



Grain

“The lessons of lament have much to teach the world about finding healing and restoration in times of crisis or after tremendous loss. Lament is part of the healing process. Failure to lament makes it difficult to move forward when we encounter life at its worst. Lament releases the energy that is bound up in grief and regret.”

—Anathea Portier-Young

Field

1 How lonely sits the city that once was full of people! How like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations! She that was a princess among the provinces has become a vassal. 2 She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has no one to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they have become her enemies. 3 Judah has gone into exile with suffering and hard servitude; she lives now among the nations, and finds no resting place; her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress. 4 The roads to Zion mourn, for no one comes to the festivals; all her gates are desolate, her priests groan; her young girls grieve, and her lot is bitter. Lamentations 1:1-4

Thoughts

If you could create a soundtrack that described your life between March 2020 and today, what kind of music would you choose? I don't know anyone who wouldn't focus on suspenseful music for the beginning of the pandemic. Several instruments would give a sense of tension by repeatedly growing louder and softer but not completely disappearing. Layers of emotional music would be added according to how you and your loved ones fared personally, and to what was happening in the news. Music filled with loud dissonant chords dominated the period of the insurrection. Celebratory music would emerge when you received a negative test result or you discovered new creative ways to enjoy life, and at times when justice was in sight. Add joyous hymns or quiet meditative music for when you found peace despite everything. And then, of course, you'd add the blues. People had the blues of isolation and unwanted changes, but many also the deep lament over lost lives. One pastor talked to me about losing over 20 members of their congregation to COVID.

How has your faith and sense of hope been affected during this time frame? What about your music for today? The book of Lamentations provides space for the music communities need for leftover and/or new grief. The setting for Lamentations is in the shadow of a great tragedy. Jerusalem had been destroyed and many were forced into exile. People had experienced destruction and witnessed death personally. The remnant still experienced profound displacement and vulnerability to being forced into servitude. They joined together in lament over the destruction, but with hope because God remained with them and would lead them into new horizons.

Out of the music of lament, God helps us to lift our creative voices and seek the justice of right relationships. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy