



DAILY
B I B L E G U I D E

The Book of Lamentations

Days 241-242 of a Yearly Bible Reading Program

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Table of Contents

Daily Bible Reading Plan	5
Introduction to Hebrew Poetry	6
Welcome to the Book of Lamentations!	7
Chapter 1 Notes	8
Chapter 2 Notes	9
Chapter 3 Notes	10
Devotional Thoughts for Day 241	11
Hymn for Day 241	11
Chapter 4 Notes	13
Chapter 5 Notes	14
Devotional Thoughts for Day 242	15
Hymn for Day 242	15

Daily Bible Reading Plan

Day	Passage	☒
Day 241	Lamentations 1-3	☐
Day 242	Lamentations 4-5	☐

Introduction to Hebrew Poetry

The books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations are all written as Hebrew poetry. There are of course other portions of Scripture that contain poetry, but these are almost entirely that. In modern English, we use patterns of rhymes and accents to add artistic beauty to our poetry. In ancient Hebrew there is no rhyme or rhythm. The way I like to describe it is that it rhymes ideas. Each verse is either a couplet or triplet of ideas and imagery that enhances the meaning.

Welcome to the Book of Lamentations!

The Book of Lamentations contains five stanzas of poetry commemorating the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. It is a powerful memorial to the fierceness of the of both God's judgment and His faithfulness. The first four chapters are in acrostic form using the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet while fifth does not use any form. Chapter 3 is noteworthy for using each letter three times in succession.

A few quick facts about Jeremiah:

- The author is Jeremiah.
- This book was written shortly after the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 B.C.
- The key verse is 3:22-23 – “*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*”
- A brief outline:
 - Devastation of Jerusalem – Chapter 1
 - Destruction of Jerusalem – Chapter 2
 - Jeremiah's Lament – Chapter 3
 - Judah's Loss – Chapter 4
 - Judah's Prayer – Chapter 5

Chapter 1 Notes

In this chapter the fall of Jerusalem is memorialized.

vs. 1-11 – Lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem.

vs. 12-22 – The personal lament of Jeremiah.

Chapter 2 Notes

In this chapter the judgment of Jerusalem is seen externally and internally.

vs. 1-10 – The anger of the Lord against His rebellious people is described.

vs. 11-22 - The viewpoint of the judged in Jerusalem.

Chapter 3 Notes

In this chapter we see hope even in judgment.

vs. 1-20 – The viewpoint of the prophet witnessing the judgment.

vs. 21-27 – The comfort of the Lord's mercies.

vs. 28-39 – The sovereignty of God in judging and blessing.

vs. 40-66 – The people are called to confess and repent. Jeremiah calls for vengeance on the enemies of Israel.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 241

While God's judgment is a terrible things to endure, we must also remember that He is working for good through it. We tend to fall into thinking that God cannot be both a God of judgment and a God of mercy. He is far more complex than our minds can comprehend.

Hymn for Day 241

Our hymn today is "New Every Morning is the Love", written in 1822 by John Keble. It draws on the theme of Lamentations 3:23.

*New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life and power and thought.*

*New mercies, each returning day,
Hover around us while we pray;
New perils past, new sins forgiven,
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.*

*If, on our daily course, our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.*

*Old friends, old scenes, will lovelier be,
As more of heaven in each we see;
Some softening gleam of love and prayer
Shall dawn on every cross and care.*

*We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbor and our words farewell,
Nor strive to find ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.*

*The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.*

*Seek we no more; content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease—
As heaven shall bid them, come and go:
The secret this of rest below.*

*Only, O Lord, in Thy dear love,
Fit us for perfect rest above,
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.*

Chapter 4 Notes

In this chapter contrasts the past and present of Jerusalem.

vs. 1-11 – The greatness of Jerusalem is remembered and contrasted with its present humiliation.

vs. 12-16 – The lying prophets failed to stop the slide toward judgment.

vs. 17-20 – No escape from God's judgment.

vs. 21-22 – Those that celebrate the fall of God's people in judgment will themselves fall into judgment.

Chapter 5 Notes

In this chapter is a plea for God to restore Israel after the judgment.

vs. 1-18 – A prayer for the Lord to regard the fallen state of Israel.

vs. 19-22 – The sovereignty and eternalness of God is acknowledged. These attributes are appealed to with his mercy to not utterly forsake Israel.

Devotional Thoughts for Day 242

Even in judgment God is glorified. His power and sovereignty are expressed through it. Also woven into it is His great mercy and love. The Babylonian Captivity was harsh justice on a rebellious people, but the result it was a restored nation that was largely broken of its tendency to chase idolatry.

Hymn for Day 242

Our hymn today is “Great God, How Infinite Thou Art”, written by Isaac Watts.

*Great God! how infinite art Thou!
What worthless Worms are we!
Let the whole Race of Creatures bow,
And pay their Praise to Thee.*

*Thy Throne Eternal Ages stood,
E'er Suns or Stars were made;
Thou art the Ever-living God,
Were all the Nations dead.*

*Nature and Time quite naked lie
To thine immense Survey,
From the formation of the Sky,
To the great burning Day.*

*Eternity, with all its Years.
Stands present in thy View;
To Thee there's nothing Old appears,
Great God, there's nothing New.*

*Our Lives through various Scenes are drawn,
And vex'd with trifling Cares;
While thine eternal Thought moves on
Thine undisturb'd Affairs.*

*Great God! how infinite art Thou!
What worthless Worms are we!
Let the whole Race of Creatures bow,
And pay their Praise to Thee.*