

“The enemy has plundered her completely, taking every precious thing she owns. She has seen foreigners violate her sacred Temple, the place the Lord had forbidden them to enter.” Lamentations 1:10 NLT

## [lectio] // LAMENTATIONS 1:16-22

listen to the text by reading out loud slowly and repeat up to 3x if desired

This book is so hard to read because of the complete destruction that Israel went through. I just see so many reflections of myself, my sin and stubbornness. I see the church and wonder about Christ's beautiful bride. Oh God, was it too much for them? Were you too harsh? They became a bitter people, producing stubborn soured children scattered all over the earth. It is so painful to read and know what your people have gone through. The author writes, “The Lord has trampled his beloved city (the virgin daughter of Judah), like grapes are trampled in a winepress.” I have no doubts about your holiness. I have no doubts about you being true, right, and just. I just ache at the disparity between your goodness, your righteousness and their sin - OUR sin. It is such a wide chasm. Here we have a record of inevitability in “our” ways. Here we have the bitter journey into the depths of self and sin. They (we) are so very stubborn, why did you make us so obstinate? We can be stubbornly fixed on righteousness and goodness, but when turn, when we want our own way - it is utterly impossible to break the human spirit of self. We would rather go down cursing you rather than repent and humble ourselves. How can your love penetrate such fortified defenses? Oh God, have mercy on us.

## [oratio]

Dad,  
I can see that there are many that have been completely shattered by life and their own decisions. They are broken and need your love and long suffering to penetrate the defenses that have protected their heart. Then there are those that are truly angry and hateful because life will not allow them to live anyway they want, that you fight against their selfishness and evil - and there is deep hatred and anger against you and anything that is good. I see such pain in both: one in suffering from so much that has happened to them, the other in such rage because they seek more control and power to pour out abuse and terror on others. My heart aches and breaks for both! I think of Keith's story from Men's Retreat and feel several generations of wickedness of selfish living dumped, like garbage, from one generation to the next. I must believe in the power of your love, grace and mercy to change and transform a life. I must live a life that convinces others that you are real and you redeem ALL things when submitted to your will.

## [contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root