***Lamentations 2:1-12 How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger! He cast down from heaven to the earth The beauty of Israel, And did not remember His footstool In the day of His anger. 2The Lord has swallowed up and has not pitied All the dwelling places of Jacob. He has thrown down in His wrath The strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He has brought them down to the ground; He has profaned the kingdom and its princes. 3He has cut off in fierce anger Every horn of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand From before the enemy. He has blazed against Jacob like a flaming fire Devouring all around. 4Standing like an enemy, He has bent His bow; With His right hand, like an adversary, He has slain all who were pleasing to His eye; On the tent of the daughter of Zion,
He has poured out His fury like fire. 5The Lord was like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel, He has swallowed up all her palaces; He has destroyed her strongholds, And has increased mourning and lamentation In the daughter of Judah. 6He has done violence to His tabernacle, As if it were a garden; He has destroyed His place of assembly; The Lord has caused The appointed feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion. In His burning indignation He has spurned the king and the priest. 7The Lord has spurned His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has given up the walls of her palaces Into the hand of the enemy. They have made a noise in the house of the Lord As on the day of a set feast. 8 The Lord has purposed to destroy The wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line; He has not withdrawn His hand from destroying; Therefore He has caused the rampart and wall to lament; They languished together. 9Her gates have sunk into the ground; He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The Law is no more,
And her prophets find no vision from the Lord. 10The elders of the daughter of Zion Sit on the ground and keep silence; They throw dust on their heads And gird themselves with sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem Bow their heads to the ground. 11My eyes fail with tears, My heart is troubled; My bile is poured on the ground Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, Because the children and the infants Faint in the streets of the city.***

***12They say to their mothers, “Where is grain and wine?” As they swoon like the wounded in the streets of the city, As their life is poured out In their mothers’ bosom.***

Lamentations 2 continues our look at the fierce anger that God poured out on the rebellious people of Israel. Remember that the prophet is weeping for the nation, but understands that the people, through rebellion and disobedience, brought this judgement. He does not separate himself from the people. Pride may cause us to see others as more sinful and disobedient than ourselves, but the Bible is clear in Romans 3 when it says that all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. That is why we cry out for a Savior. We can’t save ourselves.

 Verse 1 *How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger! He cast down from heaven to the earth The beauty of Israel, And did not remember His footstool In the day of His anger.* ***H****ow the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger!* In God’s righteous anger, He has turned Israel’s blessings into curses, prosperity into scarcity, light into darkness and fear. *He cast down from heaven to the earth The beauty of Israel, And did not remember His footstool In the day of His anger.* God has allowed the temple to be cast down, once a glory to behold, now desecrated and destroyed. Even the Ark of the Covenant He allowed to be forgotten and “lost” to time. The very earthly representations of God He removed. This sends a powerful message of God’s wrath and His hand withdrawing from the nation.

Verses 2-4 *The Lord has swallowed up and has not pitied All the dwelling places of Jacob. He has thrown down in His wrath The strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He has brought them down to the ground; He has profaned the kingdom and its princes. 3He has cut off in fierce anger Every horn of Israel; He has drawn back His right hand From before the enemy. He has blazed against Jacob like a flaming fire Devouring all around. 4Standing like an enemy, He has bent His bow; With His right hand, like an adversary, He has slain all who were pleasing to His eye; On the tent of the daughter of Zion, He has poured out His fury like fire.* ***T****he Lord has swallowed up and has not pitied All the dwelling places of Jacob.* The Lord shows no pity in His judgement of Judah. They showed no repentance for their disobedience. *He has thrown down in His wrath The strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He has brought them down to the ground –* He has allowed all the fortifications and strongholds to be overrun, the military and mighty men have failed, all they would depend on for security from a worldly standpoint has failed. *He has profaned the kingdom and its princes.* Similar to what Psalm 89:38-39 *But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been furious with Your anointed. 39 You have renounced the covenant of Your servant; You have profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.* God shows no regard for the kingdom nor the princes of the Davidic kingdom. *He has cut off in fierce anger Every horn of Israel –* The prophet continues to emphasize how God has cut off every source of Judah’s strength and glory. It reminds us of Lamentations 1 speaking of being entangled in a net. *He has drawn back His right hand From before the enemy –* God is withdrawing His protection from over Judah and is allowing the enemy to advance. God has rendered ineffective all efforts on Israel’s part. In Jeremiah 21:4 we read - *Thus says the Lord God of Israel: “Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, with which you fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who besiege you outside the walls; and I will assemble them in the midst of this city.* Not only is God allowing the Chaldeans and Babylonians to progress, but He is turning aside and hindering the Jews defense*. He has blazed against Jacob like a flaming fire Devouring all around.*God is completely consuming the Jews, just as a fire engulfs a house. *Standing like an enemy, He has bent His bow; With His right hand, like an adversary.-* The Jewish people worked and actively made God their enemy through sin and disobedience. They, through worshipping false idols and ruining relationship with Him have declared themselves His enemy. As a result, He treats them as such, bending the bow as a archer would and extending His right hand in opposition rather than protection. *He has slain all who were pleasing to His eye* – God has shown no favoritism in His judgement. All have fallen equally. *On the tent of the daughter of Zion, He has poured out His fury like fire.*His wrath devours without discrimination.

Verse 5 *The Lord was like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel, He has swallowed up all her palaces; He has destroyed her strongholds, And has increased mourning and lamentation In the daughter of Judah.* God is again compared to an enemy, but an enemy of Israel’s own making. Verse 5 repeats many of the themes in the first 4 verses. Hebrew writers used this method to emphasize the previous ideas. This verse has the idea of a nation and a people moaning and suffering in the pain of what has befallen them.

Verses 6-7 *He has done violence to His tabernacle, As if it were a garden; He has destroyed His place of assembly; The Lord has caused The appointed feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion. In His burning indignation He has spurned the king and the priest. 7The Lord has spurned His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has given up the walls of her palaces Into the hand of the enemy. They have made a noise in the house of the Lord As on the day of a set feast.****H****e has done violence to His tabernacle, As if it were a garden –* The Hebrew has the idea of dissolving or completely destroying God’s dwelling place, the Temple, as if as disposable as a tent. He has taken away the hedge that protected Israel, just as one might cut down the hedge around a garden. The nation is exposed to the mercilessness of the enemies all around. *He has destroyed His place of assembly –* God has destroyed the place of assembly for worship and the congregation that gathered to worship, the people of Israel, keeping only a remnant for the future. *The Lord has caused The appointed feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion –* Services, worship, appointed feasts, celebrations are no longer happening. The enemy and the suffering have caused these to be forgotten and impossible to hold. Isaiah 1:14-15 says - *Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. 15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.* This is very similar to what Lamentations is saying. *In His burning indignation He has spurned the king and the priest.* God no longer honors the various officers and kings of Judah. *The Lord has spurned His altar, He has abandoned His sanctuary; He has given up the walls of her palaces Into the hand of the enemy.* The altar had been defiled with sin and God will not bear with sin. He abandoned the sanctuary. The people had dedicated themselves to reprobate and sinful ways and God gave them over to their reprobate minds. They’ve been given into the hands of the enemy by the allowance of God.

Verses 8-9 *The Lord has purposed to destroy The wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line; He has not withdrawn His hand from destroying; Therefore He has caused the rampart and wall to lament; They languished together. 9Her gates have sunk into the ground; He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The Law is no more, And her prophets find no vision from the Lord.* ***T****he Lord has purposed to destroy The wall of the daughter of Zion. He has stretched out a line –* God has destroyed the wall of security He held around Jerusalem. In Isaiah 34:11, Isaiah says that it will be *called The line of confusion and the stones of emptiness.* Many times in the Old Testament, the term walls is used to highlight the outline of what will be destroyed – by stretching out a line, God delineates what He will destroy. *Therefore He has caused the rampart and wall to lament; They languished together.*God has made the walls and ramparts meant to protect feeble. There is no strength left in them. *Her gates have sunk into the ground; He has destroyed and broken her bars.* The gates of Jerusalem have been broken down and destroyed, covered in rubbish. Recall that Nehemiah had to stop the tour of the walls and turn back, the horse could not continue due to the rubble. *Her king and her princes are among the nations –* Zedekiah and the nobility of the Jews are in captivity, if they were not killed. *The Law is no more –* The Law is not read aloud or taught by the Levites and the priests. These too were either killed or sent into captivity, living among heathen and unbelieving nations. *And her prophets find no vision from the Lord –* Divine revelation has stopped or is very limited. The Prophets are in captivity of they have not been killed. God has withdrawn His wisdom and favor.

Verses 10-12 *The elders of the daughter of Zion Sit on the ground and keep silence; They throw dust on their heads And gird themselves with sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem Bow their heads to the ground. 11My eyes fail with tears, My heart is troubled; My bile is poured on the ground Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, Because the children and the infants Faint in the streets of the city. 12They say to their mothers, “Where is grain and wine?” As they swoon like the wounded in the streets of the city, As their life is poured out In their mothers’ bosom.* ***T****he elders of the daughter of Zion Sit on the ground and keep silence; They throw dust on their heads And gird themselves with sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem Bow their heads to the ground.* These actions are meant to communicate deep sorrow and mourning. *My eyes fail with tears, My heart is troubled; My bile is poured on the ground –* The prophets eyes are dim with weeping, his insides shake and tremble, his bile pouring out means that he is physically nauseous over the calamities. *Because the children and the infants Faint in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, “Where is grain and wine?” As they swoon like the wounded in the streets of the city, As their life is poured out In their mothers’ bosom.* The children faint for want of food. They cry to their mothers for something to eat, but famine is the rule. The swoon like wounded soldiers, dying of hunger and thirst in their mothers arms. It is a heartbreaking picture of suffering for Judah.

As with Israel and Judah, we must understand that God will not allow sin and disobedience to go unaddressed. Though we can’t control what others do and we will surely suffer with the nation as it turns away from God, we must not lose hope and always remember the scripture of James 5:16 - *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* When we confess and repent, praying for one another, God hears. Remember the words of Psalm 51:17 - *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart - These, O God, You will not despise.* Let us pray with a broken spirit and a contrite heart to the God of our Salvation. As in Nineveh, God may yet relent if we turn our faces back to Him.