

**Week 1**  
FAMILY & GROUP DISCUSSION

# CULTURE OF DENIAL

# INTRODUCTION

Lamentation is a gift God gives people for healing. 2/3's of the book of Psalms are psalms of lament. God made his people with the ability to speak. The key to easing suffering is not offering warped views of God, it is giving them a place to mourn and ultimately pointing them to Jesus.

## DISCUSSION

## Why do you think people try so hard not to Lament?

## EXPLANATION

Have you ever broken down and “let it all out?”

## What happened?

Name a song, in our current culture, that you could identify as a song of lament.

Why does this song speak of lament to you?

What do you think a lament looks like?

## APPLICATION

Do you think any marriages could be saved if people lamented to each other rather than burying it?

How could a workplace be better if someone talked about an “elephant in the room?”

## Why is it important to grieve?

### Why is it important to help someone else to grieve?



# LAMENTATIONS

# CULTURE OF DENIAL

Psalm 80:18-19  
Lamentations 1:1-22  
1 Thessalonians 4:13  
James 5:13-16  
Psalm 6:9

Psalm 28:6, 31:22,  
40:1, 116:1  
Matthew 11:28-29  
Hebrews 4:15-16  
Matthew 27:46

## Week 1 Notes

## & SCRIPTURE VERSES

[illegible]

## CULTURE OF DENIAL

***Psalm 80:18-19 “Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. Restore us, O LORD God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.”***

Lamentations is probably the most depressing book in the entirety of scripture (if only taken at face value). When looked more closely into, the book actually can show us how to grieve and to have hope. In our current culture, Christianity is presented in a way that teaches “if you follow God, then you get everything you want”. God will “bless” you, and to many “bless” means “the good life” as defined by us.

If you look through the majority of scripture, the people who were closest to God had the hardest time in life...but they were blessed because they walked with God daily. In Lamentations we see a whole country who once thought of themselves as “blessed” because they had the “good life,” but it has all been stripped away because their “good life” led them further and further from God. Now they are destitute and seeking God once again.

In the Talmud (*Baba Bathra* 15a), this book is called *qinot* (“Lamentations”); but the name commonly used in Hebrew for Lamentations is *ekah* (it is the book of “How”). Lamentations consists of five laments, all but the third explicitly based on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans in 587 B.C. and its aftermath. The vividness of the pictures points clearly to the work of an eyewitness. Though he was conscious of the suffering elsewhere in Judah, he concentrated on the position in Jerusalem.

Scripture finds room for every element of human experience, including overwhelming human sorrow. This can come to an individual, like Job, or to the nation as a whole. It seems that God intended the Scriptures to not always bring solace and a ray of light. Jeremiah had set a limit to Babylonian rule (in Jeremiah 25:11-12) and had promised national restoration (in chapters 30-31), but the hearts of the survivors were too stunned to appreciate the promises (we actually find no trace of them in Lamentations). Even in the era of the gospel (and today’s world), the same thing occasionally happens; when we turn to these laments we soon discover that we are not the first to pass through thick darkness before emerging into the sunlight again. *Psalm 56:8 states Record my lament; list my tears on your scroll--are they not in your record? God puts our tears on His scroll.*

In our culture we have lost the ability to lament. This is why Lamentations is so relevant, because it can teach us to grieve. That pain will go somewhere if it is not dealt with.

- **Lamentations will teach us how to navigate our culture of denial** (where it is unhealthy). Laments expose a lot of the truths we try to suppress.
- **Lamentations speaks of need** – What is her need in the 1st poem? Multiple times she says V12 “*Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? V18 Listen, all you peoples; V19. “I called to my allies...*” She simply wants someone to listen.

Your ability to listen to the pain of another is usually proportional to how well you have faced your own pain.

- **Lamentation gives voice to our Anger** - it gives people a chance to identify.

Lamentation is a gift God gives people for healing. 2/3’s of the book of Psalms are psalms of lament. God made his people with the ability to speak. The key to easing suffering is not offering warped views of God, it is giving them a place to mourn and ultimately pointing them to Jesus.

The good news of the gospel is that God doesn’t intend to leave you destitute, destroyed, abandoned...He intends to rebuild you into a new creation in His son.

