

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

Chantable English version with tropes

by Len Fellman August 12, 2017

CHAPTER 1

1 How she sits alone
the city once full of people.
She has become like a widow,
the greatest among the nations,
the princess among the provinces.
She is reduced to slavery.

א ¹ אֵיכָה | יֹשְׁבָה בְּדָר הָעִיר
רַבָּתִי עִם הָיְתָה כְּאַלְמָנָה
רַבָּתִי בְּנוֹיִם שָׂרָתִי בְּמַדִּינֹת
הָיְתָה לְמָס:

2 'She weeps bitterly' in the night.
Her tears run down her cheeks.
There is none to comfort her,
from all her lovers.
Her companions have all betrayed her;
they have become her enemies.

ב ² בָּכוּ תִבְכֶּה בַּלַּיְלָה וְדַמְעָתָהּ
עַל לִחְיָהּ אֵין-לָהּ מְנַחֵם
מִכָּל - אֲהַבְיָהּ כָּל - רֵעִיהָ
בָּגְדוּ בָּהּ הָיוּ לָהּ לְאֹיְבִים:

3 J udah is exiled in affliction
and by hard labor.

She[sits among]the nations
but she finds there no relief.
All her pursuers overtook her,
in her dire straits.

ג ³ גָּלְתָה יְהוּדָה מֵעֲנִי וּמִרָב
עֲבָדָה זֹאת יֹשְׁבָה בְּנוֹיִם לֹא
מִצָּטָה מְנוּחַ כָּל-רֹדְפֶיהָ
הַשִּׁנְיָהּ בֵּין הַמִּצָּרִים:

4 The 'roads to Zion' are mourning
for want of festival pilgrims.

All her gateways are deserted.

Her priests are groaning.

Her maidens are afflicted;
she is embittered.

ד 4 דְּרָכֵי צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלוֹת מִבְּלִי בָּאִי
מוֹעֵד כָּל-שָׁעֲרֶיהָ שׁוּמְמִין
בְּהִנָּה נֶאֱנָחִים בְּתוֹלְתֶיהָ
נוֹגֹת וְהִיא מֵר-לָהּ:

5 Her oppressors have become
her master; Her enemies prosper.

Since God has aggrieved her,
for the greatness of her sins.

Her young children
have left her as prisoners,
before the oppressor.

ה 5 הִיוּ צָרֶיהָ לְרֹאשׁ אֲבִיבָהּ שָׁלוּ
כִּי-יִהְיֶה הוֹנָה עַל-רֹב
פְּשָׁעֶיהָ עוֹלָלֶיהָ הִלְכוּ שָׁבִי
לִפְנֵי צָר:

6 Gone from the daughter of Zion,
is all her splendor.

Even her leaders have become like deer
that find no pasture,
that flee without strength,
before their pursuer.

ו 6 נִיָּצָא מִן-בֶּת-צִיּוֹן כָּל-
הַדָּגָה הֵיוּ שָׂרֶיהָ כְּאֵילִים
לֹא-מָצְאוּ מְרֻעָה וַיִּלְכוּ
בְּלֹא-כֹחַ לִפְנֵי רוֹדֶף:

7 Jerusalem remembers

her days of misery and her roaming;

All of the treasures

(that were hers) in the days of old

when her people fell

into the[hand of the enemy],

and there was none to help her.

The oppressor did[gaze at her]

and laughed at her downfall.

ז זכרה ירושלם ימי עניה
ומרוניה כל מחמיה אשר
היו מימי קדם בנפל עמה
ביד צר ואין עוזר לה ראוה
צרים שחקו על-משבתה:

8 Jerusalem has sinned very grievously.

Therefore she has become an outcast.

All who[honored her]now despise her,

for they have seen her nakedness.

And she herself sighs and turns away.

ח חטא חטאה ירושלם על-כן
לניה היתה כל-מבבדיה
הזלילה כי-ראו ערותה גם-
היא נאנחה ותשב אחור:

9 Her uncleanness[clings to her skirts].

She never thought

this would be her end.

She descended amazingly low.

(There is no one) to comfort her.

Behold, Adonai, my affliction,

(because the enemy) is triumphant.

ט טמאתה בשוליה לא זכרה
אחרייתה ותירד פלאים אין
מנחם לה ראה יהנה את-
עניי כי הגדיל אויב:

10 The oppressor has spread out
his hand
over everything that she treasured.
For she saw the nations
invade her holy place,
whom You had forbidden
to attend Your assembly.

10 יָדוֹ פָּרַשׁ צָר עַל כָּל־
מַחְמֹדֶיהָ כִּי־רָאֲתָהּ גּוֹיִם בָּאוּ
מִקִּדְשָׁהּ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָהּ לֹא־
יָבֹאוּ בִּקְהָל לָךְ:

11 All her people are sighing,
searching for bread.
They gave up their most precious things
in[exchange for food],
to restore their life.
See, Adonai, and behold,
for I have become so despised.

11 כָּל־עַמָּה נֹאנְחִים מְבַקְשִׁים
לֶחֶם נָתְנוּ מַחְמֹדֵיהֶם בְּאֶכֶל
לְהַשִּׁיב נַפְשׁ רְאֵה יְהוָה
וְהִבִּיטָה כִּי הֵיטִי זָוָלָהָ:

12 May it not befall you,
all you who pass by!
Behold, and see
if there be pain like my pain
which was meted out to me.
with which Adonai has afflicted me
on the day of His fierce anger.

12 לֹא אֲלִיכֶם כָּל־עֲבְרֵי דָרֶךְ
הַבִּיטוּ וּרְאוּ אִם־יֵשׁ מִכְאוֹב
בְּמִכְאֹבִי אֲשֶׁר עֻלְלָל לִי אֲשֶׁר
הוֹנָה יְהוָה בְּיוֹם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ:

13 From on high
 he sent a fire into my bones,
 which overpowered them.
 He spread a net for my feet;
 he hurled me backwards.
 He has left me deserted.
 All day long I endure sickness.

מ 13 מִמָּרוֹם שָׁלַח אֵשׁ בְּעֲצָמָי
 וַיִּרְבֶּה פָרַשׁ רֶשֶׁת לְרַגְלִי
 הֵשִׁבָנִי אֲחֹזֵר נִתְּנִי שְׂמָמָה
 כָּל-הַיּוֹם דָּוָה:

14 Weighing me down
 is the yoke of my transgressions.
 By His hand they were lashed,
 and thrust upon my neck;
 It saps my strength.
 The Lord has given me over
 into hands that I can't withstand.

נ 14 נִשְׁקַר עַל פִּשְׁעֵי בִידֹי יִשְׁתַּרְנֵנִי
 עָלוּ עַל-צִוְּאָרִי הַכְּשִׁיל כְּחִי
 נִתְּנִי אֲדָנִי בְיָדִי לֹא-אוּכָל
 קוֹם:

15 The Lord has trampled
 all the warriors that are in my midst.
 He has called against me
 an assembly to crush my young men.
 [As in a press], the Lord has trodden
 fair maiden, daughter of Judah.

ס 15 סָלָה כָּל-אֲבִירֵי אֲדָנִי
 בְּקֶרְבִי קָרָא עָלַי מוֹעֵד
 לְשֹׁבֵר בַּחוּרֵי גֵת דָּבָר אֲדָנִי
 לְבַתּוּלָת בֵּת-יְהוּדָה:

16 [For all of these things] I am crying.
 My eyes—my eyes are flowing in tears,
 because so far[from me]
 is any comforter
 to restore my soul.
 My children are in despair
 because the enemy
 has proved too strong.

ע 16 עַל־אֵלֶּיךָ אֲנִי בֹכֶיָה עֵינַי |
 עֵינַי יִרְדּוּ מִיָּם כִּי־רַחֵם
 מִמֶּנִּי מְנַחֵם מֹשִׁיב נַפְשִׁי הָיָה
 בְּנֵי שׁוֹמְמִים כִּי גֵבֶר אוֹיֵב:

17 Zion stretches out her hands.
 There is[no one] to comfort her.
 God has commanded concerning Jacob
 that his enemies should surround him.
 Jerusalem has become
 a thing unclean among them.

פ 17 פָּרְשָׁה צִיּוֹן בְּיָדֶיהָ אֵין מְנַחֵם
 לָהּ צָוָה יְהוָה לִיעֲקֹב סְבִיבוֹ
 צָרָיו הִתְחַה יְרוּשָׁלַם לְגִדָּה
 בִּינֵיהֶם:

18 Righteous is He, Adonai,
 for I rebelled against His word.
 Listen now, all you peoples,
 and behold my agony.
 My maidens and young men
 walked into captivity.

צ 18 צַדִּיק הוּא יְהוָה כִּי־פִיהוּ
 מְרִיתִי שְׁמַעוּ־נָא כָּל־עַמִּים
 וּרְאוּ מַכְאֲבִי בְּתוֹלְתִי וּבְחוּרֵי
 הָלְכוּ בַשָּׁבִי:

19 I called to my lovers:

they deceived me.

My priests and my elders,

breathed their last inside the city,

as they sought food for themselves

to restore their souls.

ק 19 קראתי למאהבי תמה רמוני
כהני וזקני בעיר גועו כי-
בקשו אכל למו וישבו את-
נפשם :

20 See, Adonai, my distress;

my innards are churning.

My heart has turned over within me,

because I rebelled so grievously.

Outside, the sword strikes down,

At home, it's like death.

ך 20 ראה יהוה כי-צר-לי מעי
חמרמרו נהפך לבי בקרבי
כי מרו מריתי מחוץ שבלה-
חרב בבית כמות :

21 They have heard that I am sighing.

There is none to give comfort to me.

(All of my enemies)

heard of my plight and rejoiced,

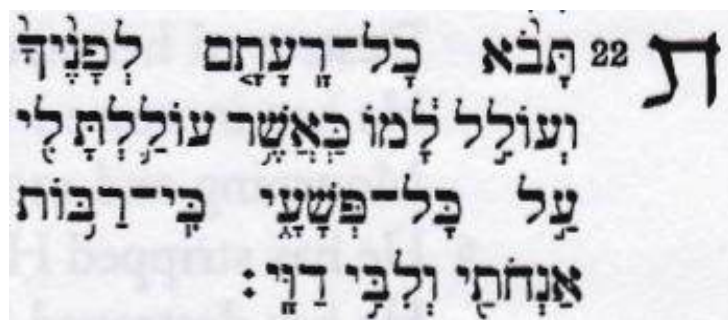
for it was You who have done it.

Bring the day that you proclaimed—

let them become like me.

ש 21 שמעו כי נאנחה אני אין
מנחם לי כל-איבי שמעו
רעתי ששו כי אתה עשית
הבאת יום-קראת ויהיו
כמוני :

22 Let all their evil come before You,
 and You will treat them
 in the same way as [you have treated me]
 for all my transgressions.
 For great is my groaning, [final melody]
 and my heart is sickened.



CHAPTER 2

1 Alàs, Adonái has darkened
in his anger the daughter of Zion.
He has cast down from heaven
to the earth
the glory of Israel,
and remembered not His footstool,
on the day of his anger.

א 1 אִיכָה־יָעִיב בְּאַפּוֹ | אֲדֹנָי אֶת־
בֵּת־צִיּוֹן הַשְּׁלִיךְ מִשָּׁמַיִם
אֶרֶץ תַּפְאֲרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא־
זָכַר הַדָּם־רַגְלָיו בַּיּוֹם אַפּוֹ:

2 The Lord has laid waste,
showing[no pity].
All of the dwellings of Jacob
He shattered[in his displeasure].
Fair Judah's stronghold,
He has thrown to the ground.
He profaned the kingdom,
and its leaders.

ב 2 בָּלַע אֲדֹנָי לֹא חֲמַל אֶת כָּל־
נְאוֹת יַעֲקֹב הָרַס בְּעִבְרָתוֹ
מִבְצָרֵי בֵּת־יְהוּדָה הִגִּיעַ
לָאֶרֶץ חָלָל מִמְלָכָה וְשָׂרֶיהָ:

3 He cut down, in[burning anger],
all the dignity of Israel.
He turned backward
His[right hand] before the enemy.
He burned through Jacob
like a flaming fire,
consuming on all sides.

ג 3 וַיִּגַּע בַּחֲרִי־אֵף כָּל קֶרֶן
יִשְׂרָאֵל הָשִׁיב אַחֲזֹר יְמִינוֹ
מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וַיִּבְעַר בִּיעָקֹב
כַּאֲשֶׁר לִהְיוֹת אֵשׁ סָבִיב:

4 He has bent his bow [like an enemy];
 poised his right hand like a foe.
 [And he] slew all who delighted the eye.
 In the tent of the daughter of Zion
 He poured out, like fire, His great fury.

ד 4 דָּרַךְ קִשְׁתּוֹ כְּאוֹיֵב נִצָּב יְמִינוֹ
 בָּצָר וַיִּהְיֶה כָּל מְחַמְדֵי-עֵין
 בְּאַהֲלֵ בֵּת-צִיּוֹן שָׁפַךְ כְּאֵשׁ
 חֲמָתוֹ:

5 Adonái became like an enemy;
 He consumed Israel;
 consumed all her citadels;
 destroyed her fortresses.
 He increased in the daughter of Judah
 mourning and lamentation.

ה 5 הָיָה אֲדֹנָי כְּאוֹיֵב בָּלַע
 יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּלַע כָּל-אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ
 שָׁחַת מִבְצָרָיו וַיִּרְבַּ בְּבֵת-
 יְהוּדָה תְּאֵנִיה וְאֵנִיה:

6 He stripped His sukkah
 like it was a garden;
 He shattered His place of meeting.
 He made to be forgotten in Zion
 sabbath and festival.
 He spurned, in the rage of His anger,
 king and priest.

ו 6 וַיִּחַמֵּס בְּנֵן שָׁבוֹ שָׁחַת מִזְבְּחוֹ
 שִׁבְחַת יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן מוֹעֵד
 וְשִׁבְחַת וַיִּנָּאץ בְּזַעַם-אָפוֹ מֶלֶךְ
 וְכֹהֵן:

7 Adonái abhorred His altar;
 abandoned His sanctuary.
 He handed over to the enemy's hand
 the walls of its citadels.
 A great noise
 they made in the house of God,
 as on the day of a festival.

ז 7 זָנַח אֲדֹנָי | מִזְבְּחוֹ נֶאֱרַם מִקְדָּשׁוֹ
 הִסְגִּיר בְּיַד-אוֹיֵב חוֹמֹת
 אֶרְמֻנֹתָיָהּ קוֹל גָּתָנוּ בְּבֵית-
 יְהוָה כִּיּוֹם מוֹעֵד:

8 Adonái resolved to destroy
 the wall of Zion's daughter.
 He stretched out a line.
 He did not draw back His hand,
 from destroying—
 bringing mourning to rampart and wall,
 they crumble together.

ח 8 חָשַׁב יְהוָה | לְהַשְׁחִית חוֹמַת
 בֶּת-צִיּוֹן נָטָה קוֹ לֹא-הִשִּׁיב
 יָדוֹ מִבִּלְעַ נִיאָכַל-תֵּל וְחוֹמָה
 יַחֲדוֹ אִמְלָלוּ:

9 Sunk into the earth are her gates.
 He has smashed her bars into pieces.
 Her king and leaders are in exile;
 there is no torah.
 [And their prophets]:
 they find no vision from Adonai.

ט 9 טָבְעוּ בָאָרֶץ שַׁעֲרֶיהָ אֲבָר
 וְשֹׁבַר בְּרִיחֶיהָ מִלְכָּה וְשָׂרֶיהָ
 בְּגוֹיִם אֵין חוֹרָה גַּם-נְבִיאֶיהָ
 לֹא-מָצְאוּ חֲזוֹן מִיְהוָה:

10 They sit on the ground, silent,
the elders of fair Zion.
They have sprinkled dust on their heads,
and [wrapped themselves] in sackcloth.
The girls bowed their heads
to the ground—
the maidens of Jerusalem.

10 יֵשְׁבוּ לָאָרֶץ יְדָמוּ וְקִנְיָ בַת־
צִיּוֹן הִעָלּוּ עָפָר עַל־רֹאשָׁם
חָנְּרוּ שִׁקִּים הוֹרִידוּ לָאָרֶץ
רֹאשָׁן בְּתוֹלֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם:

11 My eyes waste away with weeping,
my innards are burning,
poured out on the ground are my organs,
at the ruin of my daughter people.
as children—mere infants—are fainting
in the squares of the city.

11 כָּלוּ בְדַמְעוֹת עֵינַי חֲמָרְמָרוּ
מֵעֵי נִשְׁפָּךְ לָאָרֶץ כְּבִדִּי עַל־
שֹׁבֵר בַּת־עַמִּי בַעֲטָף עוֹלָל
וְיוֹנֵק בְּרַחֲבוֹת קִרְיָה:

12 To their mothers they kept asking:
“Where is the grain and wine?”
As they languish like the dying
in the squares of the city.
as their souls ebb away
in the bosoms of their mothers.

12 לְאִמָּתָם יֹאמְרוּ אֵיךְ דָּגָן וְיַיִן
בְּהִתְעַשְׂפָם כְּחָלָל בְּרַחֲבוֹת
עִיר בְּהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ נַפְשָׁם אֶל־
חֵיק אִמָּתָם:

13 How to bear[witness for you]?
 To what can[I compare you],
 O daughter of Jeruśalem?
 To what can I liken you,
 that I may consòle you?
 O maiden, daughter of Zion.
 For great,[like the sea], is your ruin.
 Who can heal you?

מ¹³ מַה-אֶעֱוֹדךָ מַה אֲדַמָּה-לָךְ
 הַבַּת יְרוּשָׁלַם מַה אֲשׁוּה-לָךְ
 וְאֶנְחָמְךָ בְּתוֹלַת בֶּת-צִיּוֹן
 כִּי-גָדוֹל כִּיָּם שְׁבַרְךָ מִי
 יִרְפָּא-לָךְ:

14 Your prôphets envîsioned for you
 delusion and fôlly.
 They did not reveal your iniquities;
 this might have restored your fortunes.
 And what they offered to yôu
 was visions of vanity and deception.

נ¹⁴ נְבִיאֶיךָ חָזוּ לָךְ שָׁוָא וְתַפְּלָה
 וְלֹא-גָלוּ עַל-עֲוֹנוֹךָ לְהָשִׁיב
 שְׁבִיתְךָ וַיִּתְּחוּ לָךְ מִשְׁאוֹת שָׁוָא
 וּמַדְוִיחִים:

15 They cláp their hânds at you,
 all who pass your wâý.
 They hiss, and shâke their hêads
 at the daughter of Jeruśalem:
 “ Is this it? the city
 that was called ‘perfect in beauty’,
 ‘the joy of the whole earth?’ ”

ס¹⁵ סָפְקוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּפִים כָּל-עַבְרֵי
 דָּרְךָ שָׁרְקוּ וַיִּנְעֻוּ רֹאשָׁם עַל-
 בַּת יְרוּשָׁלַם הַזֹּאת הָעִיר
 שֶׁאֲמָרוּ כְּלִילַת יָפִי מְשׁוּשׁ
 לְכָל-הָאָרֶץ:

16 They open their mouths against you,
all your enemies.

They whistle and grind their teeth.

They say, "We devoured her."

Indeed this is the day
that [we have been waiting for].

We have arrived; we have seen it.

פ 16 פָּצוּ עַל־יָדָם בֵּיהֶם כָּל־אֹיְבֵיהֶם
שָׂרְקוּ וַיִּחְרְקוּ־שֵׁן אָמְרוּ
בִּלְעָנֵנוּ אֵף זֶה הַיּוֹם שֶׁקִּוִּינוּהוּ
מֵצֵאוֹ רָאִינוּ:

17 God has accomplished

what He Has purposed.

He fulfilled His decree,

that he commanded from days of old.

He tore down, and did not pity.

He let an enemy rejoice over you.

He raised the pride of your foes.

ע 17 עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם בַּעֲצָה
אֲמָרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִיָּמֵי־קֶדֶם
הָרָם וְלֹא חָמַל וַיִּשְׂמַח עַל־יָדָם
אֹיֵב הָרִים קֶרֶן צָרֵיהֶם:

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord.

Walls of the [daughter of Zion]

Let tears run down like a river.

Day and night, give yourself no respite.

Don't let even your eyes find rest.

צ 18 צָעַק לָבָם אֶל־אֲדֹנָי חוֹמַת
בֵּית־צִיּוֹן הוֹרִידִי בִּנְחָל
דָּמָעָה יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה אֶל־תִּתְּנִי
פּוֹנֵת לֵךְ אֶל־תִּדְּם בֵּית־
עֵינֶיךָ:

19 Arise! Cry out in the night
 at the beginning of the watches.
 Pour out your heart like water.
 before the face of Adonai.
 Lift up to Him your hands,
 for the life of your young children
 who swoon from hunger
 at every street corner.

ק 19 קומי | רני בליל לראש
 אשִׁמְרוֹת שְׁכֵבִי בַּמַּיִם לַבֹּקֶד
 נִבַּח פִּנֵּי אֲדֹנָי שְׂאֵי אֵלָיו בַּפִּיךָ
 עַל-נַפְשׁ עוֹלָלֶיךָ הָעֲטוּפִים
 בָּרָעַב בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חֻצוֹת:

20 See, Adonai, and behold:
 whom have you ever treated so?
 Should the women eat their little ones,
 the children they have nursed?
 Should there be slain,
 in God's holy place, priest and prophet?

ך 20 רֵא וְהִנֵּה וְהִבִּיטָה לְמִי
 עוֹלָלָתָ כִּה אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָּה
 נָשִׁים פְּרִים עָלֶי עֲטָחִים
 אִם-יִהְיֶה בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כִּתּוּן
 וְנָבִיא:

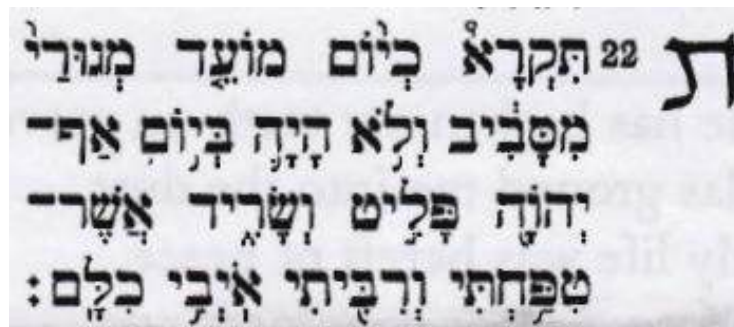
21 On the ground, in the streets
 they lie, young and old.
 My maidens and young men,
 fell by the sword.
 You slew them on the day of your anger.
 You slaughtered them;
 you showed no mercy.

ש 21 שָׁכְבוּ לָאָרֶץ חֻצוֹת נַעַר וְזָקֵן
 בְּתוֹלְתִי וּבְחוּרֵי נַפְלִי בַּחֶרֶב
 הִרְגָּתָ בַּיּוֹם אַפְּךָ טִבַּחְתָּ לֹא
 חֲמִלְתָּ:

22 [You invited]—as on a[feast day]—
my neighbors from all around.

There were none,
on the day of God's wrath:
refugees or survivors.

Those that I nursed and brought up,
[final melody]
my enemy has wiped out.



CHAPTER 3 [special melody—see note below]

1-3 I am the man

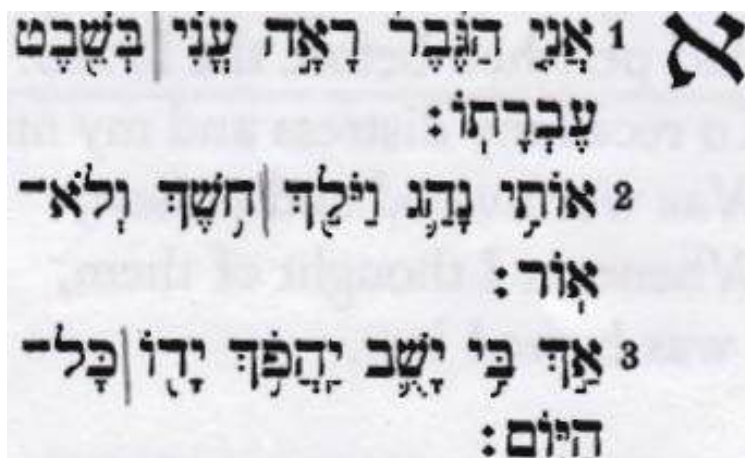
who has seen affliction↗

by the rod of his anger.

Me—he has lead and driven↑

in darkness, not in light.

Surely on me He brings down His hand↘
the whole day long.

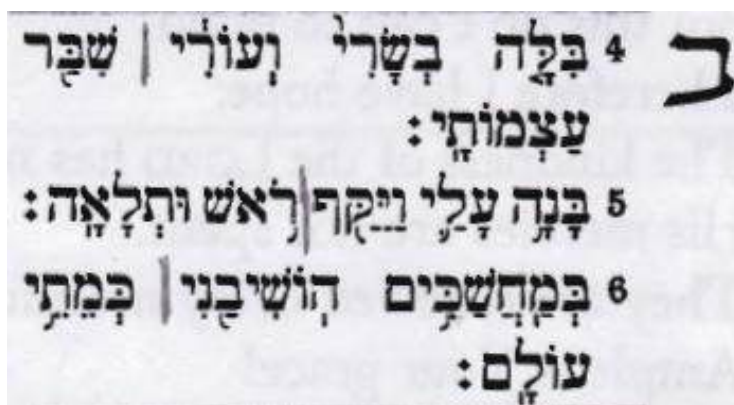


4-6 He wore away my flesh and skin↗,

and shattered my bones.

He has besieged me and surrounded me↑
with bitterness and woe.

He has made me dwell in darkness↘
like men long dead.



7-9 He has walled me in

till I can't escape↗.

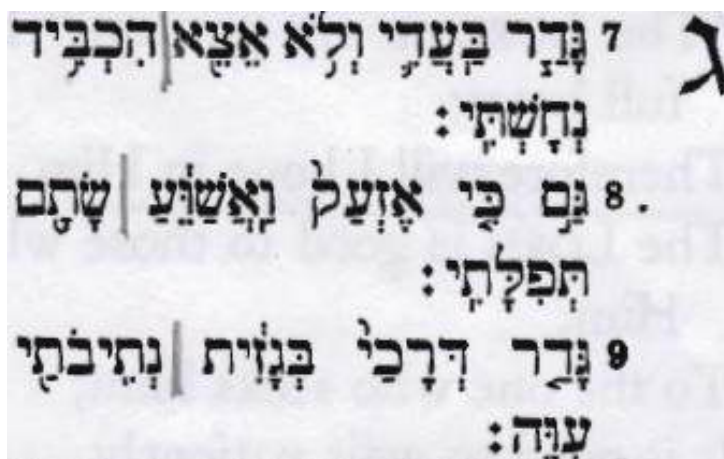
He has weighed me down with chains.

And when I cry and plead↑

He shuts out my prayer.

He has blocked my way with boulders↘.

He has twisted my path.



10-12 He is a lurking bear to me↗,
a lion in hiding.

He has filled my path with thorns↑,
torn me in pieces, left me forlorn.

He has directed His bow↘
and made me the arrow's mark.

13-15 He shot into my vitals↗
the arrows of His quiver.

I am a derision to my people↑,
they taunt me all day long.

He has filled me up with bitterness↘,
and made me drink wormwood.

16-18 He has broken my teeth with
gravel↗, and covered me with ashes.

He has bereft me of all peace↑;
I forgot what it is to prosper.

I said, "my strength has perished↘,
even my hope in God."

ד 10 נָלַב אֶרֶב הוּא לִי | אֲרִיָּה
בְּמַסְתָּרִים:
11 דָּרְכֵי סוּרָר וַיַּפְשִׁטֵנִי | שָׁמְנִי
שׁוֹמֵם:
12 דָּרְדָּר קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיַּצִּיבֵנִי | בַּמִּטְרָא
לַחֲץ:

ה 13 הֵבִיא בְּכִלָּיָתִי | בְּנִי אֲשַׁפְתּוּ:
14 הָיִיתִי שְׂחָק לְכָל-עַמִּי | וַגִּינָתָם
כָּל-הַיּוֹם:
15 הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי בְּמַרוֹרִים | הֶרְוֵנִי
לְעֵנָה:

ו 16 וַיִּגְרַם בְּחֶצֶץ שָׁנִי | הִכְפִּישָׁנִי
בְּאַפָּר:
17 וַתִּזְנַח מִשְׁלֹם נַפְשִׁי | נָשִׁיתִי
טוֹבָה:
18 וַאֲמַר אֶבְרַח | וַתִּחוּלָּתִי
מִיְּהוָה:

19-21 Remember my afflictions and
 sorrow↗, the wormwood and the gall.
 My soul remembers clearly↑,
 and is now bowed down within me.
 Here's what I'll tell my heart↘,
 and so recover hope:

ז 19 זְכַר-עֲנִי וּמְרוּרִי | לַעֲנָה
 וְרָאשׁ:
 20 זְכוֹר תִּזְכּוֹר | וְתִשָּׁחַ עָלַי
 נַפְשִׁי:
 21 זֹאת אֲשִׁיב אֶל-לִבִּי | עַל-בֶּן
 אוֹחִיל:

22-24 The kindness of the Lord has not
 ended↗, His mercies not exhausted.
 They are new every morning↑.
Raba emunatecha.
 “My portion is God”, says my soul↘, thus
 do I hope in Him.

ח 22 חֲסִדֵּי יְהוָה כִּי לֹא-תִמְנוּ | כִּי
 לֹא-כָלוּ בְחַמֵּיו:
 23 חֲדָשִׁים לְבָקָרִים | רַבָּה
 אֱמוּנָתְךָ:
 24 חֲלָקֵי יְהוָה אִמְרָה נַפְשִׁי | עַל-
 בֶּן אוֹחִיל לוֹ:

25-27 God is good to the one who
 trusts↗, to every soul that seeks Him.
 It is good to wait in silence↑
 for salvation from Adonai.
 It is good that a man bear the yoke↘
 from his youth and on.

ט 25 טוֹב יְהוָה לִקְוֹ | לְנַפֵּשׁ
 תִּדְרָשָׁנּוּ:
 26 טוֹב וַיְחִיל וְדוֹמָם | לְתִשׁוּעָתָה
 יְהוָה:
 27 טוֹב לִנְקָר כִּי-יֵשֶׁא | עַל
 בְּנֵעוּרָיו:

28-30 Let him sit alone in silence↗,

because God lays it upon him,

to put his lips to the dust↑:

perhaps there still is hope.

Let him offer his cheek to the smiter↘.

and suffer all men's taunts.

28 יֵשֶׁב בְּדָרֶךְ וַיְהִי כִּי נָטַל עָלָיו:
29 יָתֹן בְּעַפְרָא פִּיהוּ | אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ
תִּקְוָה:
30 יָתֹן לְמַכֵּהוּ לְחִי | יִשָּׁבַע
בְּחִרְפָּה:

31-33 For the Lord will not cast us off↗

forever and ever.

He wounds, but He shows compassion↑,

abundant is His kindness.

For He is loathe to cause pain or grief↘

to the sons of men.

31 כִּי לֹא יִזְנֹחַ לְעוֹלָם | אֲדָנִי:
32 כִּי אִם־הוֹנָה | וְרַחֵם בְּלִב
חֲסָדוֹ:
33 כִּי לֹא עָנָה מִלְּבֹו | וַיִּנֶּה בְּנִי־
אִישׁ:

34-36 To crush under His feet↗

all the prisoners of the earth,

To deny a man his rights↑

before the face of the Most High,

to deprive a man of justice↘,

does not the Lord see it?

34 לְדַכֵּא תַּחַת רַגְלָיו | כָּל אֲסִירֵי
אֶרֶץ:
35 לְהַטּוֹת מִשְׁפָּט־נֶבֶר | נֶגֶד פָּנֵי
עֲלִיוֹן:
36 לְעִוֹת אָדָם בְּרִיבֹו | אֲדָנִי לֹא
רָאָה:

37-39 Who's will can be fulfilled↗,
 if God did not ordain it?
 From the mouth of the Most High↑
 do not good and evil come?
 Of what should a living man complain↘?
 Only for his own sins!

מ 37 מִי זֶה אָמַר וַתְּהִי אֲדֹנָי לֹא
 צִוָּה:
 38 מִפִּי עֲלִיזָן לֹא תֵצֵא הַרְעוֹת
 וְהַטּוֹב:
 39 מִה־יִּתְאוּנוּ אַתָּם חַי נֶגְדְךָ עַל־
 חַטָּאוֹ:
 חַטָּאוֹ:

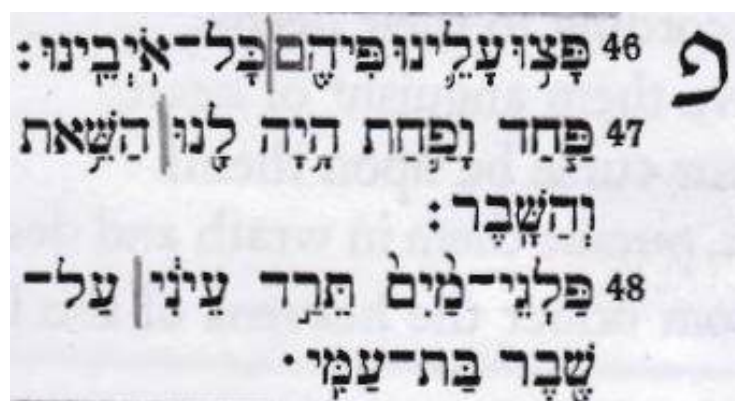
40-42 Let us search and examine our
 ways↗, and return to Adonai.
 Let us lift up our hearts and our hands↑
 to God who is in the heavens.
 We transgressed and we rebelled↘,
 and You have not forgiven.

נ 40 נִחַפְשָׁה דְרָכֵינוּ וְנִחְקֹרָה
 וְנָשׁוּבָה עַד־יְהוָה:
 41 נִשָּׂא לִבֵּנוּ אֶל־כַּפָּיִם אֶל־
 אֵל בַּשָּׁמַיִם:
 42 נִחַנּוּ פִשְׁעֵנוּ וּמַרִּינוּ אַתָּה לֹא
 סָלַחְתָּ:
 סָלַחְתָּ:

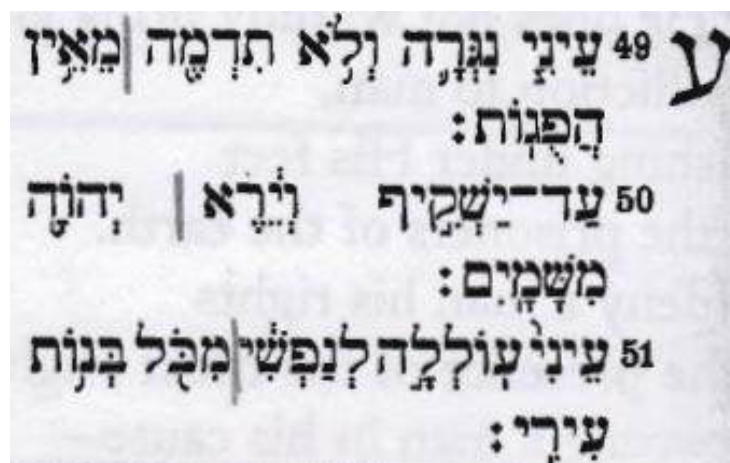
43-45 You wrapped Yourself in wrath
 and pursued↗ us,
 and slain us without pity.
 You covered Yourself with a cloud↑
 so prayer cannot pass through it.
 You have made us filth and refuse↘
 among the nations.

ס 43 סָבֹתָה בָּאֵף וַתִּרְדְּפֵנוּ הַרְגָתָ
 לֹא חַמֶּלְתָּ:
 44 סָכַתָּה בַעֲנָן לְךָ מַעְבֹּר
 תַּפְלָה:
 45 סָחִי וּמָאוֹס חָשִׂיתָנוּ בְּקֶרֶב
 הָעַמִּים:
 הָעַמִּים:

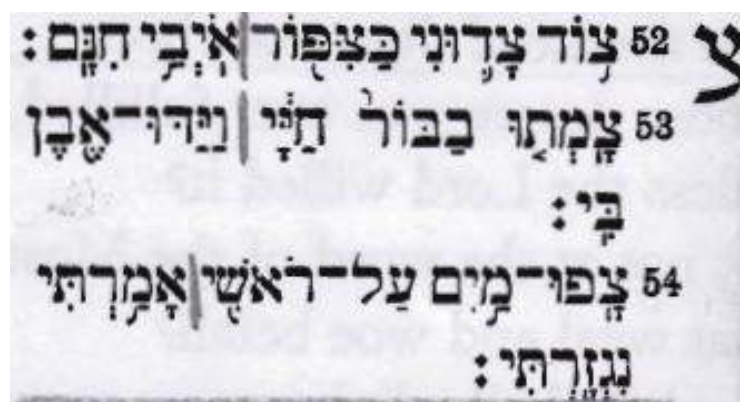
46-48 Our enemies have opened
 their mouths ↗ in chorus against us.
 Panic and pitfall befell us ↑,
 ravages and ruin.
 My eyes run with streams of water ↘
 at my poor people's ruin.



49-51 My eyes flow without ceasing ↗,
 and find no relief.
 Until the Lord looks down ↑
 and sees us from the heavens.
 My eyes are sore with sorrow ↘
 for the maidens of my city.



52-54 They hunted me down
 like a bird ↗,
 those who hate me for no reason.
 They dropped me to die in a dungeon ↑,
 and threw stones down upon me.
 The waters flowed over my head ↘.
 and I said “I am cut off.”



55-57 I called on your name, Adonai↗,
from the depths of the dungeon.

You then heard me crying↑:

“Don’t close your ears to my pleading.”

You drew near on the day

that I called↘ You,

and said to me, “Do not fear!”

ק 55 קראתי שמך יהוה | מבֹּרַח
תַּחֲתֵי־וֹת:
56 קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אֱלֹהֵי-תַעֲלָם
אֲזַנְךָ לִרְוַחְתִּי לְשׁוֹעָתִי:
57 קִרְבָּתָּ בַיּוֹם אֶקְרָאָה | אֶמְרָתְךָ
אֱלֹהֵי-תִירָא:

58-60 You have defended the cause
of my soul↗;

you have redeemed my life.

Adonai, you see how I am wronged↑,

O vindicate my right!

You have seen all of their vengeance↘,

all their designs toward me.

ך 58 רַבָּתָּ אֲדֹנָי רִיבִי נַפְשִׁי | וְנַאֲלָתָה
תִּי:
59 רָאִיתָה יְהוָה עֲוֹנֹתַי | שְׁפֹטָהּ
מִשְׁפָּטִי:
60 רָאִיתָה כָּל-נִקְמָתָם | כָּל-
מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם לִי:

61-63 You have heard their reproach

Adonai ↗,

the schemes they plot against me.

The talk of the men who attack me↑; their
muttering all day long.

Observe their sitting and rising ↘;

I am their taunting song.

ו 61 שְׁמַעְתָּ חֲרָפָתָם יְהוָה | כָּל־
מַחֲשַׁבְתָּם עָלַי :
62 שִׁפְתַי קָמִי וְהִיוּנָם | עָלַי כָּל־
הַיּוֹם :
63 שִׁבְתָּם וְקִיּוּמָתָם הִבִּיטָה | אֲנִי
מִנְּגִינָתָם :

64-66 Pay them back, Adonai ↗

according to their deeds.

Give them anguish of heart↑,

Your curse should be upon them!

Pursue them in wrath

and destroy them ↘,

from under the heaven of God.

ז 64 תָּשִׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּלָה | יְהוָה
כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם :
65 תִּתֵּן לָהֶם מְגִנַּת־לֵב | תִּאֲלָתֶךָ
לָהֶם :
66 תִּרְדֵּף בְּאַף וְתִשְׁמִידֵם | מִתַּחַת
שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה :

CHAPTER 4

1 Alas, the gold is dūllēd,
debased, the fīnēst gold.
Sacred gems are scāttēred
upōn every street corner.

א 1 אֵיכָה יוֹעַם זָהָב יִשָּׁנָה הַבָּתָּחַם
הַטּוֹב תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה אֲבֵנֵי-קֶדֶשׁ
בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוּצוֹת:

2 The sons of Zīōn are prēcious,
[worth their weight] in fine gold.
How they are treated as earthen jūgs,
The work of the potter's hand.

ב 2 בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הַיְקָרִים הַמְּסֻלָּאִים
בַּפֶּז אֵיכָה נִחְשְׁבוּ לַנְּבִלִי-
חֶרֶשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵי יוֹצֵר:

3 Even the jackels present the brēast
and give suck to their young ones.
But my poor people has become crūel,
like the ostriches in the wilderness.

ג 3 גַּם-תַּנִּינִי תִלְצוּ שֵׁד הַיְנִיקוּ
וַיִּרְיֶהוּ בַת-עַמִּי לְאֹכֶל
כִּי עֵינַי בַּמִּדְבָּר:

4 The tóngue of the baby[at the breast]
cleaves to his palate, for thirst.
The young children ask for brēad.
Not one person spares a scrap for them.

ד 4 דָּבַק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק אֶל-חִבּוֹ
בַּצִּמָּא עוֹלָלִים שְׁאֵלוּ לֶחֶם
פָּרֶשׁ אֵין לָהֶם:

5 Those who once ate all the best food
now lie rotting on the street.
Those brought up in scarlet clothing
huddle now on heaps of garbage.

ה 5 הָאֹכְלִים לְמַעֲרֻזִּים נִשְׁמוּ
בַּחוּצוֹת הָאֲמֻנִים עָלֵי תוֹלַעַ
חִבְקוּ אֲשֵׁפָחוֹת:

6 All the crimes of my poor people
have outdone the sins of Sodom.
which was overturned in a moment,
no time for a man to wring his hands.

ו וַיִּגְדֵּל עֲוֹן בְּתַעֲמֵי מַחֲשָׁאֵת
סָלָם הִתְפֹּכָה כְּמוֹ-רָגַע
וְלֹא-תָלוּ בָּהּ יָדַיִם:

7 Her elect ones were purer
even than snow,
and they were whiter still than milk.
Ruddy like rubies was their complexion,
Like the sapphire in their features.

ז זָכוּ נְזִירֶיהָ מִשְׁלֵג צָחוּ מִחֶלֶב
אֲדָמוּ עֵצָם מִפְּנִינִים סָפִיר
גִּזְרָתָם:

8 Now their appearance
is blacker than soot,
They go unrecognized in the streets.
Their skin has shriveled on their bones,
it has become as dry as wood.

ח חָשַׁךְ מִשְׁחֹרַת תַּאֲרָם לֹא נִכְרְוּ
בַּחוּצוֹת צָפַד עוֹרָם עַל-
עֲצָמָם יָבֵשׁ הָיָה כְּעֵץ:

9 We'd rather be slain by the sword
than to find death by starvation,
For these pine away. They are stricken
for lack of the fruits of the field.

ט טוֹבִים הָיוּ חֲלִי-חֶרֶב
מִחֲלִי רָעָב שֶׁהֵם יָזְבוּ
מִדְּקָרִים מִתְּנוּבוֹת שָׂדֵי:

10 With their own hands,
the women of tender hearts
have boiled their own children.
This became their food in the wreckage
of the daughter of my people.

י 10 יְדֵי נָשִׁים רַחֲמָנִיּוֹת בִּשְׁלוּ
וְלִדְיָתָן הָיוּ לְבָרוֹת לָמוֹ
בַּשֶּׁבֶר בַּת-עַמִּי:

11 The Lord has vented all His fury.
He poured out His burning anger.
And he has kindled a fire in Zion
that has devoured its foundations.

כ 11 כָּלָה יְהוָה אֶת-חֲמָתוֹ שָׁפוֹךְ
חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ וַיִּצַּת-אֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן
וְהֵאכֵל יְסֻדֶיהָ:

12 The kings of the earth
did not believe,
nor did anyone in all the world,
that a foe or an enemy could ever enter
into the gates of Jerusalem.

ל 12 לֹא הָאֱמִינִי מַלְכֵי-אֶרֶץ וְכָל
יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל כִּי יָבֹא צָר וְאוֹיֵב
בַּשַּׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם:

13 From the sins of her prophets
and the crimes of her priests,
who had shed in her midst
the blood of the righteous ones.

מ 13 מִחַטָּאת נְבִיאֶיהָ עֲוֹנֹת כֹּהֲנֶיהָ
הַשֹּׁפְכִים בְּקִרְבָּהָ דָם
צְדִיקִים:

14 They roamed like [blind men] through
the streets, being defiled with blood.
so that no one there would dare
to brush up against their clothing.

14 נָעוּ עוֹרִים בְּחוּצוֹת נִגְאָלוּ
בַּדָּם בָּלֹא יוֹכְלוּ יָגֵעוּ
בְּלִבְשֵׁיהֶם:

15 “Get away, [unclean one]!”
were the cries of [people to them].
“Keep away! Do not touch us!”
So they fled away and now wander.
People said among the nations:
“They may no longer sojourn here.”

15 סִוְרוּ טִמְאָה קִרְאוּ לָמוֹ סִוְרוּ
סִוְרוּ אֶל-תַּנְעוּ כִּי נָצוּ גַם-
נָעוּ אָמְרוּ בְּנוֹת לֹא יוֹסִפוּ
לָגוֹר:

16 The face of God has dispersed them.
He will no more give them a glance.
They respected the priests no longer,
paid no attention to the prophets.

16 פָּנֵי יְהוָה חֲלָקָם לֹא יוֹסִיף
לְהִבִּיטָם פָּנֵי כֹהֲנִים לֹא נִשְׁאוּ
זָקֵנִים לֹא תִנְנוּ:

17 Our eyes are strained and failing,
watching vainly for our deliverance.
We were watching for a nation [Egypt]
that was never there to save us.

17 עוֹדִינָה תִכְלִינָה עֵינֵינוּ אֶל-
עֲזָרָתֵנוּ הַבֵּל בְּצַפִּיתָנוּ צִפִּינוּ
אֶל-גּוֹי לֹא יוֹשֵׁעַ:

18 Our enemies eyed our steps,
so we could not walk in our streets.
Our doom is near. Our days are over,
yea our end has come.

צ 18 צָדוּ צֹעְדֵינוּ מִלֶּכֶת
בְּרַחֲבֵינוּ קָרַב קִצְנוּ מִלְאוּ
יָמֵינוּ כִּי־בָא קִצְנוּ:

19 They were swifter—our pursuers—
than the eagles in the sky.
In the mountains, they did hunt us,
in the desert, laid in wait for us.

ק 19 קָלִים הָיוּ רֹדְפֵינוּ מִנְּשָׁרֵי
שָׁמַיִם עַל־הַהָרִים דָּלְקָנוּ
בַּמִּדְבָּר אֶרְבוּ לָנוּ:

20 The breath of our nostrils,
God's own anointed [King Josiah],
our king was captured in their traps,
of whom we had said,
“Under his shadow,
we will live among the nations.”

ך 20 רוּחַ אֲפִינוּ מָשִׁיחַ יְהוָה נִלְכָּד
בַּשְּׁחִיתוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְנוּ
בְּצִלּוֹ נַחֲיָה בְּגוֹיִם:

21 Rejoice and exult, daughter of Edom,
you that dwell in the land of Uz.
To you in turn the cup will pass.
It will make you drunk;
you will show your nakedness.

ע 21 שִׂישׁ וְשִׂמְחָה בַּת־אֱדוֹם
יֹשֶׁבֶתוֹ בְּאֶרֶץ עוֹז נִסְעָלֶיהָ
תֵּעָבֶר־כּוֹס תִּשְׁכָּר וְתִתְעָרִי:

22 Your crime is atoned for,
daughter of Zion.

He will no more send you
into captivity.

But daughter of Edom,
your guilt He will punish,
your transgressions [final melody]
will be laid bare.

22 תָּם-עֲוֹנֶיךָ בֵּת-צִיּוֹן לֹא יוֹסִיף
לְהַגְלוֹתְךָ פֶּקֶד עֲוֹנֶיךָ בֵּת-
אֱדוֹם וְגַלְיָה עַל-חַטֹּאתֶיךָ:

CHAPTER 5

1 Recall, Adonai, what has befallen us.
Behold and see our disgrace.

1 זְכוֹר יְהוָה מַה--הָיָה לָנוּ
הַבֵּיט וּרְאֵה אֶת--חַרְפֹּתֵינוּ:

2 Our inheritance turned over to strangers,
and our houses unto aliens.

2 נָחֲלֵתָנוּ נְהַפְכָה לְזָרִים בְּתֵינוּ
לְנֹכָרִים:

3 We have become like orphans.
There is no father.
And our mothers are as widows.

3 יְתוּמִים הָייֵנוּ, אֵין אָב אֲמֹתֵינוּ
בְּאַלְמָנוֹת:

4 Our own water—
we pay money to drink it.
And our firewood we get for a price.

4 מִיַּמֵּינוּ בְּכֶסֶף שְׁתִּינוּ עֵצֵינוּ
בְּמַחִיר יִבְאוּ:

5 [To our very] necks, we are pursued.
We labor, but nothing is left to us.

5 עַל צַוְאַרְנוּ נִרְדָּפְנוּ יִגְעֵנוּ, לֹא
הוּנַח--לָנוּ:

6 To Egypt we stretched out a hand,
and to Assyria, just to get enough bread.

6 מִצְרַיִם נָתַנוּ יָד אֲשׁוּר לְשֹׁכֵעַ
לֶחֶם:

7 Our fathers have sinned, and are
no more. We have all suffered
for their iniquities.

7 אֲבֹתֵינוּ חָטְאוּ, אֵינָם, אֲנַחְנוּ
עֹנִיתֵיהֶם סָבְלָנוּ:

8 Slaves ruled over us.

There is none to deliver us
from their hand.

8 עֲבָדִים מָשְׁלוּ בָנוּ פֶּרֶק אֵין
מִידָם:

9 At the risk of our lives,

we get our bread,
because of the sword of the wilderness.

9 בְּנַפְשֵׁנוּ נָבִיא לַחֲמֵנוּ מִפָּנֵי
תֶּרֶב הַמִּדְבָּר:

10 Our skin is hot like a furnace.

because of the burning heat of famine.

10 עוֹרֵנוּ כְּתִנּוֹר נִבְכָּרוּ מִפָּנֵי
זֶלַע פּוֹת רָעָב:

11 The women in Zion were ravaged,
the maidens in the towns of Judah.

11 נָשִׁים בְּצִיּוֹן עָנוּ כְּחֵלֶת בְּעָרֵי
יְהוּדָה:

12 The leaders have been hanged
by their hands.

The faces of elders are not respected.

12 שָׂרִים בִּידָם נָתְלוּ פָנֵי זִקְנִים
לֹא נִהְדָּרוּ:

13 Young men carry a millstone. And
children stagger under loads of wood.

13 בְּחוּרִים טָחוּז נָשְׂאוּ וְנַעֲרִים
בְּעֵץ כָּשְׁלוּ:

14 The elders are gone from the gate,
the young men from their music.

14 זִקְנִים מִשַּׁעַר שָׁבְתוּ בְּחוּרִים
מִנְּגִינָתָם:

15 The joy in our hearts has vanished,
our dancing has turned into mourning.

15 שִׁבְתָּ מְשׁוֹשׁ לִבֵּנוּ נִהְפָּךְ לְאֵבֶל
מִחֻלָּנוּ:

16 The crown has fallen from our heads.
Woe to us, for we have sinned.

16 נָפְלָה עֲטֹרַת רִאשֵׁנוּ אוֹי־
נָא לָנוּ כִּי חָטֵאנוּ:

17 Because of this, our hearts are
sickened. This is why our eyes grow dim.

17 עַל־זֶה הָיָה דְּרוֹה לִבֵּנוּ עַל־
אֵלֶּה חָשְׁכוּ עֵינֵינוּ:

18 For the mountain of Zion, which lies
desolate, while the foxes prowl over it.

18 עַל הַר־צִיּוֹן שְׁשָׁמִם שׁוֹעֲלִים
הַלְכוּ־בּוֹ:

19 Yet You Adonai will sit forever
upon Your throne,
through all generations.

19 אַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב
בְּסֶאֱף לְדוֹר וָדוֹר:

20 You cannot mean to forget us forever,
and forsake us for all time?

20 לָמָּה לִנְצַחַת תִּשְׁכַּחַנוּ תַּעֲזֹבֵנוּ
לְאַרְבַּע יָמִים:

21 Turn us back to Yourself God,
and we shall return.
Renew our days as of old.

21 הָשִׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

22 [You can't] have rejected us utterly.
You have raged against us, it is enough.

22 בִּי אֱ-לֹהִים מִאֲסֻתְּנוּ קִצְפָּתָה
עָלֵינוּ עַד-מְאֹד :

21 Turn us back to Yourself God,
and we shall return.

21 הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְנָשׁוּבָה
תִּקְרַשׁ יָמֵינוּ בְּקֶדֶם :

[final melody] Renew our days as of old.

*This English version of Lamentations has been prepared by drawing on
the following translations:*

*The Stone Edition Tanach, JPS, H.L. Ginsberg, David Seidenberg,
James Moffat, Jerusalem Bible, New King James Bible*

The goal was to create an English reading that can be sung to the traditional tropes that are used for the Hebrew, but which follows the Hebrew with its tropes as closely as possible.

If one examines the authoritative translations, it becomes clear that there are many passages in the text of whose meaning the experts are unsure. In those situations I attempted to choose a reading which scans well with the melody, and which agrees with some (or at least one) of the authoritative renderings.

The trope melodies I used were taken from the book CHANTING THE HEBREW BIBLE by Joshua R. Jacobson. In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the following trope symbols:

mercha tip'cha munach tevir kadma/pashta geresh gershayim

However, I left these the way they are:

telisha katana telisha gedola

I also indicate a mercha/tipcha pair or a kadma/geresh pair by “wrapping it around” the phrase which will have the combined melody, as in:

⏟Renew our days, ⏟She weeps bitterly⏟

I also frequently indicate an entire English phrase to be chanted to a single trope melody, as in:
[clings to her skirts]

Chapter 3 of Lamentations is sung by singing each set of three verses to three melodies, in turn. I grouped each set of three verses together, as in 1-3, 4-6, etc. The first two of the three melodies end their first half (the “half-cadence”) with a high note, and the third with a “falling tone”. I have marked the corresponding syllable with an arrow:

↗ for the high note or half-cadence of the first melody, ↑ for the high note of the second melody, and ↘ for the “falling tone” of the third melody.