

## How Lonely Sits the City By Trey Sullins

The book of Lamentations tells the story of the sadness surrounding Jerusalem. Lamentations serves as a great example to Christians. Not only does it show what happens when God's people reject Him, but it reminds Christians of the hope obtained found only in God. Christians need to seek the great wisdom found in the book of Lamentations. By using it they can hopefully avoid making the mistakes which Jerusalem made.

The first chapter of Lamentations paints a gloomy description picture of Jerusalem's state of affliction. "She weeps bitterly at night, Her tears are on her cheeks" showing the complete sadness and despair Jerusalem felt (Lamentations 1:2). She had no one to comfort her and all of her friends had forsaken her (Lamentations 1:2). She was without food (Lamentations 1:11). She opened her hands waiting for someone to comfort her, but no one came (Lamentations 1:17). Even Jerusalem realized that she had sinned, "For I have been very rebellious" (Lamentations 1:20).

The intense anger of God opens chapter two. God's anger is expressed through the destruction of Jerusalem. God did not pity Jerusalem but swallowed the dwelling places (Lamentations 2:2). God is described as standing at the ready. With His hand on His bow, "He has poured out His fury like fire" (Lamentations 2:4). God determined to destroy Jerusalem for their wickedness and has now fulfilled and completed this task (Lamentations 2:17).

The third chapter shows the deep pain and anguish felt by the prophet Jeremiah as the city of Jerusalem was destroyed. "I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of His Wrath." This first statement of the chapter sets the mood and explains what Jeremiah was feeling. Jeremiah continues expressing his extreme sorrow over the situation. In verse twenty-three he writes, "Great is your faithfulness." After this declaration of God's great faith, he continues to praise the Lord and state why people should turn to the Lord.

The fourth chapter gives more explanation to the height which Jerusalem fell from. The punishment of God's own people is described as great than that of Sodom (Lamentations 4:6). A more graphic picture is paint in verse nine, "Those slain by the sword are better off." Verse thirteen points some of the blame at the prophets of Jerusalem. These prophets were preaching peace, yet if they were truly from God, they would know that there was no peace (Jeremiah 6:14). Jerusalem was waiting for one of the surrounding nations to come and help them, but this help would never come (Lamentations 4:17).

Chapter five is the most hopeful as it contains a prayer for the restoration of the city. The writer says "Remember... what has come upon us" (Lamentations 5:1). The chapter continues on by recapping some of the bad things that had come upon the nation. Then in the last four verses there is a change of tone. "You, O Lord, remain forever." The people ask why God has forsaken them. Then they beg God to turn them back to Him, so that they might be restored. In the last statement they beg God that unless He is angry with them then they request to be renewed as they were in the old days.

The book of Lamentations is a clear example to the Christian today. It gives the answer to what

happens when God is rejected. It also can persuade Christian not to reject God, lest these bad things come upon them. It also gives us hope. No matter what happens Christians can still pray to God and ask for restoration and forgiveness. God's people need to use this book in their lives so that they might remain in the right path. Christians must ask themselves if they are doing what is necessary to avoid these curses coming upon them.