

Lamentations 4

New King James Version (NKJV)

Lamentations 4

The Degradation of Zion

1 How the gold has become dim!

How changed the fine gold!

The stones of the sanctuary are scattered

At the head of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion,

Valuable as fine gold,

How they are regarded as clay pots,

The work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the jackals present their breasts

To nurse their young;

But the daughter of my people is cruel,

Like ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the infant clings

To the roof of its mouth for thirst;

The young children ask for bread,

But no one breaks it for them.

5 Those who ate delicacies

Are desolate in the streets;

Those who were brought up in scarlet

Embrace ash heaps.

6 The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people

Is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom,

Which was overthrown in a moment,

With no hand to help her!

7 Her Nazirites[a] were brighter than snow
And whiter than milk;
They were more ruddy in body than rubies,
Like sapphire in their appearance.

8 Now their appearance is blacker than soot;
They go unrecognized in the streets;
Their skin clings to their bones,
It has become as dry as wood.

9 Those slain by the sword are better off
Than those who die of hunger;
For these pine away,
Stricken for lack of the fruits of the field.

10 The hands of the compassionate women
Have cooked their own children;
They became food for them
In the destruction of the daughter of my people.

11 The LORD has fulfilled His fury,
He has poured out His fierce anger.
He kindled a fire in Zion,
And it has devoured its foundations.

12 The kings of the earth,
And all inhabitants of the world,
Would not have believed
That the adversary and the enemy
Could enter the gates of Jerusalem—

13 Because of the sins of her prophets
And the iniquities of her priests,
Who shed in her midst
The blood of the just.

14 They wandered blind in the streets;
They have defiled themselves with blood,

So that no one would touch their garments.

15 They cried out to them,

“ Go away, unclean!

Go away, go away,

Do not touch us!”

When they fled and wandered,

Those among the nations said,

“ They shall no longer dwell here.”

16 The face[b] of the LORD scattered them;

He no longer regards them.

The people do not respect the priests

Nor show favor to the elders.

17 Still our eyes failed us,

Watching vainly for our help;

In our watching we watched

For a nation that could not save us.

18 They tracked our steps

So that we could not walk in our streets.

Our end was near;

Our days were over,

For our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were swifter

Than the eagles of the heavens.

They pursued us on the mountains

And lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

20 The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the
LORD,

Was caught in their pits,

Of whom we said, “Under his shadow

We shall live among the nations.”

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
You who dwell in the land of Uz!

The cup shall also pass over to you
And you shall become drunk and make yourself naked.

22 The punishment of your iniquity is accomplished,
O daughter of Zion;

He will no longer send you into captivity.

He will punish your iniquity,

O daughter of Edom;

He will uncover your sins!