. Now this city is known as a place of utter affliction. So verse three, Judah has gone into exile from affliction

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and. From the abundance of and we have the word avodah. Now this word Avoda means worship, but it's in reference to its idolatrous worship. We find as well that this word could also be relating to the abundance of her service, her work, meaning that she's in bondage to her enemies. And why is she in

bondage to her enemies because of her idolatrous practice. It says she sat among the nations and she found no rest. Now this word is a kingdom word, and she does not find any of the kingdom comforts. She is far removed from a kingdom hope and a kingdom experience. Why? Because she betrayed God going after other gods, which God has said over and over that his people are not allowed to do, and in doing so will bring about disaster. And this is what Jerusalem is experiencing. This is what the kingdom of Judah is also experiencing. This death, destruction, pain, affliction, sorrow and tears, weeping bitterly. And then we see in verse three that she has set among the nations, but she has not found rest for all of her persecutors. They overtake her and notice what it says here a very important expression. Now, there is an expression in Judaism called Ben ha mitsareem. Now, the word mitzrin speaks about a narrow place, a place of stress, a place of suffering, a place of anxiety. And what we find now is this, even though the people have fled, that remnant has fled away, they're not getting anywhere in their fleeing. They find themselves being overtaken by those who persecute and pursue them, and they're doing so at a place known as the straits, meaning this place of affliction, stress and anxiety. All of this as the outcome of their idolatrous practice. When God wants to bless, God wants to pour His love out upon his people, but because they have betrayed him and gone after other gods, they are experiencing the opposite of his will. What does that mean? The opposite of his will, they are experiencing evil. God wants to do good, but because of the behavior of the people they are experiencing the opposite of the will of God. Look now to verse four, the ways of Zion. Some Bibles will say the roads meaning the way to Zion. Now, what is Zion? Zion is a synonym for Jerusalem. But there's one important distinction that we have to understand. Seon or Zion is Jerusalem, but in a redemptive state. Let me say that differently. It's Jerusalem, but in a kingdom expression, and we find here that Jerusalem is far from that kingdom character, that kingdom state of being. Look at verse four, the ways of Zion. And these ways are ways of mourning, ways of grief. And notice it says, without those who come to the Moad, what is a Moad? It is that appointed time. It's a reference to the festivals, the biblical festivals, what's called MOA de Hashem, the festivals of the Lord. What's happening, because the people would not worship God as He commanded. Now there is no worship. And these festivals, which speak about uniquely the work of God, the deliverance of God, the redemption of God, the faithfulness of God, the provision of God. And looks not just what God has done in the past, but these festivals, most of which have a future fulfillment, they're going to be used in the last days that manifest biblical truth that God is going to perform in behalf of his people, all of his people. I wish this was the case. Grace, but God works through that remnant, and we see Now look at verse four, where it says, without those who come to the appointed days or the festivals, all of her gates are desolate. And the priest that is the servants of God, these priests from the family of Aaron. It says these priests, what do they do? They are groaning and her virgins. And this is an expression that speaks about those young women who are committed to God and what has happened to them? We see a word new goat. They have been been struck. They have been afflicted. It's a word of suffering. It's a word of affliction. It's a word that reveals that these young women have no joy whatsoever. And what is Jerusalem, it says bitterness is to her. So we see the outcome of rebelliousness. We see the outcome of going after false gods, walking according to our desires, rather than the desires of God. These are miserable days of bitterness for the people of God, and they have no one to bring blame other than themselves, because they have turned away from the one true God to embrace false gods in order to carry out their desires, rather than the desires of God look now to verse five, her enemies or her opponent has become we have the word rosh, head. That's literally what it is. Many Bibles translate this differently, but it's the word rosh, which is head, which simply means her authority. This one, who are her enemies, are now

ruling over her, and it says, her enemies, what do they have? Well, there's two ways that we can understand this word. I believe the best way to understand it is a word of tranquility or ease. It is very, very sad that her enemies, they are at ease. They have tranquility. They have a peace, not a biblical peace, but they don't have the problems that we find Judah is experiencing now, there's another way to translate this word, and this is word of prosperity. It's talking about having abundance so her enemies, they are tranquil, they have peace, and they have, perhaps prosperity for the Lord has afflicted her. Why afflicted her? Concerning the abundance of her transgressions and her children walk into captivity before the enemy. So we look here and we see nothing that comforts, nothing that provides hope for the people we find that that next generation. Remember what it says in that verse we just concluded, where it says her children, and this is a word which speaks about offspring, her offspring go into captivity before the enemy. Verse six, and from the daughter of Zion goes forth all of her splendor. So because of idolatry, because of sin and transgression and iniquity among the people of God, that splendor, that that call, that blessing from God, all of that has, as it says, Here, gone out. It has departed. Look again at verse verse six, where it says, and from the daughter of Zion has gone forth. All of her splendor

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and her princes have become, as we could say, rams or DEERS that do not find any pasture, meaning there's no place for them to be nourished, no place for them to drink, no place of safety. So all of her princesses, those young women, they find no rest, no comfort, no place of provision. And it says they go without. Power before to death, the one who pursues them. Now this word for to death can also relate to a persecutor, not just one who pursues, but one who pursues for the purpose of persecution. And we find here that it's Israel's own sin, sin of idolatry. Now, whoever is the writer of this is not important. We accept the authority of of the Scripture, no matter who was the one who wrote it down. The Bible says that all scripture is given by inspiration that the Holy Spirit moved men, holy men, to write this down. And when I look at this, it is very significant that we see that the people are being persecuted. They are being pursued by the enemy, and the enemy is dominating them. Why? Because they chose sin, rebelliousness. They chose idolatry, their will, rather than the will of God. Look now to verse seven, our last verse, it says, Jerusalem has remembered the days of her affliction. Now what we see here is finally Jerusalem, the Holy City of God. She has remembered. She has understood, in other words, that she has violated the Covenant. Now, why do I bring the covenant into this? Because the Hebrew word, *Liz core*, which means to remember always has a connection to a covenant. And what it says here is, Look again at verse seven, Jerusalem, this holy city of God, has remembered the days of her affliction. Most of the rabbinical scholars mean they understand why they have suffered for what reason, then we have a word, which means to bring down. Now this word shows an emptiness, it shows a defeat, and hear this carefully. It shows a loss. And what has Jerusalem loss. Notice what it says here. She has been brought down from all of her desirable things. She has lost everything. There is nothing left in Jerusalem, nothing left in Judah that has any desire to it. She is utterly afflicted. She has seen everything been taken away, and this is the state that she's in. And here again, it's all come about for one reason, because they rebelled against that simple commandment to have no other gods before the Lord, meaning in the presence of God. And what did the people do? We read this clearly in the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah called the people to repent. God says, I'll take you and show you the right road to travel that it will be well with you. And what did the people do? They refused to repent. They refused to listen to God. And eventually, God told Jeremiah no longer pray for this. People for I

will not listen. Look again at verse seven, the second half, where it says, which there was in the days of old. Now we see something, those desirable things that Jerusalem and the Jewish people had. They were all in the past, in the days of old. Now she understands what her rebelliousness has cost her, what loss she has suffered because she has gone her way instead of the way of God. And then we have that says, and the hand of the enemy has fallen upon her people. So her people have fallen into the hand of the enemy, and notice what it says. And oh, Zerah, there is no one to help her. Now, again, that word for help is in an emphatic condition. It's in the present tense, some would say a present participle. That's fine, but whenever the present tense, whether it's a participle or not, appears, it's for the purpose of emphasizing. It makes that emphatic. And we see here that in her current condition, she. Has no one to help. It says her. Enemies look at her

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and they mock concerning. And we need to understand this last word, because when we look at it, it's it says her, and it's the same word that we get Shabbat from the Sabbath day. Now some have said when you follow the septuagint, meaning they mock her concerning her Sabbaths, that may be one way to understand it. But when I look at it closely, we find a noun there that relates to ceasing, a a stopping. Now the word Shabbat means to stop, to cease, but always with a purpose. And what we find here is that that same word for Shabbat can also relate to a ceasing, a stopping because of destruction, and this is what the people are doing. They're mocking the children of Israel, because Israel as a nation, the Jewish people, as a people, have ceased. They are no longer ruling themselves. They are in bondage. They are in an exile, and they have been placed in a position where, currently, they see no basis for hope. They are defeated. They are desolate. They have been destroyed. And we see that through human vision, there is no reason to believe that anything's going to change, except for one thing. Remember where this verse began. Look again at verse seven. It says, Jerusalem has remembered. And I made mention to you that this word for remembering is tied to a covenant, and it's because Israel, especially that remnant of Israel, they have a covenantal relationship with God, and God has obligated himself because of this covenant, and therefore we can be assured that God is going to restore, that that rest, that relief, that renewal, that restoration, will come, and it's going to come exactly at the time that God promised. And one of the things I want to conclude with this first session in our study of Lamentations is that that exile was limited. God had promised to do something, and what was that? After 70 years, now, 70 we see that number seven, and the number seven relates to purpose. God says that He is going to bring an end to that exile, and there's a purpose for that, and he's going to return the people back to the land, the land of Judah. There's a purpose for that. And what is that purpose so that Messiah can enter into this world, the people, for the Messiah to come, the people had to be back in the land, not just a remnant, but the majority of the people. And we see that out of Babylon, God was faithful. God did indeed bring a restoration. He took a group of people, not the majority, but he took a group of people out and brought them back to the land. And through this, other people also came. And what was this for? Well, if you know prophecy, well, it was for Messiah to come the first time. And let me encourage you, and I hope that you understand this encouragement, because what's going on in our days? God is up to the same thing he is bringing the people back to the land. Now the world doesn't like it. Why the world is against the will of God, the plans of God, the covenantal promises of God. The world doesn't want that because the prince of this world is Satan. He is opposed to God's glory, and there's an inherent relationship between the glory of God and the Kingdom of God. So God has brought the people back after those 70 years of exile in Babylon. He brought them back for

the coming of Messiah, his first coming, and now in our days, we see God being faithful. God ministering restoration and returning the Jewish people back to as the scripture says, their land. Very important. We need to agree with God brought them back to their land. Why? Messiah, so that Messiah can come again. And we're speaking about not only his rapture, but also the second coming, when Messiah will return for three primary purposes, one, to destroy the enemies of Israel and learn that the enemies of Israel are also prophetically the enemies of God. What is the second reason that Messiah is coming to bring about a salvation, a deliverance for that remnant of Israel? Not all of Israel is Israel, not all the Jewish people are going to be part of the Kingdom of God. It's that remnant the prophets teach us. And the third thing that he's going to do after that remnant comes to salvation and receives Messiah by faith, and let me say it more plainly, after that remnant receives the gospel, then God is going to establish that kingdom, that kingdom for 1000 years, so Messiah can demonstrate justice and righteousness, and the glory of God will be manifested so that people know that God is good and it's good to obey him. Well, I'll close with that until next week, when we press on in this first chapter of the book of Lamentations. Until then, may God bless you. Shalom from Israel.

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Well, we hope you will benefit from today's message and share it with others. Please plan to join us each week at this time and on this channel for our broadcast of loveisrael.org again, to find out more about us, please visit our website, love israel.org There you will find articles in numerous other lectures by Baruch. These teachings are in video form. May download them or watch them in streaming video until next week, may the Lord bless you in our Messiah, Yeshua, that is Jesus, as you walk with Him, Shalom from Israel. You.