

Lamentations: Good Grief

Lesson Four

Introduction:

1. Review key concepts from Lamentations 3 by circling the correct answers in bold font.

Lamentations 3:22-23 is priceless.

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

“Lovingkindness” [חֶסֶד, *chesed*] means a love or affection that is **steadfast** / **gentle**.

It is a loyal love that goes beyond legal obligation and can be depended on to the utmost. The **Good Samaritan** / **people of Jerusalem** demonstrated this kind of love.

“Compassion” [רָחָם *racham*] means “mercy” but it can also mean **“mother”** / **“womb.”** This suggests that God’s compassion is like a **mother’s** / **baby’s** love.

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

“Faithfulness” [אֶמְנָה *emunah*] can also be translated as **“organized”** / **“trustworthiness”** or “steadiness.” It portrays the idea of being completely truthful.

“**Hallelujah**” / **“Amen”** (“truly”) is from this Hebrew word. When God makes a promise, he keeps it...no matter what.

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 a candle than an oil lamp** / **more like an oil lamp than a candle**.

Lamentations 4 Jehovah’s Anger

2. Imagine reporting on conditions in Jerusalem as a war correspondent. What three details from 4:1-11 would you highlight for your news service and why?

3. The unthinkable transpired when the Babylonians entered the gates of Jerusalem (4:12). Who was to blame for this *military* defeat? The prophets and priests—the *spiritual* leaders (4:13)! Faithful spiritual leaders are important—more important than financial advisors and healthcare providers. Look up the following references and note the specific failures of the spiritual leaders of Jeremiah’s day. Then circle the reference you think carries the most pertinent warning for spiritual leaders today (pastors, parochial school teachers, and parents).

Jeremiah 23:18, 26, 36

Lamentations 2:14

Jeremiah 6:13-15

Lamentations 5 Jerusalem’s Prayer

4. As in Chapters 1, 2, and 3, God is once again implored to look on Jerusalem’s disgrace (5:1) and see that “*Joy is gone from our heart; our dancing has turned to mourning.*” (5:15) What two explanations do the people of Jerusalem give for their plight in vs. 1-18? Which explanation do you like better and why?

5. Like a swimmer in high seas who repeatedly goes under the waves before momentarily reappearing again, Jerusalem flails between despair and confidence in the last seven verses of Lamentations. (*This section left blank for notetaking. The question continues below.*)

Offer at least two possibilities as to why the book of Lamentations ends in despair: “*Restore us to yourself, Lord, that we may return; renew our days as of old 22 unless you have utterly rejected us and are angry with us beyond measure.*” (5:21-22)

6. Analyze a “life-preserver” passage from the references below that you could “swim out” to a Jerusalem drowning in grief.

Look up the reference that corresponds to the day of your birth. (e.g. Those born on the 2nd will look up reference #2 Jeremiah 24:1-7.)

Share the verses with your neighbor that you think would be especially encouraging to Jerusalem.

#1 Jeremiah 12:14-17

#2 Jeremiah 24:1-7

#3 Jeremiah 27:19-22

#4 Jeremiah 29:10-14

#5 Jeremiah 30:1-11

#6 Jeremiah 30:12-17

#7 Jeremiah 30:18-24

#8 Jeremiah 31:1-6

#9 Jeremiah 31:15-20

#10 Jeremiah 31:23-28

#11 Jeremiah 31:31-34

#12 Jeremiah 31:37-40

#13 Jeremiah 32:8-15

#14 Jeremiah 32:36-44

#15 Jeremiah 33:14-18

#16 Jeremiah 33:23-26

#17 Jeremiah 46:27-28

#18 Jeremiah 50:17-20

#19 Jeremiah 50:33-34

#20 Jeremiah 51:5-10

#21 Ezekiel 11:14-21

#22 Ezekiel 16:59-63

#23 Ezekiel 34:11-16

#24 Ezekiel 36:22-36

#25 Ezekiel 37:1-14

#26 Ezekiel 37:15-28

#27 Ezekiel 39:25-29

#28 Daniel 9:1-19

#29 Zephaniah 3:9-20

#30 Deuteronomy 4:25-31

#31 Isaiah 49:8-23

