



Wednesday 21/22 February 2023 ~ Lamentations 1+2

Leader's Prep: This 7mins video overviewing Lamentations may be very helpful to watch before (or possibly with) your group.
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/lamentations/>

Context: The book of Lamentations (probably written by Jeremiah) is a vivid description of the fall of Jerusalem in 586BC (to the Babylonian empire). God had repeatedly and lovingly warned His people Israel that because of their repeated, serious sin, He would bring his judgment. Given their failure to repent, eventually this happened - with military defeat, the Temple falling, and their subsequent exile for 70 years. (Jews today still lament the destruction of the Temple, by often reading out loud this very book at the Wailing Wall in Old Jerusalem).

Read Lamentations 1v1-11

1. From these verses, how must it have felt for God's people to experience suffering like this?
How does it make you feel as you read this?

2. Look at **1v5**, **v8**, **v22** to see the reason for this judgement.
How serious a view do we tend to have of our personal and corporate sin?

NB, the Bible urges to be careful, though, in simply drawing a straight line between our sin and any suffering in our lives. There are many causes of suffering: the sin of others, persecution, our own sin, the fact of living in a broken world, or (as in Job's life) no clear reason we can see. So we do need to be sensitive as we explore this issue – and especially alert to those of us with very sensitive consciences.

3. a) As you read **2v1-8**, who is the main actor?
b) So, what do you make of the fact that (behind Babylon's attack on Jerusalem) it was the Lord Himself, in His sovereign purposes, who brought His judgment upon sin?
4. In **1v20** and **2v18-19**, how do we see a model of bringing our confession, hurting hearts and dashed hopes to the Lord in prayer? How real are *we* with Him and with others?
5. Jamie quoted Christopher Wright: "Jesus not only wept, like Lady Zion, over Jerusalem; like her, he also suffered desertion by his friends, mockery from his enemies, and apathy from passers-by. Like her, he was stripped naked, publicly exposed and humiliated, with none to comfort." So in Lent we remember that the One who brings judgment in Lamentations, is the very same One who in love, in Christ, bears judgment in Himself.
In response, perhaps in quiet, what do we want to say to this Jesus?



It may be you want to **pray words of a Confession/ Penitence** as a CG

www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/daily-prayer/forms-penitence



This week is the start of Lent, a season when Christians, down through the ages and around the world, are real again about both our sin and God's forgiving, cleansing grace. Why not as a CG read a **Lent daily devotional**?

Here's two suggestions, where the first 4-5 days are available free online (so you still have time to order an e/hard copy!)

Paul Tripp, *Journey to the Cross* www.paultripp.com/journey-to-the-cross-a-40-day-lenten-devotional

Tim Chester, *The Glory of the Cross* www.thegoodbook.co.uk/the-glory-of-the-cross

	A reminder of CGs Programme for Lent:	
	Weds 1 March	Prayer meeting
	Tues/Weds 7/8 March	CGs on Lamentations 5
	Weds 15/22/29 March - Lent Discipleship School	
	Please all do sign up online, for catering.	
	www.holytrinityclapham.org/lent-discipleship-school	
Thurs 6 Apr	ReSet (Maundy Thursday)	
Weds/ Thurs 18/19 April	CGs restart post-Easter	