

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 363 – Take Up An Lamentation Through Devoured Fruit (Ezekiel 19:1-14)

1. Who was Ezekiel to take up a lamentation for?

The princes of Israel: *“Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel” (Ezekiel 19:1).*

- Part of what Ezekiel was shown was lamentations (**Ezekiel 2:10**). With that, Ezekiel was to lament in front of them, for a reason (**Ezekiel 21:1-7**).
- The prophets did lament over what they heard, saw, and knew was to come (**Psalms 119:53; 136, Jeremiah 9:1, Jeremiah 13:17, Lamentations 2:11, Luke 19:41-44, and Romans 9:1-3**).
- Ezekiel was to lament for the princes of Israel for they did evil (**Nehemiah 9:34, Isaiah 1:23, Jeremiah 32:30-32, Ezekiel 12:8-15, Ezekiel 22:27, and Micah 3:1-12**) and were going to answer accordingly (**Jeremiah 34:21**).
- Ezekiel was also shown lamentations for those outside of Israel (**Ezekiel 27:1-2; 32, Ezekiel 28:12, and Ezekiel 32:1-2; 16**).

2. In this lamentation, what happened to the first whelp that became a lion?

He was trapped and carried off in chains to Egypt: *“(2) And say, What is thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions. (3) And she brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men. (4) The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt” (Ezekiel 19:2-4).*

- Before I begin giving some things to think about in this context, let me say that there may be no specific meaning to the images presented. They just may illustrate that God’s people have been taken captive and they weren’t raised for that (**Exodus 19:5-6 and Deuteronomy 7:6-26**). There could also be a meaning I have not considered, thought of, become aware of, etc. I could be making this a lot harder than it is too. For the pleasure of study and consideration, I submit the following:
- This lamentation is a lot of fun to think about. Again, I am NOT sure I have the answers. The mother lioness first made me think all the way back to the forefathers (**Genesis 35:22-26; cf. Exodus 32:13**).
 - * Jacob’s [Israel; **Genesis 32:28**] sons were taken into Egypt and ultimately were put in chains (**Exodus 1:1-2:25**). That could be it, but Moses was chosen by the Lord to set them free (**Exodus 3:1-15:27**). Would that remove that understanding?
 - * Later, Israel divided (**I Kings 11:1-12:33**), ten tribes were taken by Assyria to never be reestablished (**II Kings 17:23**). After that, Judah and Benjamin ended up being taken into Babylon (**I Chronicles 9:1**). Could that be the second lion in this context? This made some sense, briefly with the context following, BUT....

- While it makes SOME [very little] sense to think about what is above, there is a more immediate and sensible possibility...
 - * The lioness could be the tribe of Judah (**Genesis 49:9**; as these kings are decedents of Judah) **or** it could be Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah (more on that in question 3). There are some possible problems with considering the mother being Hamutal. As we get to the end of the chapter, Judah as the mother makes the most sense (probably).
 - * The first lion, that was taken to Egypt, could be King Jehoahaz the son of Josiah who was evil and would account for being a predator (**Jeremiah 22:11-19**). The history supports this possibility (**II Kings 23:34** and **II Chronicles 36:1-4**). That makes some immediate sense.

3. In this lamentation, what happened to the second whelp that became a lion?

He was trapped and carried off in chains to Babylon: *"(5) Now when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion. (6) And he went up and down among the lions, he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men. (7) And he knew their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring. (8) Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: he was taken in their pit. (9) And they put him in ward in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel"* (**Ezekiel 19:5-9**).

- Hope was lost when the first lion was lost. They should know not to trust in men (**Psalms 118:8-9**; **146:3**).
- Now, instead of turning to the Lord (**Psalms 146:5** and **Jeremiah 17:7**), another hope is going to arise.
- Back to the fun in thought, with the disclaimer that these are just THOUGHTS and may not be the figures in this context. The second young lion could be Eliakim [Jehoiakim] as the timeline would fit (**II Chronicles 36:1-6**). Judah in general would be the mother if this is the explanation, for Jehoiakim's mother was not Hamutal, but Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah (**II Kings 23:36**).
- Another possibility, could be the second lion being Zedekiah for his mother was Hamutal the same as was Jehoahaz (**II Kings 24:18** and **Jeremiah 52:1**). Zedekiah was evil and was carried into Babylon in chains even somewhat more than Jehoikiam (**II Kings 25:1-7** and **Jeremiah 52:1-11**). Here is the problem with that, Jehoiachin was a king in-between Jehoiakim and Zedekiah (**II Kings 24:10-17**). Yet, this second lion was said to not have his voice heard again upon the mountains of Israel. That may not have been the case with Jehoiachin. Sometime after Zedekiah, Jehoiachin was released from prison and put back in some position of sorts (**II Kings 25:27-30**). Does that remove Jehoiachin or support him? Could this make sense in light of **Ezekiel 1:1-2**?

- So, beats me!! Any, all, or none of the above could be what is discussed here.
- The ultimate point is, these leaders in Israel have failed the people as the long history of Israel repeats over and over again (**Isaiah 9:16**).

4. In this lamentation, what happens to the mother?

Like a vine that was fruitful, she was plucked up, replanted in a dry and thirsty land, and devoured her fruit to the point where no ruler was to come forth:

*“(10) Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters. (11) And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches. (12) But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them. (13) And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. (14) And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation” (**Ezekiel 19:10-14**).*

- Long ago, from this present context, God told Israel not to choose a king over them aside from the Lord (**I Samuel 8:1-22**). As many times have come and gone, their kings have failed to lead them and deliver them.
- As we proceed here, it is sensible to go back and say we are just talking about Israel (Judah specifically) as the mother. Israel was planted in a way to be fruitful (**Deuteronomy 6:10-11**, **Deuteronomy 8:1-10**, and **Ezekiel 20:5-6**).
- The blood of Israel ran through the tribe of Judah (**Genesis 43:8** and **Isaiah 5:1-7**).
- Israel had many rulers rise and be seen (**Ezra 4:20**).
- She was plucked up (**Psalms 52:1-5** and **Ezekiel 15:6-8**).
- She was planted in a dry and thirsty ground (**Hosea 2:1-13**).
- Fire devoured her fruit (**II Chronicles 36:17-21** and **Jeremiah 38:23**).
- Remember though, God’s plan was to restore them (**Jeremiah 31:28**).