

Learning to Lament
1. A desolate place (Lamentations 1)

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Introduction

- How do we respond to suffering?
- *“Lament is a prayer in pain that leads to trust”*

Lament gives voice to our loss (v1-3)

- The destruction of Jerusalem (587 BC)

Lament brings order to our suffering (v4-11)

- Expresses completeness
- Sets limits

Lament is honest about sin (v12-20)

- A response to sin and brokenness in the world

Lament orientates us towards God (v21-22)

- Asking for God to see
- Seeking justice and comfort

Conclusion

Lamentations 1 (NIV)

¹ How deserted lies the city,
once so full of people!
How like a widow is she,
who once was great among the nations!
She who was queen among the provinces
has now become a slave.

² Bitterly she weeps at night,
tears are on her cheeks.
Among all her lovers
there is no one to comfort her.
All her friends have betrayed her;
they have become her enemies.

³ After affliction and harsh labor,
Judah has gone into exile.
She dwells among the nations;
she finds no resting place.
All who pursue her have overtaken her
in the midst of her distress.

⁴ The roads to Zion mourn,
for no one comes to her appointed festivals.
All her gateways are desolate,
her priests groan,
her young women grieve,
and she is in bitter anguish.

⁵ Her foes have become her masters;
her enemies are at ease.
The LORD has brought her grief
because of her many sins.
Her children have gone into exile,
captive before the foe.

⁶ All the splendour has departed
from Daughter Zion.
Her princes are like deer
that find no pasture;
in weakness they have fled
before the pursuer.

⁷ In the days of her affliction and wandering
Jerusalem remembers all the treasures
that were hers in days of old.
When her people fell into enemy hands,
there was no one to help her.
Her enemies looked at her
and laughed at her destruction.

⁸ Jerusalem has sinned greatly
and so has become unclean.
All who honoured her despise her,
for they have all seen her naked;
she herself groans
and turns away.

⁹ Her filthiness clung to her skirts;
she did not consider her future.
Her fall was astounding;
there was none to comfort her.
“Look, LORD, on my affliction,
for the enemy has triumphed.”

¹⁰ The enemy laid hands on all her treasures;
she saw pagan nations
enter her sanctuary—
those you had forbidden
to enter your assembly.

¹¹ All her people groan
as they search for bread;
they barter their treasures for food
to keep themselves alive.

“Look, LORD, and consider,
for I am despised.”

¹² “Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look around and see.
Is any suffering like my suffering
that was inflicted on me,
that the LORD brought on me
in the day of his fierce anger?”

¹³ “From on high he sent fire,
sent it down into my bones.
He spread a net for my feet
and turned me back.
He made me desolate,
faint all the day long.

¹⁴ “My sins have been bound into a yoke;
by his hands they were woven together.
They have been hung on my neck,
and the Lord has sapped my strength.
He has given me into the hands
of those I cannot withstand.

¹⁵ “The Lord has rejected
all the warriors in my midst;
he has summoned an army against me
to crush my young men.
In his winepress the Lord has trampled
Virgin Daughter Judah.

¹⁶ “This is why I weep
and my eyes overflow with tears.
No one is near to comfort me,
no one to restore my spirit.
My children are destitute
because the enemy has prevailed.”

¹⁷ Zion stretches out her hands,

but there is no one to comfort her.
The LORD has decreed for Jacob
that his neighbours become his foes;
Jerusalem has become
an unclean thing among them.

¹⁸ “The LORD is righteous,
yet I rebelled against his command.
Listen, all you peoples;
look on my suffering.
My young men and young women
have gone into exile.

¹⁹ “I called to my allies
but they betrayed me.
My priests and my elders
perished in the city
while they searched for food
to keep themselves alive.

²⁰ “See, LORD, how distressed I am!
I am in torment within,
and in my heart I am disturbed,
for I have been most rebellious.
Outside, the sword bereaves;
inside, there is only death.

²¹ “People have heard my groaning,
but there is no one to comfort me.
All my enemies have heard of my distress;
they rejoice at what you have done.
May you bring the day you have announced
so they may become like me.

²² “Let all their wickedness come before you;
deal with them
as you have dealt with me
because of all my sins.
My groans are many, and my heart is faint.”