The Characterization of Daughter Zion in Lamentations 1:1-22

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Preface

This paper seeks to address the characterization of Daughter Zion in Lamentations 1:1-22, and ultimately her relationship with YHWH and others in the five poems of Lamentations. This paper is very much a work in progress and is directly related to my current doctoral research. Lamentations has long been of keen interest to me, from the painful core content to the magnificent poetry which it encapsulates. These many points of interest and questions have led me to ultimately seek an answer to the following: how is Daughter Zion personified, and how is she characterized? How is YHWH portrayed, and how does the book showcase the relationship between Daughter Zion and others, especially YHWH? The methodology used for answering this question will be a close reading of the text, attention to various poetic devices, and analyzing the differences between personification and characterization.[1]

Points for Discussion:

- The literary usage of persona and character, particularly in biblical texts
- The theme of unending suffering, and lack of a comforter for Daughter Zion
- The recent movement toward reading biblical poetry as "poetry", with engagement of close readings (Dobbs-Allsopp, 2015; and Couey & James, 2018)
- The doubled meanings (layers of figurative and literal) within the poem, related to the personification of Daughter Zion as a city-woman

[1] By close reading, I mean the literary reading (and re-reading) of a text which pays careful attention to the lines, words, phrases, and images of the text; and then secondly, these readings result in an argument of its own extended from this reading. This process includes reading of the poem as a whole, and then re-reading and annotating the poem. Such a process aims to unearth the key words and phrases, specific images, unexpected or surprising anecdotes, attention to whom is speaking and when, as well as what allusions are being made with the imagery and phrasing. For a more thorough definition, justification, and written example, see Dobbs-Allsopp, *On Biblical Poetry*, Intro and Ch. 5. My version of a close reading is limited due to word count constraints, but I have attempted in this essay to highlight strophe-by-strophe the context of the poem, the speakers, the images and their allusions, as well as the significance of these aspects. As this is a preliminary attempt at such a reading, it is imperfect and incomplete, and has much work left to be done. For a more in-depth study of close reading in biblical texts, see Couey and James, *Biblical Poetry*, 2018.

1. Introduction and Orientation to the Book of Lamentations

Lamentations 1 begins the lament poems of the book and is composed of sixty-six lines which are arranged in the acrostic structure via twenty-two even strophes, with the exception of v. 7.[2] The current scholarly consensus regards Lamentations as a work of high literary and poetic merit. The book is comparable to the psalms, but stands out from the psalms in content, structure, and language.[3] The opening poem does not hold to a logical thought-flow, but rather moves from image to image, collating thoughts as it describes the devastated state of the city-woman.[4] This

[2] While the rest of Lam 1 is composed of even strophes with six lines each, v. 7 has an additional two lines for a total of eight lines instead of six. Salters translates in such a way as to make v. 7 appear even with the rest of the poem, but in his comments he notes that there indeed is an extra line added here in the Hebrew text (Salters, *Lamentations*, 55). The scholarly consensus on this extra line is that it is a result of interpolation or later expansion. The various versions presuppose the line as extra material; even 4QLam is representative of enough of the wording as to safely conclude the 4QLam translation carried much the same bulk of words and lines here as does the MT (Salters, *Lamentations*, 55). Gordis and Freedman defend the four lines; Gordis (*The Song of Songs and Lamentations*, 154) argues against deletions on metric grounds as methodologically unsound; and Freedman (*Acrostics and Metrics in Hebrew Poetry*, 378-9) postulates that the vocabulary within the verse is characteristic of Lamentations and nothing can be deleted without affecting the significant theme which is the contrast of past glory and present misery. *BHK* and *BHS* suggest deleting line 2 so that the verse would then read: "Jerusalem remembers the days of her affliction and restlessness, when her people fell into the hands of her adversaries …". The sentiment here is that Jerusalem looks back bitterly on her time of affliction, which then forces the question: Is Jerusalem not presently distressed? It would seem as if she were presently distressed as the narrator has been describing her devastation and affliction, but the verse appears to read differently. As such, Albrektson (*Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations*, 62) prefers to delete line 3, "when her people fell into the hands of the foe, and there was no one to help her" (Lam 1:3).
Hillers argues that deleting either line still leaves an intelligible text, and as such the verse contains two variant, plausible, readings. While some see line 3 as a gloss on the first line, others choose to omit the phrase ימי...ומרודיה (as does 4QLam). Although Albrektson is right to point out this discussion is an age-old textual problem, Freedman makes a very interesting argument. Freedman notes that in 2:19 we see another four-line verse amidst the three-line strophes. While most delete line four of 2:19, Freedman argues that doing so is a violence unto the text. Instead, he states that as this same deviation occurs twice, once in each of these poems (Lam 1 and 2), that it is indicative of a deliberate device (Freedman, *Acrostics and Metrics in Hebrew Poetry*, 380). Salters does not rule out this possibility, adding that the metre is adhered to throughout and appears to be selected by the author as a poetic vehicle to convey his thoughts. This metre is characterized by an unbalanced line, which could be further signaled and stressed by adding another line where one does not expect. Freedman also draws attention to 4:15 which includes two lines that are longer than all the others in the poem. Although Salters concludes that line three of 1:7 is secondary and functions as an adverbial accusative phrase modifying ימי...ומרודיה and that it is an erroneous explanation and that the days of her affliction do indeed refer to her present suffering and not to a past time when she fell into the hands of her enemy (Salters, *Lamentations*, 56).

[3] Gottwald notes with particular zeal the Book of Lamentations stands alongside Psalm 119 in acrostic grandeur; but he notes Lamentations is composed of finer detail and poetic subtlety, which the psalm does not approach. Although Psalm 119 is itself architecturally grand, so too is Lamentations, with Gottwald describing the Lamentations acrostics as a grand cathedral, with "its unity broken in innumerable pleasing ways, never distracting but always contributing to the total impression" (Gottwald, *Studies in the Book of Lamentations*, 23). Finally, he makes the point that the acrostic in Lamentations has 266 lines, which exceeds the psalms' by 90 lines, and quips that despite the difference in length, readers are not conscious of the longer Lamentations' lines, as they are painfully aware of the psalms'.

[4] Almost all commentators have made mention of this quick shift in imagery, and its difficulty in pinning down a neat and ordered structure. However, many commentators also often remark on the similarity of the images grouped together or the repetition of the language and verbs throughout. Few commentators structure the poem on the grammar and syntax alone, but some include such as a heavier weight in their division of speakers and context.

first poem largely focuses on the personified city of Jerusalem, and describes from her perspective, as well as a third party narrator's, the damage she has suffered. The opening formula of the particle איכה is repeated in three of the five poems (Lam 1, 2, and 4) and distinguishes a separation from the other chapters. There does not appear to be a closing formula of any kind in Lamentations 1, although the poem does close with an appeal to YHWH to punish the enemies of Jerusalem with the same punishments Jerusalem herself has received. While not a formal closing formula, these requests are repeated by personified Jerusalem throughout the book itself and may be considered as Daughter Zion's personal closing speech-request.

It is possible to classify the poem's genre as a communal city-dirge or communal lament, and to more broadly identify the poem as a lyric poem.[5] I have structured the poem by its speaking voices: 1:1-11a and 17 belong to the narrator, and 1:11b-16, and 18-22 are the voice of Daughter Zion.[6] The poem begins with a description of the city-woman, the personified Jerusalem, and describes her current state in such a way that it evokes pity, shame, and disgust. The poem then moves outward and away from the city-woman in content, bringing in the region of Judah, then the roads to Zion, and then finally, the enemies are mentioned. The impact of this horizontal-outward movement of the poem is dramatic and powerful: In Lam 1 the poem moves from an outward (third-person narrator view) to an inward (first-person Daughter Zion view); this movement is mirrored in Lamentations 2, wherein the flow of the poem is a vertical, heaven-to-earth movement. Together, the first two poems (Lam 1 - 2) describe the utter devastation and destruction from two different character-views, Daughter Zion and YHWH, and emphasize the totality of the destruction as complete even up to and including every cardinal direction. In accordance with this pattern, there is a distinctive psychological progression noted throughout the poem as the poem moves from a third-person, outside perspective toward an internal, first-person point-of-view.[7] As such, the destruction imagery will be discussed in this chapter as it relates to the characterization of Daughter Zion and YHWH, and then in turn to their relationship with one another.

2. Clarification of Terminology

One of the many characteristics of Hebrew Poetry is the use of imaginative and figurative language, as well as poetical diction set to provoke the reader.[8] Poetry is a work of art sourced from the creative imaginations of the poets who compose these works. The goal of poetry is not

[5] Westermann, *Lamentations*, 59-60. Lyric poetry is that which expresses personal emotions and feelings, and is often spoken in the first person. It typically has a musical rhythm and would have likely been accompanied with a lyre or another instrument in a performative setting (Dobbs-Allsopp, *On Biblical Poetry*, 178ff).

[6] While scholars have debated the structure of the text, most have followed the speakers voices in their own structuring: Berlin separates 1:1-11 and 12-22 (*Lamentations*, 48); Gordis follows a similar pattern: 1:1-11, 12-16, 18-22 (*Lamentations*, 129); Salters follows the same structure as Berlin, describing the voice of the narrator (1:1-11) as a TV reporter, and 12-22 as the in person interview of the victim (*Lamentations*, 31); and Parry composes a brilliant diagram showing the whole of the book, and notes the same pattern of narrator and Daughter Zion occurs in both Lam 1-2, and structures each poem accordingly (*Lamentations*, 17).

[7] Note that Hillers (*Lamentations*. 16); Berlin (*Lamentations*, 48); House (*Lamentations*, 365ff); and Salters (*Lamentations*, 31) have all made mention to a greater or lesser degree of this outward to inward movement and commentary on the suffering within the book.

[8] Meek, *The Structure of Hebrew Poetry*, 523. This of course does not exclude parallelism, rhythm, vocabulary, grammar and syntax (to name a few) which also distinguish Hebrew Poetry from prose. "

only to be aesthetically pleasing and creative, but to capture the "hearts" of the reader and to appeal to emotion.[9] The poetry of Lamentations is provocative, and evocative, as will be shown – but, when reading the poem, have we stopped to consider how the poet has achieved such ends? This is the question which positions our discussion as we consider the following terms which are regularly used in poetical discussions, but often without precision: *persona*, *characterization*, and *personification*. The following discussion will aim toward clarifying these terms and their use in Lamentations, in order to analyze how these categories function in the poetry of Lamentations 1.

Persona

In his 1974 article, William Lanahan analyzes the differentiated speaking voices in the Book of Lamentations.[10] His sole aim is to identify the speaking voice in Lamentations, as a matter of stylistic concern. In order to do so, he employs the literary criticism terminology of "persona", and defines it by a base definition, as the "mask, or *characterization*, assumed by the poet as the medium through which he perceives and gives expression to his world".[11] He goes on to make a point with which I wholly agree, that this persona should not be considered a work of fiction, but argues rather that the usage of such personae should be viewed as the creative procedure of the poet by which he is able to transcend the limitations of his single viewpoint and gain greater insight into the human experience.[12] This creative effect allows the poet to build a more powerful perception of the object or scenario he is describing. Lanahan continues onward to argue his view of five separate and discernible *personae* in the Book of Lamentations.[13] Lanahan views Lam 1-2 as a unit and identifies two voices within both poems: the voice of an "objective reporter", or narrator; and the voice of the city-woman herself. Citing the personified city-woman as a persona only highlights the other distinct persona present: that of the objective narrator.[14] Lanahan conflates terminology by identifying both the narrator and the personified Jerusalem as *personae*, then further adds to the confusion of literary terms by referencing both as characterizations.[15]

The terminology must here be nuanced, starting at the beginning. The idea of persona is one of ancient distinction, noted primarily in Plato and Aristotle. Persona is the device which occurred in between the parts of poems in which the poet speaks in his own voice and those characters which he has created are speaking. Derived from the Latin (*persona*), referring to the "mask of an actor", it is etymologically linked to the *dramatis personae*, or the cast of characters in a play or drama. It can be defined in a literary work as a voice, or an assumed role of a character, but should not be viewed as the character itself or the characterization of such figures.[16] Frequently,

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[9] Ibid., 523-4.
[10] Lanahan, *The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations*, pp. 41-9.
[11] Ibid., 41. Emphasis added.
[12] Lanahan, *The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations*, 41.
[13] Ibid., 41ff. The five personae he sees are as follows: Jerusalem and an objective reporter (Lam 1-2); a defeated soldier (Lam 3); a bourgeois (Lam 4); and the communal chorus (Lam 5).
[14] Ibid., 41.
[15] Ibid., 41-42. Lanahan states the obvious existence of a persona is the voice of the embodied and personified Jerusalem, and then adds that this personified voice leads the reader to become aware of the other voice in the poem, the narrator's (or in his terms, the objective reporter).
[16] Gudas, "Persona" *The New Princeton Encyclopedia for Poetry and Poetics*, 900-2.

the *dramatis personae* are identified with the writers, although at times the persona may be identified as another character or unknown narrator.[17] A persona is a representation of a character or figure by highlighting a particular aspect that is presented or perceived by others. Persona is synonymous with speaker, and is a common feature found in lyric poetry, the type of poetry to which the Book of Lamentations belongs. In lyrical poetry, the writer creates a persona, or speaker, in order to distinguish between the writer and the character(s) of the poem.[18]

Characterization

Characterization is an important topic, and is itself inextricably linked with character, so both will now be discussed. Character stems from the Greek (*charaktēr*) which signifies a stamp, mark, or characteristic and forms its basis in Greek drama. A character, at its most rudimentary definition, is a figure in literary work. This figure does not necessarily need to be human, although the majority of characters are. Indeed, characters can be non-human (such as an animal in a children's tale), or even a non-living entity (as long as the author characterizes them by attributing to them human traits).[19] A character is a descriptive analysis of a human virtue, vice, or other distinctive feature. Character was also considered a genre, and did not come to represent an individual personality until the mid-eighteenth century.[20] A character often presents a brief sketch of a familiar type: for example, "a busybody", or "a contemplative". Character becomes associated with type, and a person depicted as a character becomes associated with particularized and distinguishable traits. Aristotle linked such traits to the realm of morality, and subjugates character to the realm of plot. Aristotle's view of character was rather limited, reducing the definition of a character to that which reveals moral purposes through that which one chooses or avoids.[21] But characters are not merely made of choices, but are rather dynamic figures which emerge within their story, choices, emotions, and responses.[22] A character is a person in a novel, play, or poem who embodies and exercises mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. This differs from persona, which is only a mask or representation of the aspect of someone's character which is presented or perceived by others at the hand of the author. Characterization refers to the various ways in which an author depicts and develops the figures in

[17] Some modern critics have pushed back against the idea that a poem is a direct utterance of its author. Instead, modern critics have come to recommend that poems be read as autonomous works of verbal artwork, rather than set on a quest to answer the impossible questions of authorial intentions which belong instead to the world of authorial biography. See Gudas, "Persona", 900 fir further discussion. Lanahan too makes similar mention, as he notes that the voice of the "objective reporter" may very well be the voice of the poet, but admits this assessment is inadequate after reading the whole of the book (Lanahan, *The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations*, 41). Lanahan goes on to state that it is impossible to single out one voice as the author's, and that each of the distinct voices (the five personae) he views are each representative of a "sincere mode" of authentic expression by the poet (Lanahan, *The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations*, 41-2).

[18] The persona was initially associated with the writer in a literary work. Many modern critics insist that the speaker in any poem should be referred to as the persona, in order to avoid the unreliable assumption that the reader is listening to the "true voice" of the writer. For a further history on the development of the usage of persona in literary and biblical texts, see Holt, *Prophets as Persona*, 299-318.

[19] Murfin and Ray, "Character", 43-4.

[20] The genre of character traces its roots to Greek author Theophrastus (ca. 372 – 287 BCE); whose "characters" were more akin to a character type rather than an individual character. See Mikics, "Character", 53-4.

[21] Character has since carried the non-literary connotation of personality and morality (which is visible in the manner of which we speak of persons, as "good", or "bad" (e.g. "Jake is a shady character").

[22] Mimiks, "Character", 54.

a literary work.[23] When characterization occurs in poetry, it is often focused in a few lines or particularized with figurative language. For example, the writer may use a poignant metaphor, or a stark image, or even an action or setting from which the writer will expand in order to show the character's development. Lastly, just as character is intertwined with characterization, characterization is inextricably linked with plot. The characterization of figures is what drives a plot forward; and in order for a work to be believable the characters must be convincing. The reader must be able to visualize the characters, to sympathize with them when they face hardships, and to rejoice with them in their victories. It is the task of the author to then make their characters come alive; and it is the mystery and artistry of poetry which invites the reader to become an active participant. In order to bring to life a particular character, an author may directly characterize a figure by describing, presenting, or commenting on the character (as the narrator does in Lam 1:1-11b, 17); or indirectly by presenting characters through representations of their actions, statements, thoughts, feelings, motivations etc.[24]

In sum, although figure and character can be used interchangeably, I argue that persona is a more mask or covering, a representation of a character's perceived or presented aspect and can be viewed as a one-dimensional speaker. Characterization, in contrast, delves underneath the surface and reveals more of the character's person: their traits which form the basis for their actions, reactions, and conversations; encompassing their physicality and their physical embodiment; and their backstory and particularities. In sum, I will argue that the narrator (Lam 1:1-11b, 17) is indeed a persona, as Lanahan and others have argued, but will further nuance those notations by stating that this *persona* offers a characterization of Daughter Zion in the opening verses of Lamentations 1, and furthermore the personification of Daughter Zion is in some way also a characterization of herself. The writer has then utilized a disembodied persona, and an embodied, personified city-woman to characterize the backdrop of Lamentations and move the plot of the poems, and characters, forward.

Personification

Personification is perhaps one of, if not the, most well-known literary device related to Lamentations' poetical discussions. Personification is a manner of speech which endows nonhuman objects, abstractions, or creatures with life and human characteristics.[25] Personification is a nearly universal feature of written works, and in Greek rhetoric was given the name *prosōpopoeia* (from Gk *prospōn* ["face"] and *poiein* ["to make"]) by rhetoricians. Aristotle

[23] Murfin and Ray, "Character", 43. For a brief discussion on what constitutes a "flat" or "round" character, ideas which are still presently discussed today, see Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, 43-82. In sum, flat characters are one-dimensional and are defined by a single idea or quality; whereas round characters have a robust, three-dimensional quality and the complexity of real people. In this sense, Daughter Zion can be considered a "round" character, as the complexity of her development has a real human attachment as she embodies her suffering.

[24] Ibid., 44. In the case that an author is using direct characterization, he is telling the reader about the character; and in the case of indirect characterization, the author is showing the reader who the character is by utilizing the character's own words, actions, beliefs, and motivations. In the case of Lamentations 1, the narrator is the first voice the reader encounters, and his subject is fixed on the city-woman as he *tells* the reader who she is and what has befallen her; but it is the latter half of the poem in which the author *shows* the reader just who this city-woman is by using her own voice, words, and suffering to image it all. When one looks at the poem in this manner, the suffering takes on a deeper level than before.

[25] Arthos and Brogan, "Personification", 902.

praised Homer for his creative way of speaking of inanimate things as though they were living, which in turn made those "things" far more vivid to the reader.[26] Personification is a form of symbolic action, which uses representations of human speech-acts to convey emotions, ideas, or strategies for addressing various situations.[27] Biblical examples of personification are frequent, ranging from a simple metaphor like "Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy" (Ps 96:12); to the extended metaphors which contain monologues, for example Lady Wisdom (Prov 1:20-33; 8:4-36) and of course, Daughter Zion (Lam 1:11b-16, 18-22; 2:20-22). In these aforementioned personifications, metaphor and characterization are joined in varying proportions to depict patterns of personal interaction. This use of figurative language invites the reader to engage more deeply with the characters as common objects and situations are infused with human characteristics. In personification, human emotions and virtues (or vices) also become actors, which aid in sharpening the focus between human motivation and interaction.[28]

Personification is a broad category, and can be categorized for this discussion into four different types.[29] Of the four types, two are of keen interest to this discussion: collective and characterized personification. These forms of personification sharpens the imagery and offers a fresh angle on the positive or negative quality of an aspect or situation described.[30] Collective personification is what Koptak has referred to as a type of personification in the HB which places particular emphasis on YHWH"s relationship with collective people groups. To illustrate his point, Koptak has referenced Lamentations, calling the personification of Jerusalem in the book the most developed example of collective personification.[31] He highlights that Jerusalem is personified in Lamentations in a variety of female roles, which is startling to the imagination of the reader and encourages a particular emotional response. However, the collective personification category, according to Koptak, is entirely centered on the relationship between YHWH and a particular group of people, which admittedly is a present feature of the book. Yet there could be more attention given to parsing out the details of such a collective voice in Lamentations, which was likely not possible for such a short entry. Although Koptak views collective personification as the prevalent type in Lamentations, there also appears to be a pervasive case for characterized personification. Characterized personification is marked by highly developed characterizations of personality and purpose.[32] Daughter Zion too is highly characterized in Lam 1 – 2, and carries deep symbolism and rich imagery regarding her former glory contrasted with her present state of suffering. Not only does the narrator characterize Daughter Zion with heavy and poignant

[26] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 3.10.6; 3.11.1-4. Another literary approach also finds personification wherever nonhuman entities are endowed with intelligence and/or speech; see Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification*, 63-81.
[27] Koptak, "Personification", 516-9.
[28] Koptak, "Personification", 516.
[29] The four types are inchoate (basic) personification; synecdochic personification; collective personification; and characterized personification. These types are based on the types listed in the *DOTW* entry on "personification" by P. E. Koptak (Koptak, "Personification", 516-8). Inchoate personification refers to the basic personification we are most familiar with; that is, those forms of personification which depict brief and simple attributions of human qualities onto inanimate objects or ideas. In synecdochic personification, representative parts of the body can stand for particular human thoughts, feelings, and/or actions. This representation can be witnessed in "the steadfast heart that leaps for joy" (Ps 28:7; 51:7); or the response of the narrator's own eyes and innards in Lam 2:11 ("my eyes were worn out from tears, my stomach churned, my liver-bile was spilled out…").
[30] Ibid., 517.
[31] Ibid., 517. Koptak also draws brief attention here to the idea that Lam 3 may be the personified voice of the exiles.
[32] Ibid., 518. Koptak uses Lady Wisdom and Lady Folly of Proverbs as his example for a highly stylized contrast.

descriptions of her state as a woman and a city, but Daughter Zion too characterizes herself in her own speeches.

Now that we have briefly engaged with what personification is and various types which exist in the world of BH poetry, it is time to more concretely contextualize personification to the world of Lamentations.[33] Throughout Lamentations, but notably in Lam 1, Jerusalem is personified as a woman. This personification is identified and accentuated by the genitive term *bat* [בת] when used in the expression *bat siyyôn* [בת–ציון] and similar expressions. This epithet occurs twenty times in Lamentations.[34] This particular expression (*Bat X*) is generally understood as an appositional genitive. It would be grammatically possible to translate such as "Daughter of Zion", however, the context makes clear that it is Zion who is being addressed, and is classified as a "daughter".[35]

Daughter Zion's personified female form in Lam 1 – 2 is noted for her fallen status in a series of heavy-handed reversals; and she suffers as only a woman can suffer.[36] It is significant that the author has engendered her as a female, as gender plays an important role in literary personification.[37] Maier's research on gendered and sacred space proves an enlightening read.[38] Maier engages with several feminist critics as well as spatial theories to better conceive of the personified Jerusalem. She notes that the literary device of personification attaches a female body to a place, and pays careful attention to the idea that a body is both a spatial concept as well as a persona category.[39] The city's female body had a significant effect on the development of Jerusalem's symbolism in the HB. The role that gender plays in personification is interesting for a variety of other related reasons. It has been commonly accepted that ancient Near Eastern cities were associated with the feminine, as such cities were closely connected to their female deities. However, greater attention to such matters have been undertaken by Mark E. Biddle, in his study of the figure of Jerusalem.[40] The HB regularly personifies Jerusalem/Zion as mother

[33] The question of the biblical image of the personified Jerusalem deserves more detailed attention, Schökel (*A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, 123), and Biddle ("The Figure of Lady Jerusalem", 174) have aptly noted.
[34] There are also sixteen occurrences in Jeremiah, and only approximately forty-five uses in the entire HB (Berlin, *Lamentations*, 10).
[35] Since Zion has no daughter, it cannot be Zion's daughter, but rather an epithet of "Daughter" who is "Zion". Or one could say these two words are in apposition. See also Berlin, *Lamentations*, 10; and Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 153, 226. To read more from the one who first suggested *bat* serve as titles for personified capital cities, see Fitzgerald, "*Btwlt* and *Bt* as Titles for Capital Cities", *CBQ*, 181ff.
[36] Berlin, *Lamentations*, 8-9.
[37] Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*, 21.
[38] Ibid., esp. 27-8; 148-152.
[39] Ibid., 28. Furthermore, when personified, this unification of personal and spatial determine the relationship of the place to the people living within it.
[40] Biddle, "The Figure of Lady Jerusalem: Identification, Deification, and Personification of Cities in the Ancient Near East", *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective*, 173ff. Biddle lays out an extensive argument comparing the personified city epithets between not only the WS and Hellenistic backgrounds, but also includes Mesopotamian sources to show that the "identification of the city with its chief deity as seen in the older Mesopotamian sources is related to the deification of cities known in later WS and Hellenistic sources" (Biddle, "The Figure of lady Jerusalem", 181). He argues that the city and its principal deity were integrally intertwined, and that Israel modified this ancient city-deity concept in sophisticated ways by drawing parallels and contrasts to the Mesopotamian, WS, and Hellenistic sources. When viewed against the backdrop of cities' identification with patron deities, or with the cities themselves deified through their patron relationships, the personification of such a city as Jerusalem becomes a theological statement, as well as a poetic one.

(Isa 66:8), daughter (2 Kgs 19:21), virgin (Isa 37:22), bride (Isa 62:3), menstruant (Lam 1), harlot (Jer 2:20) etc.[41] The personification of Daughter Zion/Jerusalem has been noted by scholars, a few who have taken it upon themselves to study the epithet in more detail. Fitzgerald inspects West Semitic evidence and demonstrates major cities were regarded as goddesses and spouses of their corresponding patron deities; concluding that the personification of Jerusalem in the HB conforms to this Western Semitic usage.[42] Follis, in contrast, argues the "daughter" epithet is rooted in a Hellenistic background of "divine daughter" and notes this "intimate image" occurs exclusively in the HB in poetic texts.[43] One of her most pertinent points is the notion that " 'Daughters' have been associated with stability, with the building up of society, with nurturing the community at its very heart and center."[44] This point is paramount when considering personified Daughter Zion in Lam 1-2, as she is depicted as the very embodiment opposing such ideals: her society and cultic center have crumbled (Lam 1:4, 10), her people have fallen (Lam 1:5, 7), her children perish in the city streets (Lam 2:11-12), and she is left grieving and powerless to oppose these reversals. The pain of loss is sharp, but made even more so when considering the communal role and identity of daughters, the very center of which is stripped mercilessly from Daughter Zion.

3. Text in Terms

The "Narrator" Persona in Lam 1:1-11b, 17

Lamentations 1 is entirely devoted to its star subject: Daughter Zion. The contents of this opening poem metaphorically characterize Daughter Zion as a desolate woman. It is noteworthy that though she and her experiences are of central focus, her voice is not the first to be heard.[45] The images of violence, especially in regard to women or the female figure, are especially prominent and difficult in the opening poems of Lamentations. Perhaps adding another layer of difficulty to some readers, is the initial male voice which the reader hears.

The narrator, (or speaker, or objective reporter), is the first to speak in the opening half. This narrator is a disembodied persona, as the poem gives no description or context for this person's physicality or spatial orientation, other than as an outward observer. This outside narrator reports on Daughter Zion's physicality, emotional state, and general description with a disinterested

[41] Many of these same images are directly presented in Lamentations, or at the least alluded to by various imagery. These images have been previously explained by Hosea's polemic against fertility cults, or as a poetic expression of the covenant ideal. Yet these explanations fall short: Hosea was unconcerned with the status of woman as wife, but with woman's unfaithfulness; and marital metaphors are not explicitly connected to the covenant traditions (which are rather associated with the community as a whole and the Davidic line). Many feminist readings have stressed the violent and exploitative nature of the feminine images of wayward daughter or virgin, but have glossed over entirely the associated positive images of mother, beloved, and distinguished. It is these positive images which show how stark and inexpressible the fallen state of Daughter Zion is in Lam 1, by use of the negative associated female imagery therein.

[42] Fitzgerald, "The Mythological Background for the Presentation of Jerusalem as a Queen and False Worship as Adultery in the OT", 404-5.

[43] Follis, "The Holy City as Daughter", 173-9. Follis points to the description of Athena and the application of the epithet *polis* to support her rooting the "Daughter Zion" epithet in Hellenistic traditions.

[44] Ibid., 177.

[45] This point has not gone unnoticed by feminist scholars.

tone.[46] Gina Hens-Piazza views this coolly detached description as a form of objectification.[47] While this may be the case, Hens-Piazza has not evidenced her reasoning, and so would perhaps be better to state this impartial narrator's description as a *characterization* of Daughter Zion, rather than an objectification.

The narrator is, after all, the one who introduces the character (Daughter Zion) with noticeable emergence.[48] The first half of his speech is devoted to describing Daughter Zion as both desolate, and defiled. She sits alone and abandoned (1:1a), she is likened to a widow, vulnerable and dejected (1:1b), and her former glory of royal and renowned worldly standing has been defiled by her current state of servitude (1:1c). This opening verse alone portrays a diverse description of the city-woman. The widow imagery is especially powerful. The widow is an archetypal image of affliction and desolation.[49] The widow is classed in extremely low social standing, which is expressed in the grouping the widow finds herself in, along with the orphan, and stranger in the HB. As marriage in the HB is linked with domestic fullness, widowhood is linked with loss and emptiness.[50] These opening verses set in course a series of reversals which contrast former states of glory, prosperity, and joy, with her present state of shame, servitude, and weeping. The city was once a successful mother, full of people (1:1a), a significant role for women in Hebrew society. Motherhood was considered the chief blessing for women in the HB, and a woman's ability to conceive and bear children was among her most powerful assets. The bittersweet reality of motherhood became the primary role of women in OT culture.[51] Sons were great blessings to their mothers as through the sons the mothers gained significance; daughters too were considered blessings as they would grow and aid in the communal aspects of society until they too became mothers with children of their own. However, this state of blessing is a former memory to Daughter Zion, as she sits alone, widowed, and empty not just of womb, but of riches, and spirit. The city's patron deity, YHWH, likened to her as a husband, has abandoned her, and is considered like a dead husband. Therefore, she is vulnerable, and this loss of social connection (in husband and children), in status (as a former queen), and her current state (forced laborer) elicit pity. The image of her sitting alone, beside her ruined city-state, evokes the city goddesses in the Mesopotamian laments, and begs the reader to imagine the city of stone and mudbrick turned to flesh and blood to cry out over her state.[52]

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[46] Initially, in Lam 1 the narrator speaks in a calm and factional demeanor, but then digresses in Lam 2 into a more emotionally involved spectator. However, one should take note of the opening exclamatory cry, "alas!" [איכה], which is almost more of a sound than a word; this is a cry of despair and horror which sets the tone of the poem. Despite the narrator's initial note of calm, it does not mean that he is entirely disinterested or dispassionate in the state and outcome of which he describes.

[47] Hens-Piazza, *Lamentations*, 3.

[48] The narrator does not actually name her until vv. 4, 6; although the context clues the reader to who is being discussed far before she is named and she herself speaks.

[49] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III (eds), "Widow", 946.

[50] Although judgment, bereavement, and widowhood are often linked together in the prophetic texts, it should be noted that the widow image does not necessarily equate to judgment, as YHWH defends the cause of the widow (Deut 10:18; Ps 146:9), and Isaiah uses the metaphor positively to show YHWH's relief of the widows suffering (Isa 54:4-5). However, it becomes quickly apparent from the narrator's description and the voice of Daughter Zion herself that her case and situation is not one of the latter. She indeed suffers as a woman, and as a woman widowed, with all of the fullness and depth that metaphor encompasses.

[52] Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations*, 55.

This narrator, then in the next stage of characterization, details the behavior of Daughter Zion. Where in the first stanza, the narrator gave a distanced description of the city-woman, he now takes the reader into a panoramic shot, beginning with a close-up. The narrator shows the city-woman sobbing bitterly, continually, and images her to the reader with her tears still flowing down her cheeks (1:2a). The narrator is quick to follow this image up by naming a central source of her suffering: that her suffering continues, without interruption or ceasing, and there is no comforter on her horizon (1:2b). She weeps alone in the night, when she is left with her misery. In the HB, weeping was an act a bit different than what may be expected: weeping was an auditory and purging response to grief and sorrow, to being wronged, or to having been wronged. This type of weeping act would be loudly vocalized, and would likely include facial contortions, shortness of breath consistent with sobbing, and feelings of angst.[53] Although one would expect friends and family to stand in support of her, the next strophe details that her friends and loved ones have also betrayed and abandoned her (1:2c). Their treachery is more painful than their indifference, and adds to the city-woman's grief and despair. In the next stanza, the narrator zooms out from Daughter Zion and reveals that Daughter Zion in part sits alone because her daughter city Judah, dwells in the midst of the nations (1:3).[54] The narrator names Daughter Zion for the first time in v. four, and in so doing calls attention to the cultic center of the city's identity. She is the Jerusalem cult, the center of worship, and the verse describes the broken state and disorder therein: her roads and empty and in mourning (1:4a); her gates are desolate since no one is coming through them (1:4b); and her priests and maidens grieve the loss of the temple and their respective roles (1:4c). YHWH is first brought up in v.5, and to him is credited this state of horror and suffering, as is Daughter Zion's sin of rebellion (1:5b). The narrator does not wish to emphasize her sin, but neither he does not seek to minimize or ignore it. Echoing Zion's children being carried off into exile (1:3), this verse ends with her children, highlighting the intimate bond between the city and her inhabitants. In sum, the narrator has characterized Daughter Zion as a brokenhearted mother, an abandoned widow, and a lost and exiled slave. This serves as the foundational image connected to his next characterizations of Daughter Zion in the following verses.

Immediately following the mention of Zion's young children being taken captive, the narrator then particularizes his description of those children: her princes (1:6). The splendor and glory that has departed from Zion (1:6) is in this case, her rulers. The ruling classes of her city have departed, and without them and the temple cult it is unlikely that the city will be able to regroup and rebuild anytime in the near future. Jerusalem is first named by the narrator in v. 7, and again she is personified as "she remembers" both her former glories, including her "precious things", and the recent past of when this wound was first inflicted.[55] Jerusalem is both of political significance as the City of David where the Davidic line and the seat of divine kingship were established, and as the place where Solomon brought Israel to its economic apex and built the temple, establishing YHWH's presence and protection over the city.[56] Adding insult to injury, the narrator continues to describe her state of shame as she is derided and mocked by her

[53] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III (eds), "Weeping", 939.
[54] Judah is here also personified and given the epithet "Daughter Judah".
[55] Her former glories include but are not limited to: the stories of David and his line, her former riches, her children, her exquisitely built temple, or even the presence and protection of YHWH himself.
[56] Jerusalem's prominence in the imaginations of the Israelites rose to a place where YHWH's administrations of blessings and curses over Jerusalem was presumed and perceived to be extended to the whole of the nation (Isa 2:2; Amos 2:5; Mic 4:1).

enemies (1:7c).[57] The cause of Jerusalem's shame is her sin, which in turn causes her to be classified as the noun *nîdâ* [נידה].[58] She is now devalued and viewed as worthless, and here for the first time Daughter Zion interjects with a plea to YHWH to look and see her distress (1:8c).[59] The theme of shame is continued in the next two verses; in vv.9-10 the narrator depicts Daughter Zion as an abandoned and abused woman. Because the city of Jerusalem and her temple precinct are personified, it is possible to argue that Daughter Zion is shamed for her explicit sexual actions of her own accord, as well as those which were not. Dobbs-Allsopp links the actions expressed in v. 10 to that of rape: the enemy spread his hand over all her "precious things" ((1:10a); and the nations "entered" her temple (1:10b). While Mintz (and others) have linked this verse's imagery to that of rape and other forms of sexual violence, it is Dobbs-Allsopp who has taken the "body//Temple and genitals//Inner Sanctuary" correspondence and grounded them in the feature of personification.[60] The noun *mah a maddêhā* (מחמדיה) at its literal sense carries the meaning of pillaging the "precious things", or the temple treasures. However, it also carries sexual connotations (SoS 5:16), and as the personification of Jerusalem images the city-woman, these words then have double meaning reflective of both the literal sense of Babylonian destruction as well as the metaphorical sense of sexual assault and rape. Here, the enemy's "stretching of hands" "perverts the otherwise positive and healthy notion of sexual desirability denote by *mah a maddêh*, and thus gives the image a far more sinister and heinous coloring, that of a man physically assaulting a woman."[61]

The final image the narrator conjures of Daughter Zion is that of a starving, broken, beggar (1:11). Lastly, this narrator persona introduces the thought-processes of Daughter Zion, as she

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[57] Mocking and derision are common themes expressed in individual and communal laments. Honor and shame were dualities central to her society, and the derision she endures is often as bad as or worse than the reasons which caused it. Here, Daughter Zion's lament extends over not only her defeat, but also her shame and humiliation. She has been left to sit alone in her current state, after her children have been exiled away from her, and now she endures not only the narrator's second-hand description and characterization of herself and experiences, but also the mockery and gloating of her enemies. She is pitiable, indeed.

[58] This term occurs only in this verse, and may be indicative of the ritual uncleanness brought about by menstrual discharge or may be symbolizing the fact that her unclean and fallen state was as visible as a woman's menstruation. However, this is unlikely to be the case, as Berlin has noted that menstruation does not render a woman morally impure (Berlin, *Lamentations*, 54). It makes better sense to take instead the √*nûd* [נוד] following 4QLam, which can mean either "wanderer" or "to shake". For each of these options there are fair arguments. The LXX translates "wanderer" founded upon the idea that Jerusalem is exiled for her sin. However, as Parry points out, Jerusalem herself is not exiled, *her children are*, and she is left abandoned and alone to grieve (Parry, *Lamentations*, 50-1). In contrast to this view, Berlin elects to translate "Wanderer" on the basis that exile is a more likely punishment for sin than is derision (Berlin, *Lamentations*, 54). Parry instead opts toward translating "to shake", as it can refer to the mocking and shaking of the head in horror and insult. This fits with the context also of the preceding verse (Parry, *Lamentations*, 51).

[59] It is possible that the narrator is here quoting Daughter Zion, but it seems justified too that Daughter Zion would break her silence as her shame and distress come to a climax in these verses. She shows then that she has been a bystander to the narrator's assessment and characterization of her this entire time, and she does not yet engage with him or his statements, but instead directs her voice solely to YHWH.

[60] Dobbs-Allsopp, "The Rape of Zion", 78. See also Mintz, "The Rhetoric of Lamentations", 3; and Kaiser, "Poet as Female Impersonator", 175. Others, such as Robin A. Parry, Adele Berlin, and Christl M. Maier also view in these phrases the doubled meaning of pillaging of the temple and raping and desecrating the female body.

[61] Dobbs-Allsopp, "The Rape of Zion", 78. Dobbs-Allsopp, Mintz, and Kaiser also argue that this image is further deepened by 1:8 with the association of "seeing her nakedness". Connected to the context of her sin, the view is that of the punishment of a harlot: where her skirts are lifted in public and her most private parts (genitalia) are exposed for all to see, and she is publicly shamed.

herself interrupts his methodical description of her state to interject in her own words. Again, Daughter Zion interjects with a plea for YHWH to see what has become of her, thus beginning her speech (1:11c). In sum, the narrator is a persona who functions in the first half of the poem to introduce and characterize the city-woman, Daughter Zion. He shows her to be an abandoned woman, a lonely widow, a fallen princess, and even an abused and battered rape victim. She is full of shame and humiliation, and mocked by her enemies and passers-by at every opportunity. Thus is the background information and characterization of Daughter Zion before her own speech begins.

Daughter Zion's Speech: Lam 1:11c-16, 18-22

Finally, Daughter Zion ceases her brief interjections and speaks fully with her own voice. In so doing, she adds greater descriptions of her state, as well as insights into her psychological and emotional responses; she thus characterizes herself in her speech. It is interesting that she does not seem to be directly speaking to anyone in particular; she sounds more as if she is addressing both everyone (e.g. passers-by, YHWH, the narrator) and at the same time no one, as she does not appear to be expecting a response. She hopes and longs for a response of comfort, but does not appear to believe she will receive it. Instead, her urgent plea for sympathy and comfort appears to be more of a rhetorical resounding. She does not take the time to correct or address the descriptions the narrator has already outlined; rather, she appears to accept them as she herself exposits them. Her central contrast to the narrator's extended discussion of her enemy's attack, she reveals YHWH himself is her perpetrator.[62]

Daughter Zion again directly appeals to YWHW to look and see her worthlessness, a state which has transpired in direct result of his actions (1:11c). Furthermore, Daughter Zion outlines YHWH's personal attack against her, recording three stages of his assault: first, he sends fire from on high deep into her bones and spreads a trap to ensnare her (1:13), from which there is no possible escape. The image of trapping occurs in the HB often and symbolizes both spiritual and physical peril. The accompanying imagery is usually snares, nets, and pits and is closely linked with hunting; often pits were set as traps with camouflaged nets to ensnare prey. Similarly, Mesopotamian kings described battles in terms of hunting scenes, and viewed their superior hunting skills as mastery over their inferior enemy armies after catching their enemy armies. The image of the trap is used to show dominion then of the one who casts the net over the one who is ensnared by it.[63] Secondly, he strings her transgressions together, in order to make a rope from which he then binds her; he holds her back so that she is unable to move but painfully aware of her sins (1:14). The combination of these consequences, the fire within her bones and the net which ensnares have caused her further shame, and a potential loss of hope. In his final act, he ensures all her warriors are trampled as in a winepress, and thus hands her directly over to her enemies, from whom there is no mercy (1:15).[64] Daughter Zion is clear in both her description of

[62] Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*, 148.
[63] Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III, "Trap", 885.
[64] Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*, 148. The winepress, when used metaphorically in the HB, is always a negative image. An invading army is compared to wine-treaders; and the grapes that enter the winepress are associated with destruction and judgment. YHWH himself is pictured as treading a winepress alone in his anger (Isa 63:3; see Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman III, "Winepress", 954.

what has happened to her and by the hand who has dealt her such desolation and suffering. YHWH features in her speech as a military arsonist turned military hunter.

The phrase "the LORD in my midst" (1:15a) is quite telling of Daughter Zion's psychological state. This expression in times past would have indicated YHWH's dwelling with his people, and is blessing and protection over them. Zion now reverses the claim that YWHW's presence brings life, protection and blessing, as to her now it has brought suffering and death. Here, YHWH's presence now means her demise and destruction and the death or exile of her people. Now, YHWH calls an assembly of enemy soldiers against her.[65] Where there was once festival rejoicing and loud clamoring of the people, wine and food to share, there is no emptiness, a lack of food, and the wine has been turned into the blood of Daughter Judah ((1:4; 15). Daughter Zion's body becomes her script: her body expressed her situation as a victim of war: "her feet are fettered, her bones burning, she lies on her back, her neck feels like it is bound by ropes, her heart is overturned, her eyes are full of tears, and her spirits are low."[66] She is downtrodden and nearly crushed, and her hope is fading as she seeks comfort but finds none. This downward movement of her bodily decline parallels the devastation of her city walls and gates.

Daughter Zion finishes her speech recounting YHWH's assault and burning anger (vv.12-16), and then addresses the passers-by how she has reacted: weeping (1:2; 16) and crying out. She has been depicted as being in a state of weeping since the beginning, and even now her tears have not ceased. Her distraught state is entirely caused by YHWH's wrath and her suffering which appears to have no end. Worse is that she bears it alone, her children and people have been taken from her; and she continually seeks comfort that does not come. Perhaps her plight would be easier to bear if only she had someone alongside her to help carry the yoke. Here is the third cry for comfort and the third denial (1:2, 9, and 16). Yet this strophe also offers a faint glimmer of hope, as "her comforter is far from her" (Lam 1:16b); this indicates that her pleas may yet be answered and offers for the first time the possibility that comfort may yet reach her. Yet panning to the next stanza quickly dashes such hopes, as the narrator interjects and informs the reader and passers-by that though she stretches her arms and hands (Lam 1:17a) there is no comfort given. For the fourth time, the reader is informed that Daughter Zion continues to suffer alone. Moreover, rather than offering an inkling of comfort, YHWH that Jacob's neighbors become her enemies (1:17b).[67] The hostility with which the passers-by have treated her appears to have been organized by YHWH himself, so no matter how many tears Daughter Zion sheds, or how far she stretches her hands, or how much she proclaims her pain, comfort will not be given to her. Furthermore, she has become a ritually unclean woman, a menstruant, who is defiled and with whom any contact would defile (Lam 1:17c). This menstruating woman would be considered impure and would be alienated and unable to come into contact with the sacred; that she as a holy city has become defiled would negate her role as the dwelling place of YHWH.[68]

Daughter Zion's second speech is directed toward the nations, and her final speech to YHWH. For the first time, Daughter Zion declares YHWH's righteousness in his anger as a result of her rebellion. She uses herself as an example to the nations, as a warning, and makes no attempt to

[65] Parry, *Lamentations*, 59.
[66] Maier, *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*, 149.
[67] Jacob here likely refers to the encompassing cities of all of Israel.
[68] Parry, *Lamentations*, 61.

deny her culpability (1:18). This is a rather curious and unexpected admittance from Daughter Zion, as the narrator has spent his speech delineating her pitiable state, and she herself has just recalled her suffering at YHWH's hands. So why then would Daughter Zion state YHWH's case as righteous? Dobbs-Allsopp posits an interested, and logical, answer: by shifting the focus back to her pain she is forming a declaration of YHWH's innocence, and thus appealing to YHWH in his role as righteous judge.[69] As a result, YHWH's punishment has been dealt, and deeply felt, and it is credited to him as righteousness, with the hope that an appeal to his justice may result in salvation. Next, Daughter Zion calls out to her lovers (1:19). Although it was not made explicit at the beginning of the poem (1:2, "all those who love her"), it is now apparent that Daughter Zion has engaged in some illicit affairs. The ptc. *me' ahabay* [מאהבי] in the *piel* refers to illicit lovers. Daughter Zion expresses the deceit of her lovers and their betrayal, before commenting of the priests and elders who yet remain. The office of priests and elders is a high civil position, with which is afforded greater protection against famine as their stations would have earned them provisions from the people. However, now they too are fending for themselves and dying of starvation, for the festivals and sacrifices have ceased and the city supplies have dwindled. Daughter Zion's expression of betrayal by her lovers affects not only her, but her people and children. Lastly, she raises her voice to YHWH, the one who has inflicted her wounds, and yet the only one she can seek for a reversal of her state.[70] Daughter Zion's psychological state and the impact of her trauma is again fronted: her bowls churn and her heart is overturned within her and she likens her state to death itself (1:20). This reinforces the picture of her extreme emotional distress as her core (stomach, womb, heart, and inner parts) are turned upside down from within her. She ends her speech with a prayer, seeking a like punishment for her enemy lovers.

4. Conclusions

In sum, the narrator functions as a one-dimensional speaker, or persona, who recounts the present state of Daughter Zion and in his descriptions, characterizes her before she herself speaks. The personified Daughter Zion is a full character, who presents her emotions and motives and reactions, and she interrupts the narrator to speak for herself; in so doing she reveals more aspects of her character. The images of Daughter Zion are multidimensional and layered over one another. The more the reader looks, the more the reader in effect shames Daughter Zion by seeing what should not be seen, and witnessing her humiliation without offering any comfort. Daughter Zion is presented as a widowed woman, an abandoned wife, a fallen princess, a bruised and battered woman, and as a rape victim. She is continually distraught and left weeping at her demise and destruction, and though she seeks a comforter she finds none. She reveals YHWH as her perpetrator, and yet calls him righteous, making no attempt to deny her own responsibility. Every aspect of her description and her speech invites pity, and she stands as the main character of the poem and book. Looking forward, it will be interesting to see how the narrator continues his portrayal and characterization of Daughter Zion, and his introductory characterization of YHWH in Lamentations 2, and in turn what such characterizations reveal about the relationships Daughter Zion has with herself, YHWH, and the "others" of the book.

[69] Dobbs-Allsopp, *Lamentations*, 71. See also Ps 7:9, 11; Jer 20:12; Zeph 3:5; and Jer 12:1 as a close parallel.
[70] House notes here the wordplay on the nouns for "distress" and "adversary" as they look nearly identical, symbolizing perhaps that the foes and the pain are sometimes nearly identical (House, *Lamentations*, 363).

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Appendix

Translation: Lamentations 1:1-22

1:1 Alas, she sits alone,
The city once filled with people[71]*,*
She has become like a widow[72]*.*
Once great among the nations,
A princess among provinces;
She has become a forced laborer.

1:2 Bitterly she sobs at night,
with tears on her cheeks[73]*.*
There is no comforter for her
From among all who love her.
All her friends have betrayed her,
[all her friends] have become her enemies.

1:3 Judah was exiled after[74] *misery*
and much servitude;
She dwells among the nations,
Finds no resting place.
All her pursuers have trapped her
in narrow straits[75]*.*

1:4 Zion's roads are in mourning,
empty of festival pilgrims;
all her gates are desolate.
Her priests are groaning,
Her maidens are grieving
And she – it is bitter for her

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[71] Although the word רבתי occurs twice in this verse, the first occurrence is a construct (רבתי–עמ) meaning "having much, many people", hence the translation of "filled".

[72] I have kept here the traditional rendering of the particle "like" for sake of consistency with the MT, however, I will be arguing in Chapter 2 that the כ in Lamentations is best understood as an equalizer. In other words, rather than being considered "like a widow" here, Daughter Zion should indeed be viewed as a widow. This argument will be made with Lam 2:4 and 5:3, and will note that 5:3 comes full cycle and once again describes Daughter Zion in the way in which she was described in the opening poem (Lam 1:1).

[73]The noun לחה in Hebrew is used to reference either the jawbone, or the cheek. It is used often in reference of the cheek of a man or woman, and figuratively for Jerusalem (See BDB, s.v. "לחה"). Although grammatically singular, cheek is understood as a collective.

[74] I am reading the מ preposition before עני and עבדה temporally (after), signifying Judah's movement from a bad state of misery and servitude to a worse state of exile.

[75] The Hebrew phrase בין המצרים is unparalleled and the exact sense is uncertain, but the literal reading would be "overtook her between the narrow places". A psalm from Qumran (1QH v 29) has paraphrased this sense and added "so I could not get away". (See Hillers, *Lamentations*, 7).

1:5 Her foes have become the master,
her enemies rest easy,
for the LORD made her suffer
for her many transgressions.
Her little children have gone away as captives
Before the foe.

1:6 Gone[76] *from Daughter Zion*
is all her splendor.
Her princes have become like stags
That find no pasture,
But go on exhausted
Before the pursuer.

1:7 Jerusalem remembers[77]
(in) the days of her misery and her trouble,
all her treasures of earlier days.
When her people fell into the hand of the foe,
And there was no one to help her,
Foes saw her, mocked her collapse.

1:8 Grievously has Jerusalem sinned,
therefore she has been banished.
All who respected her treat her as worthless,
For they have seen her nakedness.
Indeed, she herself groans,
And turns away.

1:9 Her impurity is in her skirts,
she had no regard for her future;
And she had come down amazingly low,
There was no one comforting her.
"Look LORD, upon my misery,
for the enemy is triumphant."

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[76] The verb ויצא "has gone out" is act. (qal impf 3 ms) but BHS offers a pass. reading of the LXX, repointing the Hebrew as a pass. The Greek tradition is divided over ויצא; the Hexaplaric and the Lucianic tradition aligns with the MT translating εξηλθεν "is departed". Another translation offers εξηρθη "is taken"; it is unlikely this presupposes the Hebrew and may be either a scribal error for εξηλθεν, or a free translation to express that the beauty of the city "is departed" not by God, but rather he is the one who has taken it away.
Considering the מן בת the ketib is the more unusual orthography and is to be preferred. For further reading see R. Schäfer. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta Edition*. "General Introduction and Megilloth: Lamentations". Vol.18. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2004.

[77] The phrase זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַם The 4QLam has a textual variant for the opening of this verse, which was likely derived from the form זכרה `which allows two different interpretations (as a 3 f. sg. Pf or as an emphatic m. sg. Impv; I have followed the 3 f. sg. Pf).

1:10 The foe spread his hand
over all her treasures.
Indeed, she has seen the nations
Enter her temple,
Concerning whom You had commanded:
"They shall not enter your assembly."

1:11 All her people are groaning,
searching for bread,
they gave their treasures[78] for food
to sustain life.
Look, LORD, and see
What a beggar[79] I have become.

1:12 May it not happen to you, all you passersby
Look, See:
Is there any pain like my pain,
Which befell me
Which the LORD made me suffer
On the day of his anger?

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[78] The noun MRhyé;døwmSjAm is translated typically as "precious things" or "desirable things"; I have translated treasures here as the noun carries the sense of pleasurable times or experiences. Adele Berlin (*Lamentations*, 46) translates similarly in 1:10-11, and 2:4, and adds the sense of "treasured memories" and "treasured moments" as it relates to the things that delight her (Daughter Zion). However, the form in v. 11 is different than v. 10, and the context of v. 11 lends itself more toward the material meaning of treasured items. However, some variations exist; the V uses the indefinite pronoun instead of the possessive, indicating all these precious things are to be given away or traded im commerce. The S holds a sg. which might express that each individual gives his/her most treasured possession and the sg. in the T is understood in a collective sense and fits with the meaning of the MT.

[79] The word זוללה is generally taken from the root זלל with the sense of "lacking value". The etymology of this particular word has been debated amongst scholars, with two primary interpretations rising to the top of the discussion. Some traditional Jewish exegetes have related this word to זולל "glutton", but this is a minority opinion as it does not best suit the context in Lamentations 1. The Targum renders the phrase הויתי נרנריתא "I have become a glutton"; and Ibn-Ezra cites the expression זולל וסבא translated widely as the phrase "gluttonous lush" (Dt. 21:20; Prov. 23:20-21). The central problem with these renderings is that a starving person cannot be a glutton, and no amount of verbal gymnastics can change that fact to strengthen this argument. For this reason, the majority of ancient and modern scholars translate from זלל "to be cheap, worthless" with carries a variety of denotations including זלזל "treat with disrespect". All of these derivations reflect the base meaning of worthlessness, which is also reflected in the LXX, V, Syriac, and many other scholars and biblical versions. V.A. Horowitz (*Zllh = Peddler/Tramp/Vagabond/*Beggar, 542ff) relates the Hebrew word זוללה to the Akkadian "*zilulu*" as it appears in "Advice to a Prince" and in the bilingual lexical text of Diri Vi (translated as "*sahhiru*" with the meaning of vagabond, peddler, beggar. In the texts "The Babylonian Theodicy" and "Advice to a Prince" *zilulu* can be translated as vagabond or peddler. Horowitz favors Diakanoff's (*A Babylonian Political Pamphlet from about 700 BC,* 347) rendition of "beggar". Both stories describe persons, either an heir or nobility, who have had their fortunes reversed and the once proud characters wander the city streets, peddling their possessions for food and sustenance. This is exactly the type of person Daughter Jerusalem describes herself as, thus lending credence to the word זוללה being a Hebrew form of this Akkadian word *sulilu*, with the translation "See O LORD, and look, for I have become a *beggar*".

1:13 From on high he sent fire into my bones,
and he brought it down[80]*.*
He spread a net for my feet,
He held me back
He made me desolate,
All day long languishing.

1:14 My yoke of transgressions was fashioned[81]*,*
with his hand they were entwined,
they mounted upon my neck,
it sapped my strength.
My LORD gave me into the hands
Of those I cannot withstand.

1:15 He trampled[82] *all my warriors,*
the LORD in my midst
He proclaimed against me a set time
To crush my youths
The LORD trod the winepress
Of Dear Maiden Judah

1:16 For these things do I sob,
my eyes, my eyes flow with water
For far from me is any comforter
Anyone to keep me alive
My children are desolate,
For the enemy has prevailed.

1:17 Zion spread out her hands,
there is no comforter for her.
The LORD has commanded for Jacob

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[80] YHWH is the subject of all the verbs in this verse. The word וירדנה can be derived from the root רדה "to rule" or ירד "to descend"; the form in the MT indicates רדה (*yireddenna*) but many translations emend to *yoreddenna* "he caused it to come down". The 3p fs suffix seems to have no appropriate antecedent; Ibn-Ezra takes "fire" as the antecedent and understands the meaning as "God ruled over the fire", and Provan takes a similar view. Furthermore, Lamentations 2 features "fire from heaven" significantly, and it is clear there that God is the one who causes the fire and hurtles it downward to destroy Jerusalem.

[81] The word נשקד is a hapax-legomenon and there are various postulations; I follow Berlin, using a neutral term to indicate the action of a yoke being made for Daughter Jerusalem.

[82] The word סלה means "heap up", which is close to סלל "lift up, cast up". Hillers translates סלה literally and relates it to a harvest imagery; but סלל is often used in describing the earthen ramp in sieges which is formed by stomping down on earth around the city wall. It is more likely with the context that סלל was intended and what the Syriac seemed to have in mind with the rendering of כבש, which the Targum also translates.

That those around him are his foes
Jerusalem has become
A menstruating woman among them.[83]

1:18 The LORD is in the right,
for I have rebelled against his mouth.
Listen well, all you peoples,
And see my pain.
My maidens and my youths
Have gone into captivity.

1:19 I called to my lovers,
they deceived me.
My priests and elders
Expired in the city
As they searched for food
to sustain their life

1:20 See, LORD, how distressed I am,
my bowels churn,
My heart is turned over inside me,
How very bitter I am[84]
Outside the sword bereaved,
Inside – death.[85]

1:21 They heard that I was groaning,
"There is no comforter for me"
All my enemies who heard my distress
Rejoiced that you had caused it.

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[83] The form נידה is likely a variant spelling; the LXX renders "*εις αποκαθημενην",* and the V "*quasi polluta menstruis*"; T לאתתא מרחקא and the Syriac "*ndt"* understand this as a reference to a menstruating woman. The f. noun נדת has the meaning "impurity" in reference to either ceremonial impurity (in particular, menstruation) or figuratively, to immorality. Gottwald, Westermann, and Gordis do not deny the links with menstruation but prefer to translate the term to mean something unclean and to be shunned.

[84] The phrase כי מרו מריתי is typically translated as "for I have indeed rebelled". However, C. L. Seow has argued the meaning to be "how very bitter I am" from the root מרר rather than מרי/מרה. This reading better fits the context of Daughter Jerusalem's protest and emotional expressions within the poem (See C. L. Seow, "A Textual Note on Lamentations 1:20", *CBQ* 47, 1985, pp. 416-419).

[85] Many interpreters find the כ troublesome. Salters (2010, 98) states the final line, מחוץ שכלה–חרב בבית כמות, to be reminiscent of the words in Deut 32:25 (sword outside, terror within); Ezek 7:15 (sword outside, plague and famine inside); and Jer 14:18 (sword outside, famine inside). Similarly, Hillers references lines from city lamentations over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur: "inside we die of famine, outside we are killed by the weapons of the Elamites" (*ANET*, 618, lines 403ff). Berlin (*Lamentations*, 46) aptly summarizes taking the phrase כמות "like death" as a weakening of the trope and a rendering which acts against the description of death inside and outside the city (i.e. something that is like death but not death itself is quite bad, but less forceful than death itself). For this reason, Gordis renders the כ as an asseverative, and argues it was clearly recognized as such by the medieval Jewish commentators (*Lamentations*, 159). Berlin and Gordis argue the best translation as "death" communicating that the actions and state of destruction outside the city parallels the destruction found inside (Berlin, *Lamentations*, 47; Gordis, *Lamentations*, 159).

O bring the day you proclaimed
And let them be like me.

1:22 Let their evildoing come before you,
and do to them
what you did to me
for all my transgressions
For many are my groans,
And my heart is languishing.