

# Lamentations: Good Grief

## Lesson Three

Introduction:

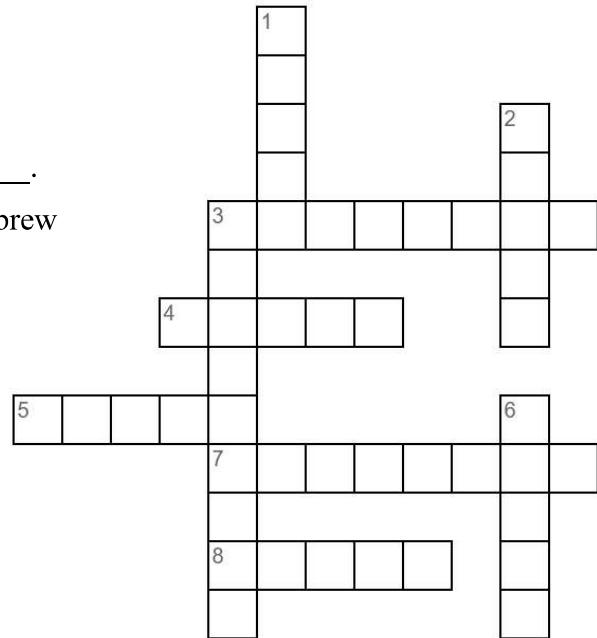
1. Review important material about the book of Lamentations by completing the crossword puzzle.

### ACROSS

- 3 Tradition names this individual as the author of Lamentations.
- 4 This is the theme of Lamentations: Good \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 The book of Lamentations is a collection of five \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 The style of poetry prevalent in Lamentations that uses the Hebrew alphabet as an organizing principle.
- 8 The Hebrew title for Lamentations meaning "Ah, how!"

### DOWN

- 1 The most comforting part of Lamentations is in this chapter.
- 2 The meaning of the Greek title for Lamentations.
- 3 Lamentations mourns the destruction of this city.
- 6 Lamentations employs this poetic meter also used for funeral dirges.



### **Lamentations 3:1-18 Jeremiah's Heartache**

2. What other biblical characters experienced the suffering Jeremiah describes in this section (3:1-18)? List at least two and pinpoint the verses in 3:1-18 that best describe the suffering they endured. Then note the verses that best describe suffering *you* have endured.

### **Lamentations 3:19-38 Jeremiah's Hope in the Lord**

3. What can we learn from the underlined words about how to handle difficult times? "*I remember my affliction...the bitterness...I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this [God's mercy] I call to mind and therefore I have hope...*" (Lam. 3:19-21)

4. Lamentations 3:22-23 is priceless.

*“It is because of the Lord’s  
lovingkindnesses  
that we are not consumed,  
because his **compassions** never fail.  
They are new every morning;  
great is your **faithfulness**.”*  
(Amplified Bible)

Fill in the blanks below to learn more about the highlighted words.

“**Lovingkindness**” [חֶסֶד, *chesed*] means a love or affection that is \_\_\_\_\_.

It is a love that is more than a feeling. It is an \_\_\_\_\_ —a willingness to give of oneself, even when it is difficult.

It is a \_\_\_\_\_ love that goes beyond legal obligation and can be depended on to the utmost.

*Chesed* is never used in the Old Testament in reference to the \_\_\_\_\_.

It is a \_\_\_\_\_ term that applies to God’s people only, highlighting their favored status with him.

“**Compassion**” [רָחָם *racham*] means “mercy” but it can also mean \_\_\_\_\_.

*Racham* is a deep feeling for something with a \_\_\_\_\_.

This suggests that God’s compassion is like a \_\_\_\_\_ love.

*Chesed* is a love that will fight for you, go to bat for you, and take a bullet for you—a \_\_\_\_\_ and not a Hallmark-movie love. *Racham* is the \_\_\_\_\_ love of a mother caring for her sick child.

According to Lamentations, God’s *chesed* and *racham* (both nouns are \_\_\_\_\_ suggesting an abundance of each) are new every \_\_\_\_\_.

“**Faithfulness**” [חֶמְדָה *emunah*] can also be translated as \_\_\_\_\_ or “steadiness.”

It portrays the idea of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ (“truly”) is from this Hebrew word. When God makes a promise, he keeps it...no matter what.

It’s not surprising that these three memorable words are present in God’s \_\_\_\_\_ to Israel.

*“And I will betroth you to me forever;  
Yes, I will betroth you to me...”*

*in lovingkindness \_\_\_\_\_,  
and in compassion \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I will betroth you to me in faithfulness \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Then you will know the Lord.”*  
(Hosea 2:19-20 Amplified Bible)

Which of the three highlighted words do you need to remember the most right now?

Imagine God is texting you. Write a brief message to yourself from God using one of those three words. Or design a card cover that illustrates one of the three words. (Use the space on the back of page 3.)

5. For 40+ years Jeremiah ministered to a people who didn't just ignore him, they even persecuted him! He also suffered along with everyone else during the siege of Jerusalem. Still, he was able to say that he was not "consumed." God's every-morning, never-failing, loyal and compassionate love was the reason for this. In other words, **Jeremiah (and every believer) is more like an oil lamp than a candle.** How so?
  
6. Focus on Lamentations 3:24-33 where Jeremiah urges the believer to "*bear the yoke while young*" (v. 27), and "*to offer his cheek to one who would strike him*" (v. 30).  
Why would anyone want to do that? Find two reasons from verses 24-33.  
Then think of at least one other biblical reason.

## **Lamentations 3:39-66 Jeremiah's Hope for the People**

7. *Good* grief is characterized by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. It is a grief that is not afraid to express pain and anger, but it is also a grief that is ultimately rooted in trust in God. Find examples of each characteristic in this section (3:39-66).