

# Lamentations 1: Facing Sorrow - Tim's notes

(For syllabus and resources for this Jeremiah series type [bit.ly/nlncmu](http://bit.ly/nlncmu) into any browser.)

## **Getting Started:**

Lament can be used as a noun and as a verb. How would you define each? – *As a noun, a lament is a passionate expression of grief or sorrow. As a verb, lament means to mourn*

## **Practicing God's Presence exercises**

### ***Last week: Physical 02 | Physical Reminders***

### ***Upcoming: Relational 02 | The Least, Last and Lost***

Jesus made time for the people others ignored or devalued: little children, a demon-possessed man, a woman hemorrhaging for 12 years. So, this week, notice some overlooked people - a grocery bagger, your mail carrier, a person nobody talks to, etc.. Ask how they're doing or make it a point to thank them if they're serving you. "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Mat 25:40 ).

## **Today's lesson (Lamentations 1.1-8, 12-18)**

### **Context:**

*Lamentations was written after the fall of Jerusalem. 5 chapters. Many Psalms are laments.*

*Chapters 1-4 are acrostics based on the 22 characters in the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 5 has 22 verses but is not an acrostic.*

*Lamentations does not offer much hope; mostly it is a sob of grief.*

### **Read Lam 1.1-4:**

In v1, what three words describe the current state of Jerusalem? – *deserted, widow, slave.*

### **5-8:**

Did this demise happen all at once? – *No, it happened over hundreds of years.*

What caused this sad scene? – *God's discipline for Judah's betrayal of the covenant.*

Stepping back from the Jerusalem disaster, there are two kinds of evil that bring deep sorrow: moral and natural. How do you understand these two terms? – *Moral evil derives from human sin (actions or inactions). It can come from the sin of another person or organization. Or it can come from the sins, of our ancestors. Or moral evil can emerge from the culture in which we live, such as in the case of Jerusalem. Daniel was not dragged off to Babylon as a refugee because of any sin of his own, he was born in a culture that had betrayed their covenant with God for generations and it*

*continued to Daniel's day. And moral evil can come from a sinful, neighboring culture.*

*Natural evil describes things like brain cancer, earthquakes, volcanos, floods, fires started by lightning, and such "natural disasters."*

*In today's world, we're starting to see a combination of moral and natural evil. Environmental scientists say that for the first time in history humans have as large an impact on the environment as any other factor. So the impacts of hurricanes today derive from a combination of moral and natural evil.*

12-14:

*What is the difference between God's discipline and God's punishment? – Punishment is a punitive action done to make the offender repay a debt incurred. It is done for the benefit of the offended rather than for the offender. Jesus absorbed our punishment on the cross, so God does not punish his children, only his enemies. Discipline is corrective action to change the behavior of the offender. It is for the benefit of the offender rather than for the offended. God does discipline his children ... such as in this case of Jerusalem/Judah. For more on this see [Punishment vrs Discipline](#).*

15-18:

*Can you think of any time in the New Testament when Jesus lamented like Jeremiah? – Jesus' mixture of anger and weeping with the women who were weeping for Lazarus in John 11.32-44. And Jesus knew he was about to raise Lazarus back to life! Think about that. For more on this click on [Jesus Laments Lazarus](#).*

Connecting to life:

Ask someone to read [Mother Love: Divine](#).

Are you lamenting for or with any group? –

After lamenting, what further action could you take?

*Can you remember a time when you lamented over the situation of a particular person? – Share my recollection my time alone at the bedside of a (very) Christian dying woman. It was early in my experiences with death. I watched her losing her fight for air and I saw for the first time the ugliness of where sin leads - to death. I just sat there lamenting with tears. I think this is what Jeremiah experienced surrounded by the ruins of Jerusalem.*

*When you are downcast and lamenting over something in your own life, where do you turn for comfort? – Read the Psalms over and over. One a day for a year or two. Confession/repentance if your sorrow is a consequence of your sin, Paul's epistles (especially Ephesians and Romans, my*

*ID in Christ scripture list, long walks listening for God's quiet voice.*

Frances' moment

Consider Isaiah 30.18-27 provides hope for and Deuteronomy 8.10-20

***Let's Pray.***

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Session objective: Understand that sin has such widespread consequences so there are seasons to dwell in deep lament before turning to hope or action.

## **Lamentations 1:1-12 (NLT)**

### ***Sorrow in Jerusalem***

1 Jerusalem, once so full of people, is now deserted.  
She who was once great among the nation now sits alone like a widow.  
Once the queen of all the earth, she is now a slave.

2 She sobs through the night; tears stream down her cheeks.  
Among all her lovers, there is no one left to comfort her.  
All her friends have betrayed her and become her enemies.

3 Judah has been led away into captivity, oppressed with cruel slavery.  
She lives among foreign nations and has no place of rest.  
Her enemies have chased her down, and she has nowhere to turn.

4 The roads to Jerusalem are in mourning, for crowds no longer come to celebrate the festivals.  
The city gates are silent, her priests groan,  
her young women are crying – how bitter is her fate!

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5 Her oppressors have become her masters, and her enemies prosper,  
for the Lord has punished Jerusalem for her many sins.  
Her children have been captured and taken away to distant lands.

6 All the majesty of beautiful Jerusalem has been stripped away.  
Her princes are like starving deer searching for pasture.  
They are too weak to run from the pursuing enemy.

7 In the midst of her sadness and wandering, Jerusalem remembers her ancient splendor.  
But now she has fallen to her enemy, and there is no one to help her.  
Her enemy struck her down and laughed as she fell.

8 Jerusalem has sinned greatly, so she has been tossed away like a filthy rag.  
All who once honored her now despise her, for they have seen her stripped naked and humiliated.  
All she can do is groan and hide her face.

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... 12 "Does it mean nothing to you, all you who pass by?  
Look around and see if there is any suffering like mine,  
which the Lord brought on me when he erupted in fierce anger.

13 "He has sent fire from heaven that burns in my bones.  
He has placed a trap in my path and turned me back.  
He has left me devastated, racked with sickness all day long.

14 "He wove my sins into ropes to hitch me to a yoke of captivity.  
The Lord sapped my strength and turned me over to my enemies;  
I am helpless in their hands.

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15 "The Lord has treated my mighty men with contempt.  
At his command a great army has come to crush my young warriors.  
The Lord has trampled his beloved city like grapes are trampled in a winepress.

16 "For all these things I weep; tears flow down my cheeks.  
No one is here to comfort me; any who might encourage me are far away.  
My children have no future, for the enemy has conquered us."

17 Jerusalem reaches out for help, but no one comforts her.  
Regarding his people Israel, the Lord has said,  
"Let their neighbors be their enemies! Let them be thrown away like a filthy rag!"

18 "The Lord is right," Jerusalem says, "for I rebelled against him.  
Listen, people everywhere; look upon my anguish and despair,  
for my sons and daughters have been taken captive to distant lands.

# Lamentations 1: Facing Sorrow - handout

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