

The struggle for justice in East Jerusalem continues.
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Laments איכה

Translations of *Eikhah* for our world

<http://neohasid.org/resources/laments>



Laments 4:1, Margaret Adams Parker
www.margaretadamsparker.com
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This work is dedicated to all refugees

Eli Tsiyon, selected verses

*Eli Tsiyon v'areha
k'mo ishah v'tsireha
v'khivtulah chagurat sak
al ba'al n'ureha*

My God, Zion and her towns,
like a woman in travail of labor,
like a virgin wearing sackcloth
for the husband of her youth

*Alei hegyon m'choleha
asher damam b'areha
V'al va'ad asher shamam
uvitul sanhed'reha*

For her dancers' concentration
whose blood (ran) in her towns
and for the mob that destroyed
and ended her high court of
justice

*Alei galut m'shartei El
n'imei shir z'mareha
V'al kolot m'charpeha
b'eit rabu f'gareha*

For the exile of God's servants
sweet singers of her songs
and for her scorers clamoring
while the corpses piled up

*Alei pesha asher av'tah
s'lol derekh ashureha
V'al tsiv'ot k'haleha
sh'zufeha sh'choreha*

For the perversion she twisted
paving the path of the well-off
and for her amassed community
her field workers, her brown,
her black people

*Alei shimkha asher chulal
b'fi kamai m'tsareha*

For Your name desecrated
in the mouth (of those) who stood
against her oppressed
and for the plea they scream to You –
focus and listen to her message

*V'al tachan y'tsavchu lakh
Kashuv ush'ma amareha.*

*Im eshkachekh Y'rushalayim tishkach y'mini.
Tidbak l'shoni l'chiki im lo ezk'rekhi,
im lo a'aleh Y'rushalayim al rosh simchati.*

If I forget you Jerusalem, may my right hand forget
My tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I don't remember,
If I don't lift up Jerusalem ahead of my joy.

“The Hope of How” - By Yehudah Webster & Zahara Zahav
(via Detroit Jews for Justice, kinah for BLM)

“My insides are churning” –

A most sacred home, in flames, deemed worthless, disposable; How
can it be? Eikhah? A pastor and worshipers slain, heads bowed, in the
sanctuary; How?

A mother sits in the street where her son’s soul was poured out;
How? A world turns its back again, again, again – there is none to
comfort her; How?

A people shown their Black bodies, tears, families do not matter;
How?

How have we fallen to such disgrace? How long will we slink away
from justice? How do we allow? How do we hope? How do we dance
when so heavy with grief? How do we turn to face each other?

A woman climbs where no one dared, tears down a flag of hatred;
How? A mother refuses to back down, power yields to her demands;
How?

A wave of clergy rise up to meet resounding call for a different world;
How? A movement plants seeds everywhere, sprouts flowers over
burial ground; How?

A black man’s cry, “I can’t breathe” amplified in the streets for all to
hear; How?

With this hope we pray that we do not reach the point of total
destruction. We pray that we desist from senseless hatred and
brutality. That sacred places remain holy, unstained from the blood of
racism. That we do not repeat the mistakes of our ancestors, taking
instead honest account of our obligations.

May community, allyship and love forge new bridges of
understanding and trust. That we continue to hope and believe in
each other. Demanding as one that black lives truly do matter. All
these things we pray in solidarity together.

Tisha B’Av is not primarily about the Temple – *Chaza”l*, the
rabbis, figured out how to live without the Temple long ago.
Rather, *Tisha B’Av* is about homelessness, fleeing from war
into famine, being thrown into a hostile world without
shelter or protection – things all too present in our world.
It’s an opportunity empathize, to confront the ways we
abuse our power, as individuals, as a society, as a people,
and as a species, turning other people, and other species,
into refugees.

Last year, *Tisha B’Av* was especially weighty. So many
continue to suffer the loss of community, wealth, and
mental well-being. As the world struggles to face the
plagues of racism and the pandemic, both plagues make
each other worse. There is hope in the U.S., with a
government that isn’t putting refugees in detention camps
and that acknowledges systemic racism. At the same time,
Jews we face growing anti-Semitism, along with pressure
from some on the left to say that anti-Semitism isn’t so
important. And climate cataclysm comes ever closer. We
remain in difficult times. *Oy meh hayah lanu!*

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New this year from neohasid:

Use the Omer Counter app to count the seven weeks and  
the Sefirot between *Tisha B’Av* and *Rosh Hashanah*.

For info go to: [neohasid.org/omer/apps/](https://neohasid.org/omer/apps/)

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# Laments איכה

Translations of *Eikhah* for our world

This translation of *Laments*, the book of mourning poems read on *Tish'a B'Av*, uses principles of the Buber-Rosenzweig Bible. It strives to be “concordant”, translating related Hebrew words with related English words and following the order and syntax of the Hebrew where possible. It also focuses on the more physical, earthy meaning of words, in order to draw the modern reader towards more ancient ways of seeing and feeling. Sometimes alternate translations are given, indicated by a slash. (When reading aloud, simply pick one of the translations. For *YHVH*, you can read *Adonai* or *Hashem* or “the Eternal”.) James Moffat’s 1922 translation was consulted. As a somewhat literal translation, *Laments* uses “He” and “His” as pronouns for God, though Torah and common sense command us not to make an exclusively male or female image of God. If you are using *Laments* liturgically, please feel encouraged to change the pronouns. For brief essays on the theology of *Eikhah*, refugees, the Earth, and more, see the end of this booklet.



*Laments 4:1*, Margaret Adams Parker  
www.margaretadamparker.com  
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Read sections from Rabbi Seidenberg’s groundbreaking book, now in paperback, *Kabbalah and Ecology: God’s Image in the More-Than-Human World* (Cambridge U., 2015) at [kabbalahandecology.com](http://kabbalahandecology.com).

Find more *Tisha B'Av* resources, songs, and teachings online at: [theshalomcenter.org/node/1733](http://theshalomcenter.org/node/1733) and [neohasid.org/zman/tisha\\_bav/](http://neohasid.org/zman/tisha_bav/).

*Laments* ©2019 (v.4.2.1) by David Mevorach Seidenberg. First published by neohasid.org in 2007, based on translations for the Aleph Kallah and National Havurah Institute in 2002 and 2003; translation begun 1993. Layout based on 2003 design by Mark Frydenberg. This booklet contains the sacred name in Hebrew for God. Please do not destroy or dispose of improperly. Download this booklet at: [neohasid.org/resources/laments](http://neohasid.org/resources/laments) Rights granted for ten copies per download. To donate go to:

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8. What does this mean? The Torah portrays the land as a subject with rights and interests that take priority over our needs. Especially in the flood story and the laws of Jubilee and sabbatical years (Lev. 25)—and in the consequences that are supposed to befall the people if they do not observe these laws (Lev. 26)—the Torah teaches that God will take the side of the land against the people if forced to. The land will “enjoy her Sabbaths” (Lev. 26:34,43) – even if that means the people are exiled or wiped out. From the divine perspective, the land can sue for justice. What has intrinsic value is not humanity but justice, which is humanity’s potential. See: [neohasid.org/torah/genesis-shmitah](http://neohasid.org/torah/genesis-shmitah)

9. The Torah outlines six curses for not observing the sabbatical year that describe an unraveling relationship between people and land. Two curses involve children being eaten – by wild animals (v.22), then by their parents (v.29). That image is repeated in *Eikhah* (2:20, 4:10), and it is the main connection between *Eikhah* and Leviticus. The final curse in Leviticus is that “you will be lost in the nations and the land of your enemies will eat you” (v.38). The last curse does not sound like the worst. But if the land eats us, this represents a complete reversal of the right relationship between the people and the land.

10. In ancient times, people believed that the Temple existed to promote fertility and abundance. Temple rituals were performed for the sake of the land and for all life, not just for the Jews or even for all humanity. The Temple’s purpose had already been destroyed by the way people treated the land.

11. The idea that destruction came because of how the Jewish people treated the land is not found in *Eikhah*, where identification of the land with the people is total. Instead, Jerusalem’s downfall results from the moral downfall in relationships between human beings. In Jeremiah too, the fate of Jerusalem is sealed only after the rich, who briefly set their slaves free, re-enslave them when it looks like the danger has passed. (Jer. 34) How we treat the stranger, the poor, the refugee, is what determines if we have the right to be in the land.

12. Creation is compared to a sacred Temple (*Tanchuma Pekudei, P’ri Eitz Hadar*). In an age when our ecological “sins” are coming home to roost, the connection between natural disaster and divine retribution is not farfetched. However, when the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed, there were other lands to flee to. If we destroy the Temple that is this Earth, there will be no place to flee. (Cantor Richard Kaplan’s *Kinah L’churban Gan Eden*, on [neohasid.org](http://neohasid.org), can help you focus on this theme.)

13. We can expect more wars over resources, as well as people fleeing areas that have flooded or become deserts, as climate change puts more pressure on our ecosystems and our social systems. We need all the spiritual resources we can muster to stay open to the humanity of the refugee and the stranger while also taking care of each other. *Eikhah* is an invitation to move towards justice for all people, for all species, and for the land herself.

Rabbi David Mevorach Seidenberg  
2018/5778. Some of this material is taken from *Kabbalah and Ecology*.

Some notes on the theology of *Eikhah*:

1. *Tish'a B'Av* could not be more relevant than it is today, when the crisis of war refugees and fear of terrorism have overwhelmed the political process in so many countries. We think of *Tish'a B'Av* as a time of mourning, but it is more importantly a call to identify with the experience of refugees who are forced to risk their lives and even their children's lives in order to escape violence, hunger, devastation. That's what the Jewish people went through when the Temple, and the nation and society it stood for, were destroyed, when they became "like deer, not finding a place to graze, walking without strength before a pursuer." (1:6)

2. The idea that tragedy and disaster are punishment for sins seems alien to many modern Jews. This is also why it can be hard to connect the Holocaust with *Tish'a B'Av*. But this theology can also be consoling, because it allows people to find meaning in tragedy.

3. The author(s) of *Eikhah* (traditionally Jeremiah) believed that what happened to Jerusalem expressed divine judgment. For our ancestors, the choice was to believe either that the destruction was God's punishment, or that God no longer cared about what happened to them. It is easy to imagine people choosing a punishing God over an uncaring God (though the latter possibility is also suggested in the last verse of *Eikhah*). Even though *Eikhah* sounds like it's about God punishing us, it's not really a theodicy, a justification of God. Rather, it expresses the hope that tragedy proves that God cares about us, instead of proving the opposite.

4. That doesn't mean we need to accept that theology – even in *Eikhah* itself, this idea is questioned. Only in chapter three is Zion's destruction consistently seen as fair and just punishment. In all the other chapters, the degree of divine punishment is described as excessive and abusive. In every chapter, the poet begs God to pay attention: "See, *YHVH*, and look: to whom did You deal thus? If women will eat their fruit, coddled babes – !" (2:20; also 1:9, 1:11, 1:20, 3:63, 4:16, 5:1). It's as if other people could see and understand the tragedy that unfolded (1:12), but God could not.

5. This suggests one way to confront the images of sexual abuse in *Eikhah*: "All who honor her despise her, for they saw her nakedness." (1:8; also 1:10, 4:21, 5:11) In the prophets, such abuse is a metaphor for the "just" punishment that follows Israel's "adulterous" pursuit of other gods. But in *Eikhah*, the metaphor is used to hold up a mirror to God, to show that the punishment was intolerably abusive.

6. The real theology of *Eikhah* is summed up in the verse, "What can I compare to you, daughter Jerusalem, that I may comfort you?" (2:13) What images, what words, can help people bear the memory of tragedy? The poet is willing to say whatever is needed to enable the people to find meaning.

7. There is another way to understand the destruction of Jerusalem. According to Jeremiah, the reason for the exile was that Israel did not let the land rest every seven years after they entered the land. (2 Chron. 36:21) Since 490 years had passed without a sabbatical year, Israel had to go into exile for 70 years.

## CHAPTER 1

אֵיכָה |  
יְשִׁבָה בְּדָר  
הָעִיר רַבָּתִי עָם  
הִיְתָה כְּאַלְמָנָה  
רַבָּתִי בְּגוֹיִם  
שָׂרְתִי בְּמַדִּינֹת  
הִיְתָה לְמָס:  
בְּכֹו תִבְכֶּה בְּלַיְלָה  
וְדַמְעָתָהּ עַל לַחֶיהָ  
אֵין לָהּ מְנַחֵם  
מִכָּל־אֲהָבֶיהָ  
כָּל־רֵעֶיהָ  
בְּגָדוּ בָּהּ  
הָיוּ לָהּ לְאִיְבָיִם:  
גַּלְתָּהּ יְהוּדָה  
מִעֲנִי וּמִרַב עֲבֹדָה  
הִיא יְשִׁבָה בְּגוֹיִם  
לֹא מְצָאָה מְנוּחַ  
כָּל־רֹדְפֶיהָ הִשְׁיגוּהָ  
בֵּין הַמְצָרִים:  
דְּרָכֶיהָ צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלֹת  
מִבְּלִי בְּאֵי מוֹעֵד  
כָּל־שַׁעְרֶיהָ שׁוֹמְמִין

1 *Eikhah!* How can it be –  
she sat alone,  
the city so great / so swelled with people?  
She was like a widow.  
The one great among the nations,  
ministering among the states,  
became a slave caste.  
2 Crying, she will cry in the night,  
her tear upon her cheek  
There is none for her, no comforter,  
from all her lovers.  
All her companions  
played traitor with her.  
They became for her enemies.  
3 She, Judah, was exiled,  
by poverty, and by (so) much hard labor  
She sat among the nations,  
not finding any rest;  
All her pursuers caught up with her  
between the confined places.  
4 Zion's roads are mourning  
from being without festival-goers,  
all her gates desolated;

כְּהִנִּיחַ נֶאֱנָחִים  
 בְּתוֹלְתֶיהָ נוֹגֹת  
 וְהִיא מֵרָלָה:  
 הָ הָיוּ צָרֶיהָ לְרֹאשׁ  
 אֵיבֶיהָ שָׁלוֹ  
 כִּי־יְהוָה הוֹגָה  
 עַל רַב־פְּשָׁעֶיהָ  
 עוֹלָלֶיהָ הִלְכוּ שָׁבִי  
 לִפְנֵי־צָר:  
 וַיֵּצֵא מִן־בֵּת־צִיּוֹן  
 כָּל־הַדָּרָה  
 הָיוּ שָׂרֶיהָ כְּאֵילִים  
 לֹא־מֵצְאוּ מְרֻעָה  
 וַיִּלְכוּ בְּלֹא־כֹחַ  
 לִפְנֵי רוֹדֶף:  
 זַ וַיִּזְכֹּר יְרוּשָׁלַם  
 יְמֵי עֲנִיָּה  
 וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ  
 כָּל מַחֲמָדֶיהָ  
 אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִיָּמֵי קֶדֶם  
 בְּנִפֹל עַמָּהּ בְּיַד־צָר  
 וְאֵין עֹזֹר לָהּ  
 רְאוּהָ צָרִים  
 שֹׁחֲקוּ עַל מִשְׁבֹּתֶיהָ:  
 ח חָטְא חָטְאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם

Her priests are moaning,  
 her girls grieving;  
 And she – it is bitterness for her.  
 5 Her tormentors were at the head,  
 her enemies had ease  
 For YHVH / the Eternal aggrieved her  
 for the greatness of her sins.  
 Her babes walked captive  
 before foe;  
 6 and all her splendor went out from  
 daughter Zion!  
 Her ministers were like deer,  
 not finding a place to graze;  
 and (so) they walked, without strength,  
 before a pursuer.  
 7 Jerusalem remembered  
 the days of her poverty / affliction  
 and her downsliding,  
 all her precious things  
 which were from days long ago,  
 while her people fell into a foe's hand;  
 and there is no help for her.  
 They saw her, her tormentors,  
 laughing over her becoming stilled.  
 8 Sinning she sinned, Jerusalem.

Hashiveinu הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ  
 Adonai elekha יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 v'nashuvah וְנָשׁוּבָה  
 Chadash yamenu חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ  
 k'kedem כְּקֶדֶם:

Some more songs:

Shifkhi kamayim libeikh  
 nokhach p'nei Hashem

Pour out your heart like water  
 right before Hashem

Yehudah l'olam teishev,  
 Yerushalayim l'dor vador

Judah will dwell for all time,  
 Jerusalem for generations

By the waters of Babylon we sat  
 down and wept for thee Zion  
 We remember thee Zion

Nachamu 'ami.  
 Anokhi hu m'nachemchem

Take comfort my people  
 I am the one who comforts you

Eli Tsiyon v'areha  
 k'mo ishah v'tsireha  
 v'khivtulah chagurat sak  
 al ba'al n'ureha

My God, Zion and her towns, like  
 a woman in travail, like a virgin  
 wearing sackcloth for the  
 husband of her youth

Turn us,  
 YHVH, toward you,  
 and we will turn.  
 Make our days new again,  
 like dawn / long ago.

*The observances of Tish'a B'Av*

The observances of Tish'a B'Av—not wearing fresh clothes, not washing, fasting from eating and drinking and sexual contact, not greeting each other, not sitting anywhere except on the ground—are closer to the experience of being a refugee than to being a mourner. The destruction of the Temple stands not just for the destruction of Jerusalem, but for the city being turned into a war zone, and the people becoming prey to hunger, violence, and death. Tish'a B'Av is not primarily about the Temple – Chaza"l, the rabbis, figured out how to live without the Temple long ago. Rather, Tish'a B'Av is about homelessness, fleeing from war into famine, being thrown into a hostile world without shelter or protection – things all too present in our world. It's an opportunity empathize, to confront the ways we abuse our power, as individuals, as a society, as a people, and as a species, turning other people and other species into refugees.



City Shelter, Kathe Kollwitz, 1926, public domain

יב שָׂרִים בְּיָדָם נִתְּלוּ  
 פָּנֵי זְקֵנִים לֹא נִהְדְּרוּ:  
 יג בַּחֹרִים טָחוּז נָשְׂאוּ  
 וּנְעָרִים בַּעֲץ כָּשְׁלוּ:  
 יד זְקֵנִים מִשְׁעָר שָׁבְתוּ  
 בַּחֹרִים מִנְּגִינָתָם:  
 טו שָׁבֵת מְשֹׁשׁ לִבָּנוּ  
 נִהְפָּךְ לְאַבֵּל מַחֲלָנוּ:  
 טז נִפְּלָה עֲטֶרֶת רֹאשֵׁנוּ  
 אוֹיֵ-נָא לָנוּ כִּי חָטֵאנוּ:  
 יז עַל-זֶה הָיָה דָּוָה לִבָּנוּ  
 עַל-אַלֶּה חֲשָׁכוּ עֵינֵינוּ:  
 יח עַל הַר-צִיּוֹן שִׁשְׁמָם  
 שׁוֹעֲלִים הִלְכוּ-בּוּ:  
 יט אַתָּה יְהוָה  
 לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב  
 כְּסֹאֲךָ לְדָר וְדוֹר:  
 כ לָמָּה לִנְצַח תִּשְׁכַּחֲנוּ  
 תַּעֲזֹבֵנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יָמִים:  
 כא תִּשְׁיִבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 וְנִשׁוּבָה  
 חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:  
 כב כִּי אִם-מָאֵס  
 מֵאִסְתָּנוּ קִצְפָּתָ עָלֵינוּ  
 עַד-מָאֵד

12 Ministers by their hand were hung.  
 Elders' faces shown no majesty / respect.  
 13 Boys would carry a millstone,  
 and youths, stumbling with wood.  
 14 Elders ceased from gate,  
 boys from their play.  
 15 Our heart ceased / stopped any joy,  
 our dance overturned into mourning.  
 16 The crown on our head is fallen;  
 Oy for us! For we sinned.  
 17 For this our heart was sickened.  
 For these our eyes darkened.  
 18 For Mount Zion, that was desolated,  
 foxes went through her.  
 19 You, *YHVH*  
 will sit for all world-time,  
 Your throne (lasts) for generations.  
 20 Why would you forget us forever?  
 Abandon us for the span of time's days?  
 21 Turn us, *YHVH*, toward you,  
 and we will turn.  
 Renew our days, like long before,  
 22 for (what) if rejecting you did reject  
 us / loath us, were enraged over us,  
 so very much—!

עַל-כֵּן לְנִידָה הָיָתָה  
 כָּל-מִכְבְּדֶיהָ הִזְלִוָהּ  
 כִּי-רָאוּ עֲרוּתָהּ  
 גַּם-הִיא נֹאנָחָה  
 וַתִּשָּׁב אַחֲוָר:  
 ט טִמְאָתָהּ בְּשׂוּלֶיהָ  
 לֹא זָכְרָה אַחֲרֵיתָהּ  
 וַתִּרְדּוּ פְּלָאִים  
 אֵין מְנַחֵם לָהּ  
 רֹאֶה יְהוָה אֶת-עֲנִיִּי  
 כִּי הִגְדִּיל אוֹיֵב:  
 י יָדוּ פֶּרֶשׁ צָר  
 עַל כָּל-מַחֲמָדֶיהָ  
 כִּי-רֹאֶתָהּ גּוֹיִם  
 בָּאוּ מִקִּדְשָׁהּ  
 אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָהּ  
 לֹא-יָבֹאוּ  
 בִקְהָל לָךְ:  
 יא כָּל-עַמָּה נֹאנָחִים  
 מִבִּקְשִׁים לֶחֶם  
 נָתַנוּ מִחֲמוּדֵיהֶם  
 בְּאֹכֶל לְהָשִׁיב נַפְשׁ  
 רֹאֶה יְהוָה  
 וְהִבִּיטָהּ כִּי הִיטִי זוּלָּתָהּ:  
 יב לֹא אֶלֶיכֶם

For this an outcast / *nidah* she became.  
 All who honor her despise her,  
 for they saw her nakedness.  
 Also her, she is moaning,  
 and turned around backward.  
 9 Her blood / *tum'ah* in her skirts,  
 she didn't remember her end after,  
 she descended wondrously.  
 There is no comforter for her.  
*YHVH*, see my poverty / my humiliation,  
 for an enemy became great.  
 10 A foe / Trauma spread out his hand  
 over all her precious things;  
 She saw other nations  
 come within her holy place,  
 which You commanded her:  
 "They won't come in  
 with the community to you."  
 11 All her people are moaning  
 seeking bread;  
 They gave up their precious things  
 for food to restore life.  
 See, *YHVH*,  
 and look (at how) I was despised.  
 12 Never to you,

כָּל-עֲבָרֵי דֶרֶךְ  
 הִבִּיטוּ וּרְאוּ  
 אִם-יֵשׁ מִכְּאוֹב כְּמִכְאוֹבִי  
 אֲשֶׁר עוֹלָל לִי  
 אֲשֶׁר הוֹגָה יְהוָה  
 בְּיוֹם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ:  
 יג מִמָּרוֹם שָׁלַח-אֵשׁ  
 בְּעֶצְמוֹתַי וַיִּדְבֶּנָה  
 פָּרֶשׁ רָשֶׁת לְרַגְלִי  
 הִשְׁבִּינֵנִי אֲחֹזֶר  
 נִתְּנֵנִי שְׁמָמָה  
 כָּל-הַיּוֹם דָּוָה:  
 יד נִשְׁקַד עַל פִּשְׁעֵי  
 בִּידּוֹ יִשְׁתַּרְגְּנוּ  
 עָלוּ עַל-צַוְאָרִי  
 הִכְשִׁיל כֹּחִי  
 נִתְּנֵנִי אֲדָנִי בַיָּד  
 לֹא-אוּכָל קוֹם:  
 טו סֵלָה  
 כָּל-אַבְיָרִי | אֲדָנִי בִקְרָבִי  
 קָרָא עָלַי מוֹעֵד  
 לְשֹׁבֵר בַּחוּרִי  
 גַּת דֶּבֶר אֲדָנִי  
 לְבַתּוּלַת בֵּת-יְהוּדָה:  
 טז עַל-אַלְהָה | אֲנִי בּוֹכֶיהָ

all who pass on the way.  
 (All of you) look, and see –  
 could there be pain like my pain  
 which was doled out to me,  
 which YHVH caused to grieve  
 in the day of His furious anger?  
 13 From a height He sent fire  
 in my bones and overwhelmed them.  
 He spread out a net for my feet;  
 He turned me / repelled me backward;  
 He made me desolate,  
 all day – sickness.  
 14 The harness of my sins lashed on,  
 they were tied down by His hand,  
 brought up onto my neck,  
 making my strength fail.  
 Adonai gave me over into (such) hands  
 that I am unable to stand up.  
 15 Adonai spurned  
 all my mighty warriors within me,  
 He called out over me a feast  
 for breaking my boys;  
 a winepress—Adonai stomped—  
 for daughter Judah's girl.  
 16 Over these, I am crying;

א זְכוֹר יְהוָה מָה-הָיָה לָנוּ  
 הִבִּיטָה וּרְאָה  
 אֶת-חֲרָפָתָנוּ:  
 ב נִחַלְתָנוּ נְהַפְכָה לְזָרִים  
 בָּתֵּינוּ לְנֹכְרִים:  
 ג יְתוּמִים הָיִינוּ וְאֵין אָב  
 אֲמִתֵּינוּ כְּאַלְמָנוֹת:  
 ד מִיָּמֵינוּ בְּכֶסֶף שָׁתִינוּ  
 עֵצֵינוּ בְּמַחֲרִיר יָבֹאוּ:  
 ה עַל צַוְאֲרֵנוּ נִרְדְּפָנוּ  
 יָגַעְנוּ וְלֹא הוֹנֵחַ-לָנוּ:  
 ו מִצְרַיִם נִתְּנוּ לָד  
 אֲשׁוּר לְשִׁבְעַת לֶחֶם:  
 ז אֲבֹתֵינוּ חָטְאוּ וְאֵינָם  
 וְאֶנְחָנוּ עוֹנֵתֵיהֶם סָבְלָנוּ:  
 ח עֲבָדִים מָשְׁלוּ בָנוּ  
 פֶּרֶק אֵין מִיָּדָם:  
 ט בִּנְפְשֵׁנוּ נָבִיא לְחַמָּנוּ  
 מִפְּנֵי חֶרֶב הַמִּדְבָּר:  
 י עוֹרֵנוּ כִּתְנוֹר נִכְמָרוּ  
 מִפְּנֵי זַלְעָפוֹת רָעָב:  
 יא נָשִׁים בְּצִיּוֹן עָנוּ  
 בְּתִלַּת בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה:

1 YHVH, remember what was ours.  
 Look, and see  
 our abuse / our shame!  
 2 Our inheritance overturned to strangers,  
 our houses to foreigners.  
 3 We were orphans, there is no father,  
 our mothers like widows.  
 4 Our water we drank for money;  
 our wood came (only) with a price.  
 5 On our neck were we pursued,  
 weary, and none would let us (rest).  
 6 Egypt, we stretched a hand,  
 Assyria, to satisfy bread.  
 7 Our fathers sinned and are not,  
 and we shouldered their iniquities.  
 8 Slaves ruled us.  
 None can break us out from their hand.  
 9 For our lives we bring our bread,  
 from before the wilderness's sword.  
 10 Our skin like a furnace, glowing,  
 from before the delirium of hunger.  
 11 Women in Zion were victimized,  
 girls, in Judah's towns.

בַּצְפִּיתָנוּ צָפִינוּ אֶל־גּוֹי  
לֹא יוֹשָׁע:  
יח צְדוּ צַעֲדֵינוּ  
מִלִּכְתּוֹת בְּרַחֲבֵינוּ  
קָרַב קִצֵּינוּ מִלְאוּ יָמֵינוּ  
כִּי־בָא קִצֵּינוּ:  
יט קָלִים הָיוּ רֹדְפֵינוּ  
מִנְּשָׁרֵי שָׁמַיִם  
עַל־הַהָרִים דָּלְקָנוּ  
בַּמִּדְבָּר אָרְבוּ לָנוּ:  
כ רוּחַ אִפְּנוּ מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה  
נִלְכַּד בְּשַׁחֲתוֹתָם  
אֲשֶׁר אָמְרָנוּ בְּצִלּוֹ  
נִחְיָה בְּגוֹיִם:  
כא שִׂישִׁי וְשִׂמְחִי בַת־אֲדָוָה  
יוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּאֶרֶץ עוֹץ  
גַּם־עָלֶיךָ תַּעֲבֹר־כּוֹס  
תִּשְׁכַּר וְתִתְעָרִי:  
כב תִּם־עוֹנֶיךָ  
בַת־צִיּוֹן  
לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהִגְלוֹתְךָ  
פָּקַד עוֹנֶיךָ  
בַת־אֲדָוָה  
גָּלָה עַל־חַטָּאתֶיךָ:

In our seeking, we sought / we peered  
toward a nation not (able to) save.  
18 They hunted / tracked our steps,  
(driven) from going in our squares.  
Our end draws close, our days filled,  
for our end has come.  
19 Swift were they, our pursuers,  
more than eagles of the heavens.  
Over the mountains they chased us,  
in the wilderness they laid ambush for us.  
20 Breath of our nose, *YHVH*'s anointed,  
he was trapped by their destructions,  
(the one) whom we said, "In his shade  
we will live with the nations."  
21 Rejoice and be happy, daughter Edom,  
dwelling in the land of Utz –  
a cup will also pass over (to) you,  
you will drink and strip yourself naked.  
22 Complete be your iniquity,  
daughter Zion,  
no more to be exiled / exposed.  
He has charged your iniquity,  
daughter Edom,  
exposed (you) for your sins.

עֵינַי | עֵינַי יִרְדָּה מַיִם  
כִּי־רַחֵק מִמֶּנִּי מְנַחֵם  
מִשְׁעִיב נִפְשִׁי  
הָיוּ בְנֵי שׂוֹמְמִים  
כִּי גִבַר אוֹיֵב:  
יז פָּרְשָׁה צִיּוֹן בְּיָדֶיהָ  
אֵין מְנַחֵם לָהּ  
צִוָּה יְהוָה לַיַּעֲקֹב  
סָבִיבֵי צָרָיו  
הִיטָה יְרוּשָׁלַם  
לְנִדָּה בֵּינֵיהֶם:  
יח צַדִּיק הוּא יְהוָה  
כִּי פִיהוּ מְרִיתִי  
שָׁמְעוּ־נָא כָּל־הָעַמִּים  
וְרֹאוּ מִכְּאֲבִי  
בְּתוֹלָתִי וּבַחוּרִי  
הָלְכוּ בַשִּׁבִּי:  
יט קָרָאתִי לְמֵאֲהָבִי  
הִמָּה רְמוּנִי  
כָּהֲנֵי וְזִקְנֵי  
בָּעִיר גּוֹעִו  
כִּי־בִקְשׁוּ אֲכָל לָמוֹ  
וַיֵּשִׁיבוּ אֶת־נַפְשָׁם:  
כ רָאָה יְהוָה כִּי־צָר־לִי  
יַמְעִי חֲמָרְמוֹרוֹ

my eye, my eye, she drops water.  
For so far from me is any comforter,  
a restorer for my life.  
My children were decimated,  
for an enemy overwhelmed / triumphed.  
17 Zion spread out with her hands,  
there is no comforter for her.  
*YHVH* commanded for Jacob,  
surrounding him, his tormentors.  
Jerusalem became  
outcast / *nidah* between them.  
18 Righteous is *YHVH*,  
for His mouth I rebelled (against).  
Listen, please—all peoples—  
and see my pain!  
My girls and my boys  
walked captive / into captivity.  
19 I called to my lovers.  
Those deceived me.  
My priests, and my elders,  
they wasted away in the city,  
while they sought food for themselves  
(that) would bring back their life / soul.  
20 See *YHVH* – for mine is torment,  
my guts were churning,



נִהְפָּךְ לִבִּי בְּקֶרְבִּי  
 כִּי מָרוּ מְרִיתִי  
 מִחוּץ שִׁבְלֵה־חָרֶב  
 בַּבַּיִת כַּמּוֹת:  
 כֹּא שָׁמְעוּ כִּי נִאֲנָחָה אָנִי  
 אֵין מְנַחֵם לִי  
 כָּל־אֹיְבֵי שָׁמְעוּ  
 רָעָתִי  
 שָׂשׂוּ כִּי אָתָּה עָשִׂיתָ  
 הִבֵּאתָ יוֹם־קִרְאָתָּ  
 וַיְהִיו כַּמוֹנִי:  
 כֹּב תָּבֵא כָּל־רָעָתָם לִפְנֵיךָ  
 וְעוֹלָל לָמוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר  
 עוֹלָלָתָ לִי עַל כָּל־פְּשָׁעֵי  
 כִּי־רַבּוֹת אֲנִיחָתִי  
 וּלְבִי דָוָי:

my heart overturned within me,  
 for rebelling I rebelled.  
 From outside sword bereaving;  
 In the house, like death itself.  
 21 They listened – for I am moaning,  
 there is no comforter for me.  
 All my enemies listened  
 for my evil (doom).  
 They rejoiced, for You did it,  
 You brought the day You called for –  
 and let them be(come) like me.  
 22 May all their evil come before You,  
 and deal to them as  
 You dealt to me for all my sins.  
 For so much are my sighs,  
 and my heart is sickened.

## CHAPTER 2

אַיִכָּה  
 יָעִיב בְּאַפּוֹ |  
 אֲדֹנָי אֶת־בֵּת־צִיּוֹן  
 הַשְׁלִיךְ מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶרֶץ  
 תִּפְאֶרֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל

1 *Eikhah!* How can it be –  
 in His anger *Adonai* / the Lord  
 clouded over daughter Zion.  
 He cast down, from skies (to) earth,  
 Israel's glory,

מֶלֶךְ־אֶרֶץ  
 כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֶל  
 כִּי יָבֹא צָר וְאוֹיֵב  
 בְּשַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם:  
 יֵגַ מִחֲטָאת נְבִיאֶיהָ  
 עֲוֹנוֹת כֹּהֲנֶיהָ  
 הַשֹּׁפְכִים בְּקֶרְבָּהָ  
 דָּם צְדִיקִים:  
 יָד נָעוּ עוֹרִים  
 בַּחוּצוֹת נִגְאָלוּ בַדָּם  
 בָּלֹא יוֹכְלוּ  
 יִגָּעוּ בְּלִבְשֵׁיהֶם:  
 טו סוּרוּ טָמֵא  
 קִרְאוּ לָמוּ  
 סוּרוּ סוּרוּ אַל־תִּגְעוּ  
 כִּי נָצוּ גַם־נָעוּ  
 אָמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם  
 לֹא יוֹסִיפוּ לָגוּר:  
 טז פָּנֵי יְהוָה  
 חִלְקָם לֹא יוֹסִיף  
 לְהִבִּיטָם  
 פָּנֵי כֹהֲנִים לֹא נִשְׂאוּ  
 וַיִּקְנִימוּ לֹא חֲנּוּ:  
 יז עוֹלֵינוּ תִּכְלִינָה עֵינֵינוּ  
 אַל־עֲזָרָתֵנוּ הֶבֶל

kings of the earth  
 all the inhabitants of the world,  
 that tormentor and enemy would come  
 into the gates of Jerusalem –  
 13 because of her prophets' sins,  
 her priests' wrongs / iniquities,  
 the ones who poured out inside her  
 the blood of righteous people.  
 14 They were shaking / staggering, blind  
 in the streets, defiled with the blood,  
 with none able / none willing (to)  
 come in contact with their clothes.  
 15 “Get out! Contaminated! / *Tamei!*”  
 they would call to them,  
 “Get out! Get out! Don't touch!”  
 For they fled, even staggered.  
 They said in the nations,  
 they will no more (be allowed) to dwell.  
 16 *YHWH's* presence / face  
 divided them, He would no more  
 look at them / notice them –  
 (for) priest's faces they did not lift up,  
 and (to) elders they did not show grace.  
 17 Still will our eyes be used up / failing,  
 toward our help, (which is) emptiness.

מִחֲטָאת סֹדֶם  
 תִּהְיוּכָה כְּמוֹ-רֹגֶעַ  
 וְלֹא-תָלוּ בָּהּ יָדַיִם:  
 ז וְכֹו נְזִירֶיהָ מִשְׁלֵג  
 צָחוּ מִחֶלֶב  
 אֲדָמוֹ עֵצִים מִפְּנִינִים  
 סַפִּיר גִּזְרָתָם:  
 ח חֲשֹׁךְ מִשְׁחֹר  
 תִּתְאַרֵם  
 לֹא נִכְרוּ בַּחוּצוֹת  
 צֶפֶד עוֹרֶם עַל-עֲצָמָם  
 יָבֵשׁ הָיָה כַּעֲץ:  
 ט טוֹבִים הָיוּ חֲלָלֵי-חֶרֶב  
 מִחֲלָלֵי רָעֵב  
 שֵׁהֶם יוֹבֹו מִדְּקָרִים  
 מִתְּנוּבַת שְׂדֵי:  
 י יְדֵי נָשִׁים רַחֲמָנִיוֹת  
 בִּשְׁלוּ יִלְדֵיהֶן  
 הָיוּ לְבָרוֹת לָמוֹ  
 בְּשֹׁבֵר בֵּת-עַמִּי:  
 יא כָלָה יְהוָה אֶת-חֲמָתוֹ  
 שָׁפַךְ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ  
 וַיִּצַּת-אֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן  
 וַתֹּאכַל יְסוּדֹתֶיהָ:  
 יב לֹא הֵאֱמִינוּ

grew great, beyond the sin of Sodom,  
 the one overthrown, as (in) a moment,  
 and no hands were laid on her.  
 7 Her Nazirites were pure beyond snow,  
 clearer than milk,  
 red of bone, more than rubies,  
 their cut shape sapphire crystal.  
 8 (Now) darkened beyond black soot  
 is their form,  
 they are not recognized in the streets,  
 their skin stretched taut over their bone,  
 it was dried out like a stick.  
 9 Better were the sword-slain  
 than the famine-slain,  
 for those drain away, stabbed through  
 from (want of) produce of the field.  
 10 Merciful hands of merciful women  
 stewed their children –  
 they became provision for them  
 in the shattering of my daughter people.  
 11 YHWH used up His fury,  
 poured out His burning anger,  
 and He kindled a fire in Zion,  
 and she consumed her foundations.  
 12 They would not have believed,

וְלֹא-זָכַר  
 הֶלֶם-רַגְלֹו  
 בְּיוֹם אָפּוֹ:  
 ב בָּלַע אֲדֹנָי לֹא חֶמֶל  
 אֶת כָּל-נְאוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 הָרֶם בְּעִבְרָתוֹ  
 מִבְּצֻרֵי בֵּת-יְהוּדָה  
 הִגִּיעַ לָאָרֶץ  
 חָלַל מַמְלָכָה וְשָׂרֶיהָ:  
 ג גִּבַּע בְּחָרִי-אַף  
 כָּל קֶרֶן יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 הִשִּׁיב אֲחֹרֹר יָמִינוֹ  
 מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב  
 וַיִּבְעַר בִּיעָקֹב כְּאֵשׁ  
 לָהֶבֶת אֹכֶלָה סָבִיב:  
 ד דָּרַךְ קִשְׁתּוֹ כְּאוֹיֵב  
 נָצַב יָמִינוֹ  
 כְּצֹר  
 וַיַּהַלֵּךְ כָּל  
 מִחְמַדֵּי-עֵין  
 בְּאַהֲלֵ בֵּת-צִיּוֹן  
 שָׁפַךְ כְּאֵשׁ חֲמָתוֹ:  
 ה הָיָה אֲדֹנָי | כְּאוֹיֵב  
 בָּלַע יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 בָּלַע כָּל-אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ

and didn't remember  
 His foot's resting place  
 in His day of anger.  
 2 Adonai devoured—He had no pity—  
 all of Jacob's pastures.  
 He tore down with His burning  
 daughter Judah's fortifications;  
 He reached to the very ground.  
 He violated kingdom and her ministers.  
 3 With ferocious anger He hacked off  
 all of Israel's horn.  
 He turned His right hand backward  
 before the enemy.  
 Burning into Jacob, like fire  
 flaming, consuming (all) around.  
 4 He worked His bow like an enemy,  
 He stood firm His right hand  
 as a foe / a tormentor  
 and He murdered everything  
 precious to the eye;  
 In daughter Zion's tent  
 He poured out His wrath like the fire.  
 5 Adonai was like an enemy;  
 He devoured / swallowed Israel.  
 He devoured all her citadels,

שֶׁחַת מִבְצָרָיו  
 וַיִּרְבֶּ בִּבְת־יְהוּדָה  
 תִּאֲנִיָּה וְאֲנִיָּה:  
 וַיִּחַמַּס כְּגֹל שָׁכֹו  
 שֶׁחַת מוֹעֵדוֹ  
 שָׁפַח יְהוָה | בְּצִיּוֹן  
 מוֹעֵד וְשַׁבָּת  
 וַיִּנְאֹץ בְּזַעַם-אָפוֹ  
 מֶלֶךְ וְכוֹהֵן:  
 ז וַנֹּחַ אֲדֹנָי | מִזִּבְחוֹ  
 נֶאֱדָר מִקֹּדְשׁוֹ  
 הִסְגִּיר בְּיַד-אוֹיֵב  
 חוֹמַת אֲרָמְנוֹתֶיהָ  
 קוֹל נְתָנוּ בְּבֵית-יְהוָה  
 כִּיּוֹם מוֹעֵד:  
 ח חָשֵׁב יְהוָה | לְהַשְׁחִית  
 חוֹמַת בֵּת-צִיּוֹן נִטָּה לָּו  
 לֹא-הָשִׁיב יָדוֹ  
 מִבִּלְעַד  
 וַיִּאֲבֹל-חֵל וְחוֹמָה  
 יַחְדָּו אִמְלָלוּ:  
 ט טָבְעוּ בָאָרֶץ שְׂעָרֶיהָ  
 אֲבָד וְשֹׁבֵר בְּרִיחֶיהָ  
 מִלְכָּה וְשָׂרֶיהָ בְּגוֹיִם  
 אֵין תּוֹרָה

undermined His fortifications;

And He multiplied in daughter Zion  
grief and groaning.

6 Like a garden, He tore apart His sukkah,  
destroyed His feast.  
YHVH caused Shabbat and festival  
to be forgotten in Zion,  
by the rage of His anger  
king and priest.

7 Adonai abhorred His altar,  
disdained His holy place.  
He made shut with an enemy's hand  
the walls of her citadels.  
They gave a shout in YHVH's house  
like a festival day.

8 YHVH plotted to ruin  
daughter Zion's wall, stretched a line,  
didn't turn back His hand  
from swallowing up,  
and He made rampart and wall mourn,  
together made wretched.

9 They drowned in the earth, her gates.  
He smashed and broke her bars.  
Her king and her ministers in the nations,  
there is no Torah / no teaching.

אַיִיכָה  
 יוֹעַם זָהָב  
 יִשְׁנָא הַכֶּתֶם הַטּוֹב  
 תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה אַבְנֵי-קֹדֶשׁ  
 בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוֹצוֹת:  
 ב בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הַיְקָרִים  
 הִמָּסְלָאִים בַּפֹּז  
 אֵיכָה נִחְשְׁבוּ  
 לְנִבְלֵי-חָרָשׁ  
 מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי יוֹצֵר:  
 ג גַּם-תַּנִּינִים חָלְצוּ שָׂדֶה  
 הַיְנִיקוּ גּוֹרֵיהֶן  
 בֵּת-עַמִּי לְאֶכָזָר  
 כִּי־עֲנִים בַּמֶּדְבָּר:  
 ד דָּבֵק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק  
 אֶל-חִכּוֹ בְּצִמָּא  
 עוֹלָלִים שָׁאֲלוּ לָחֶם  
 פָּרֶשׁ אֵין לָהֶם:  
 ה הָאֶכְלִים לְמַעַדְנִים  
 נִשְׁמָו בַּחוֹצוֹת  
 הָאֲמָנִים עָלֵי תוֹלַעַ  
 חִבְקוּ אֲשֵׁפֶתוֹת:  
 ו וַיִּגְדַּל עֲוֹן בֵּת-עַמִּי

1 Eikhah! How can it be –

gold becomes dull,  
the best gold transmuted,  
stones of the holy poured / dumped out  
at every street head;

2 Zion's children, precious ones,  
weighed against the purest gold –  
how can it be that they are counted  
as clay jars,  
work of a maker's hands?

3 Even jackals draw out a breast,  
would give suck to their cubs.  
(But) my daughter people – so cruel,  
like ostriches in the wilderness.

4 A suckling's tongue, stuck  
to its palate with such thirst;  
babes sought bread –  
none break it off for them.

5 The ones who eat for delicacies  
were wasted in the streets,  
the ones nursed on scarlet  
were hugging trash heaps.

6 And my daughter people's iniquity

אל־תַּעֲלֶם אָזְנוֹךָ  
לְרוֹחֲתִי לְשׁוֹעָתִי:  
נָו קָרַבְתָּ בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָאָךְ  
אֲמַרְתָּ אֶל־תִּירָא:

נַח רַבָּת אֲדֹנָי  
רִיבִי נִפְשִׁי גָאֲלָתָה חַיִּי:  
נָט רָאִיתָה יְהוָה עֲוֹתַי  
שִׁפְטָה מִשְׁפָּטִי:  
ס רָאִיתָה כָּל־נִקְמָתָם  
כָּל־מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם לִי:

סֵא שָׁמַעְתָּ חֲרָפְתָם יְהוָה  
כָּל־מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם עָלַי:  
סָב שִׁפְתַי קָמִי  
וְהִגִּיזוּם עָלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם:  
סָג שָׁבַתָם וְקִיַּמְתָּם  
הַבִּיטָה אֲנִי מִגִּינָתָם

סֵד תִּשְׁלֵיב לָהֶם גָּמוּל  
יְהוָה כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם:  
סֵה תִתֵּן לָהֶם מִגִּנַּת־לֵב  
תִּאֲלָתֶךָ לָהֶם:  
סֹו תִרְדֹּף בָּאֵף וְתִשְׁמִידֵם  
מִתַּחַת שָׁמַיִ יְהוָה:

Don't hide / conceal your ear  
to my (plea for) relief, to my cry.  
57 You were near the day I would call,  
You said, "Don't fear."  
58 Adonai, You struggled (in) my  
soul's struggles; You saved my life.  
59 You saw my twisting;  
(now) judge my judgment!  
60 You saw all their vengeance  
all their designs for me.  
61 You heard their shaming, YHVH,  
all their designs against me,  
62 the speech of those rising at me,  
their obsession over me every day,  
63 (whether) sitting or rising up –  
Look! I am their singsong!  
64 You will pay them back, YHVH,  
according to the work of their hands;  
65 You will make theirs a heart walled  
up – let Your curse be for them!  
66 Pursue in anger and destroy them  
from under YHVH's heavens.

גַּם־נְבִיאָיָה  
לֹא־מָצְאוּ חֲזוֹן מִיְהוָה:  
י יֵשְׁבוּ לָאָרֶץ  
יְדַמּוּ וְזָנְיָ בֵּת־צִיּוֹן  
הֵעֲלּוּ עָפָר עַל־רֹאשָׁם  
חָגְרוּ שָׁקִים  
הוֹרִידוּ לָאָרֶץ רֹאשָׁן  
בְּתוֹלֵת יְרוּשָׁלַם:  
יֵא כָּלוּ בְדַמְעוֹת עֵינָי  
חֲמָרְמוּ מִעֵי  
נִשְׁפָּךְ לָאָרֶץ כְּבֹדִי  
עַל־שֹׁבֵר  
בֵּת־עַמִּי  
בַּעֲטָף עוֹלִל וְיוֹזֵק  
בְּרַחְבוֹת קִרְיָה:  
יֵב לְאִמָּתָם יֵאמְרוּ  
אֵיךְ דָּגָן וְיַיִן  
בְּהִתְעַטְּפָם  
כְּחָלָל בְּרַחְבוֹת עִיר  
בְּהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ נִפְשָׁם  
אֶל־חֵיק אִמָּתָם:  
יֵג מֶה־אֶעֱיִיד  
מֶה אֲדַמֶּה־לָּךְ  
הַבֵּת יְרוּשָׁלַם  
מֶה אֲשׁוּהֶ־לָּךְ

Also her prophets,  
They found no vision from YHVH.  
10 They sat down to the earth, they  
stayed silent, daughter Zion's elders,  
they lifted dust over their head,  
tied on sackcloth.  
They let their head down to the earth,  
Jerusalem's girls.  
11 My eyes were used up by the tears,  
my guts churned up,  
my liver poured out to the ground  
over the shattering of  
my daughter people,  
with exhaustion of babe and suckling  
in the town's squares.  
12 To their mothers they would say,  
"Where is grain and wine?",  
stretching themselves out,  
like a corpse, in city streets,  
with their life-force pouring itself out  
onto their mothers' chest.  
13 What can I make testify?  
What will I liken to you?  
O daughter Jerusalem!  
What can I compare to you

וַאֲנִי־חֲמֹד׃  
 בְּתוּלַת בֵּת־צִיּוֹן  
 כִּי־גָדוֹל כַּיָּם שִׁבְרָךְ  
 מִי יִרְפָּא־לָךְ׃  
 יָד נְבִיאֶיךָ חָזוּ לָךְ  
 שׂוֹא וְתַפֵּל  
 וְלֹא־גָלוּ עַל־עוֹנֶךָ  
 לְהָשִׁיב שְׁבוּתָךְ  
 וַיַּחֲזוּ לָךְ  
 מַשְׁאוֹת שׂוֹא וּמַדּוּחִים׃  
 טו סָפְקוּ עָלֶיךָ כַּפִּים  
 כָּל־עַבְרֵי דָרֶךְ  
 שָׁרְקוּ וַיִּנְעוּ רֹאשָׁם  
 עַל־בֵּת יְרוּשָׁלַם  
 הִנָּאת הָעִיר שִׁיאֲמְרוּ  
 כְּלִילַת יָפִי  
 מְשׁוֹשׁ לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ׃  
 טז פָּצוּ עֲלֶיךָ פִּיהֶם  
 כָּל־אוֹיְבֶיךָ  
 שָׁרְקוּ וַיִּחְרְקוּ־שֵׁן  
 אָמְרוּ בְלָעֵנוּ  
 אַךְ זֶה הַיּוֹם שֶׁקִּוִּינָהוּ  
 מִצָּאֵנוּ רְאִינוּ׃  
 יז עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם  
 בַּצֵּעַ אֲמָרְתּוֹ

(that) I may comfort you,  
 daughter Zion's girl?  
 For great, like the sea, is your shattering  
 – who will bring healing to you?  
 14 For you did your prophets envision  
 deception, and irrelevance,  
 revealing nothing for your wrong  
 to turn back your destiny / your captivity,  
 and they envisioned for you  
 a burden of deceit and dejections.  
 15 They struck their hands over you,  
 all who passed on the road,  
 they hissed and they shook their head  
 over daughter Jerusalem:  
 “Is this it? The city they said (was)  
 beauty's completion,  
 joy's source for all the earth?”  
 16 They crack open their mouth over you,  
 all your enemies.  
 They hissed, and they grit teeth.  
 They said: We swallowed;  
*Akh!* This day that we hoped for,  
 we found, we saw!  
 17 *YHVH* did what He conspired;  
 He pushed through His saying

מִן פָּצוּ עָלֵינוּ פִּיהֶם  
 כָּל־אֹיְבֵינוּ׃  
 מז פָּחַד וּפַחַת הָיָה לָנוּ  
 הַשָּׂאת וְהַשְׁבֵּר׃  
 מח פָּלְגֵי־מַיִם תִּכְרַד עֵינִי  
 עַל־שִׁבְר בֵּת־עַמִּי׃  
 מט עֵינִי נִגְרָה  
 וְלֹא תִדְמָה  
 מֵאֵין הַפְּגוֹת׃  
 נ עַד־יִשְׁקִיף  
 וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם׃  
 נא עֵינִי עוֹלִלָה לְנַפְשִׁי  
 מְכַל בָּנוֹת עִירִי׃  
 נב צוֹד צְדוֹנִי כַצֹּר  
 אֵיבֵי חֲנָם׃  
 נג צָמְתּוּ בְּבוֹר חַיִּי  
 וַיִּדּוּ־אֶבֶן בִּי׃  
 נד צָפוּ־מַיִם עַל־רֹאשִׁי  
 אָמַרְתִּי נִגְזַרְתִּי׃  
 נה קָרָאתִי שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה  
 מִבוֹר תַּחְתִּיּוֹת׃  
 נו קוֹלִי שָׁמַעַתָּ׃

46 All our enemies crack open  
 their mouth against us;  
 47 Trepidation and trap were ours,  
 the ruination and the shattering.  
 48 My eye drops floods of water  
 for my daughter people's shattering;  
 49 My eye streams  
 and won't silence herself,  
 (she cries) with no breaks / no stutters,  
 50 until *YHVH* would look down  
 and see from heaven.  
 51 My eye doles sorrow to my soul  
 over all my city's daughters.  
 52 Hunting, they hunted me, like a bird,  
 (becoming) my enemies for no reason;  
 53 they sealed off my life in the pit,  
 and cast stone against me;  
 54 waters flowed over my head,  
 “I am cut off,” I said.  
 55 I called Your name, *YHVH*,  
 from a pit far underground.  
 56 You heard my voice:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| אֲדֹנָי לֹא רָאָה:                                                                                                                                                                               | struggle – wouldn't <i>Adonai</i> see (that)?                                                                                                                                                                                                   | אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִימֵי-קֶדֶם<br>הָרָס וְלֹא חָמַל<br>וַיִּשְׂמַח עָלֶיךָ אוֹיֵב<br>הָרִים קָרָן צָרִיךְ:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | which He commanded from early days.<br>He tore down and showed no pity.<br>He made an enemy rejoice over you;<br>your tormentors' horn was exalted.                                                                                                        |
| לֹא מִי זֶה אָמַר וַתְּהִי<br>אֲדֹנָי לֹא צִוָּה:<br>לֹחַ מִפִּי עָלִיוֹן לֹא תֵצֵא<br>הָרָעוֹת וְהַטּוֹב:<br>לֹט מִה-יִתְאוּנוּ אַדָּם חַי<br>גָּבֵר עַל-חַטָּאיוֹ:                             | 37 Who is this who spoke and it was<br>– didn't <i>Adonai</i> so command?<br>38 From the mouth of the Highest<br>don't the evils and the good come out?<br>39 How could a living person complain,<br>a man, (if punished) for his sins?         | יָחַצְעַק לָבָם אֶל-אֲדֹנָי<br>חוֹמַת בֵּת-צִיּוֹן<br>הוֹרִידִי כְנָחַל דִּמְעָה<br>יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה<br>אֶל-תַּתְנֵנִי פּוּגַת לֶךְ<br>אֶל-תָּדֹם בֵּת-עֵינֶיךָ:<br>יֵט קוֹמִי   רְנֵי בַלִּילָה                                                                                                                                                                                          | 18 Their heart screamed out to <i>Adonai</i> .<br>Wall of daughter Zion,<br>let down a tear like a torrent,<br>day and night.<br>Don't give yourself any break;<br>Don't let your daughter eye fall silent.                                                |
| מִנְחַפְשָׁה דְרָכֵינוּ וַנִּחְלְרָה<br>וְנָשׁוּבָה עַד-יְהוָה:<br>מֵאֵי נִשְׂא לְבַבֵּנוּ<br>אֶל-כַּפָּיִם<br>אֶל-אֵל בְּשָׁמַיִם:<br>מִבְּנַחְנוּ פָשַׁעְנוּ וּמָרִינוּ<br>אַתָּה לֹא סָלַחַת: | 40 Let us search our ways and dig deep,<br>and let us return until <i>YHVH</i> ,<br>41 Let us lift our hearts<br>up to our hands (stretching them)<br>toward God in the heavens.<br>42 Us, we sinned and rebelled.<br>You – You did not pardon. | יֵט קוֹמִי   רְנֵי בַלִּילָה<br>לְרֹאשׁ אֲשִׁמְרוֹת<br>שִׁפְכִי כַמִּים לְבֶךְ<br>נִכַח פָּנֵי אֲדֹנָי<br>שָׂאִי אֵלָיו כַּפָּיךְ<br>עַל-נֶפֶשׁ עוֹלָלֶיךָ<br>הַעֲטוּפִים בָּרָעַב<br>בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוֹצוֹת:<br>כִּי רָאָה יְהוָה וַהֲבִיטָה<br>לְמִי עוֹלָלָת כָּה<br>אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נָשִׁים פְּרִיָם<br>עָלִילֵי טַפָּחִים<br>אִם-יִהְיֶה בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי<br>כִּהְיֶה וְנִבְיָא: | 19 Get up! Sing out in the night<br>to the first of the nightwatches:<br>Pour out your heart like water<br>right before <i>Adonai</i> !<br>Lift your palms toward Him –<br>for the life of your babies<br>stretched out by famine<br>at every street head! |
| מִגִּי סִפְתָּה בָּאֵף<br>וַתִּדְרֹפֵנוּ<br>הָרָגַת לֹא חָמַלְתָּ:<br>מִדִּ סִפּוֹתֶה בְּעָנֹן לֶךְ<br>מִעֲבוֹר תִּפְלָה:<br>מִה סְחִי וּמָאוֹס<br>תִּשְׁמִינֵנוּ<br>בְּקָרֵב הָעַמִּים:         | 43 You took shelter in such anger,<br>and You would pursue us,<br>You murdered without pitying;<br>44 You sheltered Yourself within a<br>cloud, far beyond prayer;<br>45 Scum and refuse<br>You would make us<br>in the midst of the peoples.   | כִּי רָאָה יְהוָה וַהֲבִיטָה<br>לְמִי עוֹלָלָת כָּה<br>אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נָשִׁים פְּרִיָם<br>עָלִילֵי טַפָּחִים<br>אִם-יִהְיֶה בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי<br>כִּהְיֶה וְנִבְיָא:                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 20 See, <i>YHVH</i> , and look:<br>to whom did You deal thus?<br>If women will eat their fruit,<br>coddled babies—!<br>If priest and prophet are murdered<br>in <i>Adonai</i> 's holy place—!                                                              |

כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבוּ לָאָרֶץ חַיּוֹת  
נָעַר וְזָקֵן בְּתוֹלְתֵי וּבְחוּרֵי  
נָפְלוּ בַּחֶרֶב  
הִרְגֵתָּ בַּיּוֹם אֶפְרָיִם  
טָבַחְתָּ לֹא חֲמִלָתָּ:  
כִּי תִקְרָא כְּיוֹם מוֹעֵד  
מִגּוֹרֵי מִסָּבִיב  
וְלֹא הָיָה בַּיּוֹם אֶף-יְהוָה  
פָּלִיט וְשָׁרִיד  
אֲשֶׁר-טִפַּחְתִּי וְרַבִּיתִי  
אִיְבֵי כָלָם:

21 Laid down to the earth (in the) streets,  
young and old, my girls and my boys,  
they fell by sword;  
You murdered in the day of Your anger.  
You slaughtered, You had no pity.  
22 You would call, like a festival day,  
(for) my neighbors from all around;  
and (so) in YHVH's day of anger  
there weren't any escaped or remaining  
which I had nursed and raised –  
my enemy finished them all.

### CHAPTER 3

אֲנִי הַגִּבֹּר רָאָה עָנִי  
בְּשִׁבְט עֲבָרְתוֹ:  
בְּאוֹתֵי נְהָג וּיָלַךְ  
חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא-אוֹר:  
גַּם אֵפוֹד בִּי יָשָׁב  
יִהְיֶה יָדוֹ כָּל-הַיּוֹם:  
ד' בָּלָה בְּשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי  
שָׁבַר עֲצָמוֹתַי:  
ה' בָּנָה עָלַי וַיִּקָּה  
רֹאשׁ וּתְלָאָה:

1 I am the man who saw affliction  
through the rod of His burning anger.  
2 Me did He drive and He led –  
darkness and no light;  
3 Akh – Even against me He turned  
upending His hand, all the day.  
4 He wore away my flesh and my skin,  
He broke my bones;  
5 He built against me and surrounded  
– gall and wormwood.

לְנֶפֶשׁ תִּדְרֹשְׁנוּ:  
כִּי טוֹב וַיַּחֲלֵ וְדוֹמָם  
לְתַשׁוּעַת יְהוָה:  
כִּי טוֹב לְזָכָר  
כִּי-יִשָּׂא עַל בְּנֵעוּרָיו:

to a soul / person that would seek Him.  
26 Good – and he should wait and  
be silent, wait for YHVH's salvation.  
27 Good it is for a man  
that he carry a yoke in his youth.

כִּי יֵשֵׁב בְּדָד וַיִּדָּם  
כִּי נָטַל עָלָיו:  
כִּי יִתֵּן בְּעַפְרֹ פִּיהוּ  
אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ תִּקְוָה:  
לִי יִתֵּן לְמַכְחוֹ לְחֵי  
יִשְׂבַּע בְּחֶרֶפָה:

28 Let him sit alone and be silent,  
since He laid (it) on him;  
29 he should put his mouth in the dust –  
maybe there is hope;  
30 Put out his cheek for the one who  
strikes, be satiated with shame.

לֹא כִּי לֹא יִזְנֶה  
לְעוֹלָם אֲדָנִי:  
לִבִּי כִּי אִם-הוֹלָה וְרַחֵם  
כָּרֵב חֲסָדָיו:  
לִגְבִי כִּי לֹא עָנָה מִלְּבוֹ  
וַיִּגָּה בְּנִי-אִישׁ:

31 For Adonai would not  
spurn forever;  
32 for if He aggrieved and showed mercy,  
it is according to His love's abundance;  
33 for He did not afflict from His heart  
and aggrieve human beings.

לֵד לְדַכָּא תַּחַת רַגְלָיו  
כָּל אֲסִירֵי אֶרֶץ:  
לֵה לְהַטּוֹת מִשְׁפַּט-גֹּבֵר  
נִגַּד פָּנָי עָלְיוֹן:  
לִי לְעוֹת אָדָם בְּרִיבּוֹ

34 To crush under His feet  
all imprisoned of the land,  
35 to make bent a man's judgment,  
right to the face of the Highest,  
36 to twist / wrong a person in his

טז וַיִּגְרַם בַּחֲצֵץ שְׁנִי  
הַכְּפִישְׁנִי בְּאַפֶּרֶ:  
יז וַתִּזְנַח מִשְׁלֹם נַפְשִׁי  
נָשִׁיתִי טוֹבָה:  
יח וָאָמַר אֲבַד נַצְחִי  
וַתוֹחַלְתִּי מִיְּהוָה:  
יט זְכַר-עֲנִי  
וּמְרוֹדֵי לַעֲנָה וְרָאשׁ:  
כ זְכוֹר תִּזְכּוֹר  
וַתִּשְׁוַח עָלַי נַפְשִׁי:  
כא זֹאת אָשִׁיב אֶל-לִבִּי  
עַל-כֵּן אוֹחִיל:  
כב חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה  
כִּי לֹא-תֵמָנוּ  
כִּי לֹא-כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו:  
כג חֲדָשִׁים לְבָקָרִים  
רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ:  
כד חֶלְקִי יְהוָה  
אֲמַרְהָ נַפְשִׁי  
עַל-כֵּן אוֹחִיל לָו:  
כה טוֹב יְהוָה  
לְקָוֹ

16 He broke my teeth with gravel,  
and pressed me into the ashes.  
17 My soul was spurned from peace;  
I forgot goodness,  
18 and I said, “I have lost from *YHVH*  
my endurance and my hope!”  
19 Remember my affliction and  
my scattering – wormwood and gall;  
20 Remembering, she will remember,  
my soul, and will sink down upon me.  
21 (Still) this will I turn toward my heart,  
for so will I hope:  
22 *YHVH*’s love / kindness  
– they are never done,  
for His mercies were not used up.  
23 They are new by every morning;  
great is Your trust / faithfulness!  
24 My portion is *YHVH*  
—said my soul—  
therefore so will I hope for Him.  
25 Good is *YHVH*  
to those waiting for Him,

ו בַּמַּחֲשָׁכִים הוֹשִׁיבָנִי  
כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם:  
ז גָּדַר בְּעֵדִי  
וְלֹא יֵצֵא  
הַכְּבִיד נִחַשְׁתִּי:  
ח גַּם כִּי אֶזְעַק וְאֶשׁוּעַ  
שְׁתֵּם תִּפְלֹתִי:  
ט גָּדַר דְּרָכִי  
בְּגִזִּית נְתִיבֹתַי עֲוֹה:  
י נָלַב אֲרֵב הוּא לִי  
אֲרִי בַּמְסֻתָּרִים:  
יא דְּרָכִי סוּרָר וַיִּפְשְׁתָּנִי  
שָׁמַנִּי שָׁמֵם:  
יב דִּבְרֹךְ קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּצִּיבָנִי  
כַּמִּטְרָא לַחֵץ:  
יג הִבִּיא בְּכִלְיוֹתַי  
בְּנֵי אֲשַׁפְתּוֹ:  
יד הִיִּיתִי שֹׁחַק לְכָל-עַמִּי  
נְגִינָתָם כָּל-הַיּוֹם:  
טו הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי בְּמַרְוֹרִים  
הָרוֹנִי לַעֲנָה:

6 In darkening-nights He made me dwell  
like those ever dead;  
7 He barricaded against me,  
and I cannot go out / get away,  
He weighed down my bronze (shackle).  
8 Even when I would cry and plea,  
He stopped up my prayer;  
9 He barricaded my ways with  
stone blocks; my paths He twisted.  
10 For me He was a bear ambushing,  
a lion in hiding places / stalking;  
11 My ways He diverts and He would tear  
me up; He made me desolate.  
12 He worked His bow and made me  
stand as the target for the arrow;  
13 He guided into my kidneys  
what came from His quiver,  
14 I was a laughingstock for all my  
people, their song all the day.  
15 He sated me with bitter herbs,  
and overfilled me with wormwood;