

## Lamentations4

4 [a]How the gold has lost its luster, the fine gold become dull!The sacred gems are scattered at every street corner.

2 How the precious children of Zion, once worth their weight in gold,are now considered as pots of clay, the work of a potter's hands!

3 Even jackals offer their breasts to nurse their young,but my people have become heartless like ostriches in the desert.

4 Because of thirst the infant's tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth;the children beg for bread, but no one gives it to them.

5 Those who once ate delicacies are destitute in the streets.Those brought up in royal purple now lie on ash heaps.

6 The punishment of my people is greater than that of Sodom,which was overthrown in a moment without a hand turned to help her.

7 Their princes were brighter than snow and whiter than milk,their bodies more ruddy than rubies, their appearance like lapis lazuli.

8 But now they are blacker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets.Their skin has shriveled on their bones; it has become as dry as a stick.

9 Those killed by the sword are better off than those who die of famine;racked with hunger, they waste away for lack of food from the field.

10 With their own hands compassionate women have cooked their own children,who became their food when my people were destroyed.

11 The Lord has given full vent to his wrath; he has poured out his fierce anger.He kindled a fire in Zion that consumed her foundations.

12 The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the peoples of the world,that enemies and foes could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

13 But it happened because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests,who shed within her the blood of the righteous.

14 Now they grope through the streets as if they were blind.They are so defiled with blood that no one dares to touch their garments.

15 "Go away! You are unclean!" people cry to them. "Away! Away! Don't touch us!"When they flee and wander about, people among the nations say, "They can stay here no longer."

16 The Lord himself has scattered them; he no longer watches over them.The priests are shown no honor, the elders no favor.

17 Moreover, our eyes failed, looking in vain for help;from our towers we watched for a nation that could not save us.

18 People stalked us at every step, so we could not walk in our streets.Our end was near, our days were numbered, for our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were swifter than eagles in the sky;they chased us over the mountains and lay in wait for us in the desert.

20 The Lord's anointed, our very life breath, was caught in their traps.We thought that under his shadow we would live among the nations.

21 Rejoice and be glad, Daughter Edom, you who live in the land of Uz.But to you also the cup will be passed; you will be drunk and stripped naked.

22 Your punishment will end, Daughter Zion; he will not prolong your exile.But he will punish your sin, Daughter Edom, and expose your wickedness.