

3: Excerpts from letters: Yosef Klausner, 1903, and S. Y. Abramovitsh, c. 1904, respond to “In the City of Slaughter.”

Yosef Klausner, Letter to Bialik

...for three days now I have not been able to free myself from the tremendous impression made upon me by your poem [...]. I nearly went out of my mind from broken-heartedness. I have read it already 20 times and am not yet sated. This is no poem but a scroll of lamentations stronger, more courageous, more rigorous than the [biblical] *Book of Lamentations* itself [...]. It is terrible and deep as the abyss and demanding and profoundly depressing. I have never read a poem like it in any other literature. Pain, bitterness, despair and fury and every kind of intense emotion are blended in your poem. You have erected a monument of disgrace for the most terrible events in our lives [...]

From a slightly later letter: ...it is not an exaggeration to say [...] that this is no poem but a piece of prophecy from Jeremiah or Ezekiel [...].