

# The Land Is in Ruins, Weep All Ye People!

by Brian Long

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and faith in seeking God's mercy and revival, despite the judgment that is coming.*

**Duration:** 27:44

**Scripture:** Lamentations 1:15, Lamentations 3:19-26, Lamentations 3:43-51, Lamentations 5:21

**Topics:** "Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the desperate state of the nation during the time of Jeremiah. He emphasizes how Jeremiah's heart was deeply affected by the sins of God's people and the destruction of Jerusalem. The speaker urges the audience to go beyond simply gathering and listening to messages, but to cry out to God in desperation and faith-filled prayer. He encourages them to believe that God desires to revive them and calls for a deeper understanding of God's perspective and a heartfelt response like Jeremiah.

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## Transcript

I'm going to share tonight from the book of Lamentations, and I'm just going to begin reading in chapter 3 and verse 43 through about 51. Thou hast covered with anger and persecuted us, thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied, thou hast covered thyself with the cloud that our prayer should not pass through. Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people.

All our enemies have opened their mouths against us. Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction. Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

Mine eye trickleth down and ceaseth not without any intermission till the Lord look down and behold from heaven, mine eye affecteth my heart because of all the daughters of my city. Jeremiah the prophet is the one speaking here, he's known as the weeping prophet, and he's weeping throughout this entire book of Lamentations. Sometimes he would weep day and night, crying out to God over the total devastation and destruction of his people.

Jerusalem had fallen, the nation was destroyed and taken captive by the Babylonians, the temple had been totally demolished, and for these things, Jeremiah said, I wept, I wept day and night. Chapter 1, verse 16, he says, for these things I weep, mine eye, my eye runneth down with water because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me. My children are desolate because the enemy

prevailed.

In chapter 2, verse 11, he says, mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured out upon the earth for the destruction of the daughter of my people because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city. So what I want you to see tonight is that it was an hour, it was a time of crisis. It was a desperate, desperate hour.

And looking upon all of this, all the desolation, all the destruction, all the devastation, Jeremiah says, my eyes have affected my heart. In other words, what he saw, he felt. And what he saw brought anguish to his heart.

It brought deep grief to his soul. And I want to just see for a moment, what was it that he saw that so affected his heart this way? First of all, I think we can find that Jeremiah was looking upon the sins of God's people and perhaps even his own sin. I mean, the closer a man gets to God, the more he sees how far short of the glory of God he really is.

And he was looking at this city, the city of Jerusalem that was supposed to be called the Holy City, a city set apart by God and a people set apart by God to be holy. And yet he's seeing that they're saturated with sin. There was sin in the camp.

They had sinned against God. And it was all this desolation and destruction and this severe judgment that had fallen upon them, this hour of crisis. It was not the result of the sins of another nation or the sins of the heathen.

It was the result of the sins of God's own people. And this brought Jeremiah to weeping. He had preached for years, warning them to repent and to return to God, warning them of judgment to come.

But nobody wanted to hear it. And so now judgment had come, total desolation. Jeremiah looks upon it and he weeps.

And he says, my eyes have affected my heart. Jerusalem has grievously sinned, he said in chapter 1, verse 8. Jerusalem has grievously sinned. Therefore she is removed.

All that honored her despise her because they have seen her nakedness. Yea, she sighed and turned backwards. She turned away from God.

And then in chapter 2, in verse 9, he says, her gates are sunk into the ground. He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her kings and her princes are among the Gentiles.

The law is no more. Her prophets also find no vision from the Lord. That is exactly a picture of the church in North America today.

The law is no more and the prophets find no vision from the Lord. There is a famine of the word of the Lord in the land. The word of God has been thrown out and replaced with entertainment that has come into the church.

The prophet finds no vision from the Lord, but now instead just preaches nice little stories and sermonettes. And he goes on to say in verse 14 of chapter 2, thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee. They have not discovered thine iniquity to turn away thy captivity, but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

These are lying false prophets that Jeremiah is exposing here, who will never preach a word from the Lord that will turn people from sin. But instead they are preaching the imaginations of their own hearts. They are hirelings, they are prosperity preachers, crying out peace, peace, when there is no peace.

In fact, just the opposite was true. Judgment was at the very door. And again, he said, I saw these things and my eyes affected my heart.

The glory of God had departed from them. And when that happens, the church then just becomes a public spectacle for the world to laugh at, to scoff and to mock. And that's what he says in verse 15.

All that pass by clap their hands at thee. They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? They are now scoffing at the very city that was called and supposed to be set apart by God as a testimony of His beauty and of His joy and of His glory to the whole earth. The type of the church today, the very people who are called to be salt of the earth, who are called to be light of the world, have lost her savor and is now only a smoldering wick.

And they scoff at her. And Jeremiah sees it and he weeps and he says again, my eyes have affected my heart. It pained him deeply to see this.

And then on top of that, he says, the enemy is there gloating over it all. Verse 16, all thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee. They hiss and gnash their teeth.

They say, we have swallowed her up. Certainly, this is the day that we look for. We have found.

We have seen it. The Lord has done that which He has devised. He has fulfilled His word that He had commanded in the days of old.

He has thrown down and it's not pity. And He has caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee. He has set up the horn of thine adversaries.

Earlier in chapter 1, Jeremiah says, O Lord, behold my affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself. In other words, it looked like the enemy was triumphing, a triumph. And I can hear Jeremiah saying, crying out to the Lord and saying, Lord, how long can this go on? What about your testimony? Lord, what about your name? What about your honor? What about the glory of God on the earth? How long can this go on? And we're seeing the very same thing today.

And what we see, what I see, affects my heart, as it does so many of you on this call. And there's something else that has really affected my heart just recently. It comes from something I just recently read that was written back in the 1940s from the Hebrides Revival.

This was actually a public declaration that the Free Church Presbytery of Lewis printed and put out in their local newspapers just before the Hebrides Revival broke out. In this public declaration, they pleaded with the people in their congregations to consider their ways, to consider the controversy that the Almighty God had with them, and to consider the lack of power in all of their gatherings. They knew it was an hour of crisis.

This presbytery knew that it was an hour of desperate need, of desperation. And I won't read the whole public declaration, but I want to read just one statement that they included in the last part of it. They said

this, The presbytery affectionately plead with their people, especially with the youth of the church, to take these matters to heart and to make serious inquiry as to what must be the end should there be no repentance.

That statement there has arrested my heart just recently. What must be the end should there be no repentance? In light of all that we see, in light of all the desolation and the devastation that we see today, in light of the public flaunting of sin, the total moral decadence, the filth, the evil, the violence, in light of the untold multitudes who have yet to hear the name of Jesus around the world, what must the end be? What must their end be should there be no repentance? In light of the even many more who have heard the name of Jesus, but who have yet to hear the true gospel of Jesus Christ, but instead have heard so much of a false gospel, what must the end be should there be no repentance, should there be no revival? In light of the devastation and the destruction of the family, of the marriage, of the home, of the many who are true Christians, but who are like today or like sheep without a shepherd. We're finding so many people who really do love God, who want to follow the Lord Jesus with all of their heart, but they're having a very difficult time finding a church where Jesus Christ has the preeminence.

What must the end be should there be no repentance? In light of the sad, powerless state of the church in the West today, and when you put all of these things together and add on top of it the fact that Jesus Christ could be at the very door of His return. What must the end be should there be no repentance and should there be no revival ever again? I can't even bear the thought of that. I can't accept the thought of there never being a revival, a God-sent revival again.

But I'll tell you what the end would be. Should there be no repentance and should there be no revival, the end will be severe judgment, the severe judgment of a holy God, the holy wrath of God. Jeremiah said in chapter 4 and verse 6, For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.

Punishment greater than the punishment for the sins of Sodom because her sins were greater than the sins of Sodom. And what about us, brothers and sisters, today, in light of all that we've been given? And remember that to whom much is given shall much be required. In light of the rebellion and sin and wickedness that we have committed, how much greater judgment do you suppose that we in the U.S. and Canada have stored up for ourselves? We have stored up for ourselves the terrifying wrath of God.

And I know that because God is just, He must judge sin. Judgment must come that one day His holy wrath will be poured out upon this entire nation and upon the whole earth. We read that in Revelation.

I know that judgment is coming, but I also know this, that God is slow to anger and abounding in mercy. And I'm thinking about those souls who don't yet know Christ, but can be saved and can come to know Him before the time of His judgment. And I'm thinking about the pure, spotless bride that the Lord Jesus Christ will come back for someday.

Is she really ready at this very hour? Should there be no repentance? Should there be no revival? Is the church ready for the return, the glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ? I know that judgment is imminent, but my prayer, our desperate cry, the reason we gather tonight is to cry out to God for mercy because He is also not only a God of justice, but a God of mercy. And so the other thing I would like to point out here in Lamentations is that while it was a desperate hour, it was not a hopeless hour. It's a desperate hour today, and I hope that everyone who comes to Dallas knows that.

I hope that everyone who gathers at that conference comes desperate for the living God. And they come knowing that this is a time of crisis, this is an urgent hour. It's a time of desperation.

But I also hope that as we gather, we know that while it's a desperate hour, it is not a hopeless hour, and this is why. Lamentations 3, verse 19. He says, Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance and is humbled in me.

This I recall to my mind. Therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul.

Therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.

Jeremiah was afflicted. He was deeply affected in his heart. He was in anguish.

He was desperate for a move of God. He was weeping day and night. He was desperate for an outpouring of God's mercy and revival.

He was desperate, but he was not in hopeless despair. He was not without hope, because he knew God. And he believed that even now God could and God would show mercy.

And I believe with all of my heart that even now, in light of all that we see today, and the state, the sad state of the church today, in light of all this, that God can and God will show mercy. And one of the reasons I have such an assurance and a desperate plea for God to show mercy by stepping down in revival once again is because of the incredible mercy that God has shown me. Over and over and over again.

Mercy to a wretched sinner. And when someone experiences the tremendous mercy of God, they long for others to also be shown that mercy from God. I know that judgment is coming.

But my cry is that God would first show mercy. That we demonstrate His mercy in coming by sending a revival that is greater than man has ever known. Jeremiah said in verse 21, This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope.

He recalled to mind the great magnitude of God's mercy and faithfulness. And therefore he had hope. And I think we need to recall to mind also the mercy of God in our time of desperation, in this critical crisis hour.

We need to remember the mercy of God. The mercy that God showed to Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah. And the mercy that God showed to Jonah himself.

When I look at that mercy of God, I say yes, there is still hope for revival. When you look at the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel, bones that were dead, that were dry, that man had no hope for. And yet God put them together and put flesh on them and breathed life into them.

And revived them and brought the people up out of their graves. We see that as an act of mercy from God. And I say yes, there is still hope for revival.

When we remember Lazarus who was in the grave for four days, dead, already stinking, in the tomb for four days. And yet the Lord Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life said, Lazarus, come forth. And that dead man walked out of the grave, revived, alive.

I see that and I say yes, there is still hope for revival. And most of all, what we need to recall to mind is simply the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remember Calvary.

Stand under the fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins. That fountain at which sinners are plunged, lose all their guilty stains. Stand under the fountain of the precious blood of the Lamb and ask yourself, is there still hope for God to come and revive even nations? Even nations today.

And I say His blood is enough. His blood, there is power in the blood of the Lamb and yes, there is hope. I cannot look at Calvary and say there is no hope for revival.

I cannot see the empty tomb and the Lord Jesus occupying His throne in glory and majesty and say that there is no, it is too late for revival. There is no hope. I cannot say that.

I look at Him and I say there is hope. There is tremendous hope. All of God's covenant promises are yes and amen through Christ Jesus.

Even in such a desperate hour, there is tremendous hope because we serve a God of hope and of incredible mercy and faithfulness. Now the question is, what will our response be in this desperate hour? What will we do in our crisis hour of desperation, what Jeremiah the prophet of God did in his hour of desperation? And what did he do? He cried out to God. He cried out to God desperately in prayer.

He says in verse 55 of chapter 3, I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice. Hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee. Thou saidst, fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul.

Thou hast redeemed my life. God drew near when Jeremiah called upon Him. And he cried out to Him with all of his heart.

In fact, part of his cry was a cry for revival. The second to the last verse of this little book says in chapter 5, 21, Jeremiah cries, turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned. Renew our days as of old.

That's a cry for God to have mercy. That's a cry for God to come in revival. And that's got to be our response.

In such a desperate hour, we've got to cry out to God like never before. We've got to desperately cry out to God because He is our hope. He's our only hope.

He's all the hope we need, more than we need. And I would just say in closing, we've got to go beyond just gathering at a conference and listening to good sermons and having good fellowship. I love all of that.

I cherish all of that. But we've got to go beyond that. The times are too critical.

The time is too urgent. It's too desperate of an hour for us not to go beyond just gathering and listening to good messages. We've got to gather and we've got to cry out, literally cry out to God in desperation, but to cry out to Him with hope-filled prayer, faith-filled prayer, laying hold of the covenant promises of God and believing that God wants to come and revive us again, more than we do even.

I believe that with all my heart. Father God, Lord, I pray, I pray, Father, that somehow, in the mighty name of Jesus, Lord, You would cause us to see what You see, first of all. God, I pray that You would bring us to that place where our eyes have affected our heart, just like You did the prophet Jeremiah.

I pray, Father God, that You would cause us to hear what You hear, that You would cause us to feel what You feel. Father, when I look at the state of Your church, Lord Jesus, when we look at the state of Your church, our hearts break. And yet, Lord Jesus, we look to You as the God of all hope and the God of mercy, who is faithful, Lord, to all of Your promises.

And Lord, we're crying out to You to revive her once again, to call forth Your people, Lord, out of their graves, to call forth Your people out of their grave clothes, to call Your people, Lord, back to their first love, which is namely You, Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, so many who have gone after other lovers, namely the world, I ask You, Lord Jesus, that You would come, Lord God, that You would cause them to hear Your voice, cause us all to hear Your voice, Lord Jesus, and to come back to You, to come running back to our first love. Lord, we ask You for a revival of first love.

We ask You, Lord God, to move, to move, Lord God, to step down in churches that have a name that they are alive but really are dead. Churches that are characterized now by lukewarmness, that would even say, we are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing. But You look at them, Lord, and You say, You do not know that You are poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked.

Repent. Lord, I ask You, Lord God, for a revival of repentance. I ask You, Father, for an awakening in our day, God, that we sweep across this land.

We ask You, Father, to pour out Your Spirit in such a way that multitudes, Lord, beyond being able to even count them, are awakened by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, awakened by the Spirit of God. Lord, I ask You to cause blind eyes to see, to open, to see our desperate need for You, Lord Jesus, at this hour of crisis, this hour of desperation. And Father, tonight we just pray that as You gather people to Dallas, that we would come, Lord God, with desperate hearts, hearts that are hungry for You, Lord Jesus, hearts that are desperate for You, Lord, hearts that long to see You glorified on this earth, hearts that are consumed, Father, with Your presence.

I pray, Father, that we would come that way, desperately seeking You, desperately crying out to You, Lord God, but with prayers of faith, having assurance, Lord, having hope that the God of all hope will hear us and will step down again in revival, in great awakening. And Father, I ask You to do a work in our day that would far exceed anything that has ever been done in the past, Lord, that nations, entire nations, Lord God, would be swept into Your kingdom. You're a great and mighty God.

I'm sitting out here underneath this starry sky. What a magnificent sky that You have created, Lord. All these stars, innumerable stars, and we see that You're a great and mighty God.

You're a big God. And Lord, we know that You are able, You are able, Lord, to revive us again. You are able to sweep multitudes into Your kingdom.

Lord, we're asking You to do it in our day. We're crying out to You from our hearts. Hear us tonight, Father.

Bless my brothers and sisters as they pray tonight, as they cry out to You, O God. I pray that You would pour out Your Spirit upon us to pray, to lay hold of Your promises, to seek Your face, Lord. Hear us now as we cry.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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