



unfoldingWord® Simplified Text

v90

Lamentations

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Lamentations

1 ALEPH

¹ Jerusalem, the city that was
once so full of people,
is now empty and deserted.
It was once the greatest city
among all the nations,
but now it is like a widow—
alone and without
protection.

It was once honored among the
provinces like a princess,
but now her people are
forced to do slave labor.

BETH

² Jerusalem's inhabitants weep
and cry bitterly all through the
night;
tears run down their cheeks.
None of the nations that loved
them have come to comfort
them.
All their allies have turned
against them;
they have all become their
enemies.

GIMEL

³ Enemies drove the people of
Judah out to other countries,
and made them suffer
greatly as slaves.
They live among foreign
nations,
where they find no peace or
rest.
Their enemies caught up with
them;
they were trapped and could
not escape.

DALETH

⁴ No one comes to Zion
anymore for the sacred
festivals,
so the roads to the city are
silent and empty.
The city gates stand deserted;
the priests groan in sorrow.
The young women of the city
are grieving,
and the whole city is filled
with bitterness.

HE

⁵ Jerusalem's enemies have
become rulers over it;
its adversaries are doing
well.
Yahweh has caused it to suffer
greatly,
because of all the ways its
people sinned against him.
Its children have been taken
captive
and marched away before
the enemy.

WAW

⁶ All the glory and beauty that
Zion once had
has left it completely.
Its leaders are like deer that
are starving
because they cannot find any
grass to eat.
They stumble along weakly
with the enemy chasing
them.

ZAYIN

⁷ Now as Jerusalem suffers in
exile and misery,

its people remember all the
good things that they had in
former times.

When the enemy conquered the
people,

no one came to help them.

Some enemies watched

and laughed contemptuously
as others destroyed the city.

HETH

8 Jerusalem's people sinned so
greatly

that the city became
something everyone treated
as filthy and defiling.

All those who had honored it
now despise it,

because they have seen how
shamefully disgraced it has
become.

Now its people moan

and humbly hide.

TETH

9 Everyone can see that the
people in Jerusalem have made
themselves impure by sinning,
but its people never thought
about what would happen to
them as a result.

The enemy devastated
Jerusalem in a terrible way;

no one has come to comfort
its people.

They cried out, "Yahweh, see
how we are suffering!

The enemy has triumphed
over us!"

YODH

10 The enemy took possession
of all its precious treasures.

Its people watched as
foreign nations entered the
temple—

the nations that you, Yahweh,
had commanded

to stay out of your holy
place.

KAPH

11 All the people groan and
search for food.

They have traded their
precious things just to get
something to eat

so that they can stay alive.

They cried out, "Yahweh,
look at us!

See how people treat us
contemptuously!"

LAMEDH

12 Jerusalem's people cried out
to those passing by the ruined
city,

"Do you not care at all about
what has happened to us?

Look around you and see—

has anyone ever suffered as
much as we have suffered?

Yahweh inflicted this terrible
pain on us

on the day when he was
fiercely angry.

MEM

13 He sent fire down from
above

that burned deep inside us.

He set a trap that caught our
feet

and forced us to turn back.

He left us devastated and
abandoned,

exhausted and miserable all
day long.

NUN

14 God tied our sins around our necks like a heavy yoke;
they are twisted tightly together so that we cannot remove them.

They are piled onto our necks and weigh us down,
so that we have no strength left.

The Lord handed us over to enemies we have no power to defeat.

SAMEKH

15 The Lord has despised and rejected all our warriors.
He called our enemies together at the right time to destroy our young men.

The Lord has crushed the people of Judah
like someone treading on grapes in a winepress.

AYIN

16 These are the things we weep over, weeping without stopping;
our eyes overflow with tears.
There is no one near us to comfort us
or to restore our strength.
Our children have been left with nothing,
because the enemy has overcome us."

PE

17 Zion's people reach out their hands, pleading for help,

but no one comes to comfort them.

Yahweh ordered that all the nations surrounding Jacob would become his enemies.
Jerusalem has become something all the neighboring nations treat as defiling and avoid.

TSADHE

18 Jerusalem's people said,
"Yahweh is righteous,
because we disobeyed his commands.

Listen, all you peoples of the world,
and see what great pain we are in.
Our young women and young men
have been taken away as captives.

QOPH

19 We called to our allies for help,
but they completely betrayed us.
Our priests and our elders
died in the city,
while they were desperately searching for food
just to stay alive.

RESH

20 Yahweh, look at how much we are suffering!
Our stomachs churn with anguish;
our hearts are completely devastated within us,
because we have deeply and truly rebelled against you.

In the streets, the sword kills people;
inside the city, people are dying like a plague.

When the day came for him to punish Israel,
he did not even spare his own temple.

SIN

21 People have heard us groaning in misery,
but no one has come to comfort us.
All our enemies have heard about the disaster that came upon us;
they are glad about it,
because you are the one who brought it.
Bring the day of punishment that you promised,
when they will suffer as we have suffered!

BETH

2 The Lord completely destroyed all the homes of Jacob's descendants
and was not merciful to them.
Because he was furious,
he tore the fortresses of the people of Judah down to the ground.
He disgraced their kingdom and its rulers.

GIMEL

3 Because he was extremely angry,
he took away all of Israel's power.
He refused to protect his people
when their enemies attacked them.
He destroyed everything among Jacob's descendants
like a raging fire that burns up everything around it.

TAW

22 Let all the evil things they have done come to your attention,
and punish them for what they have done.
Treat them the way you treated us
for all the ways we sinned against you.
We are constantly sighing and groaning,
and we grieve greatly."

DALETH

4 He got ready to shoot his bow at us, his own people,
as though we were his enemies.
He used his power to kill everyone we loved most
among the people of Jerusalem.
He was extremely angry with us; his anger burned like a fire.

2 ALEPH

1 The Lord was very angry with the people of Jerusalem,
so he brought darkness and judgment on them.
Jerusalem used to be a beautiful and glorious city,
but he humiliated it and brought it down to nothing.

HE

5 The Lord started treating us
like an enemy;
 he destroyed Israel.
He destroyed all of Jerusalem's
palaces
 and turned its fortresses into
ruins.
He caused the people of Judah
 to grieve and weep even
more.

WAW

6 He wrecked his own temple
as easily as someone tears
down a garden hut;
 he destroyed the place
 where people gathered to
 worship him.
Yahweh caused the people of
Zion to stop celebrating their
sacred festivals and Sabbath
days.
Because he was so furiously
angry,
 he rejected both the king
 and the priest.

ZAYIN

7 The Lord turned away from
his own altar;
 he abandoned his own holy
 place.
He let the enemies have power
over the walls of Jerusalem's
palaces.
Those enemies shouted
triumphantly inside Yahweh's
temple,
 as if they were celebrating
 one of the sacred festivals.

HETH

8 Yahweh planned to destroy
the wall of Jerusalem.
He carefully measured it out for
destruction
 and then he did not stop
 himself from devouring it.
He made the outer wall and the
inner wall fall into ruin;
 together they crumbled.

TETH

9 Jerusalem's gates have sunk
into the ground;
 Yahweh smashed the bars
 that held them shut.
The enemy has taken the king
and the officials away to foreign
nations;
 no one teaches them God's
 instruction anymore.
The prophets also no longer
receive any messages from
Yahweh.

YODH

10 The old men of Jerusalem sit
on the ground and say nothing.
They have thrown dust on their
heads
 and put on rough sackcloth
 to show how deeply they
 grieve.
The young women of Jerusalem
bow their faces all the way
down to the ground.

KAPH

11 I have cried until my eyes
can produce no more tears;
 my stomach is churning with
 anguish.
I feel as if my insides are
spilling out on the ground,
 because so many of my
 people have died.

Even children and babies are fainting

in the city streets because they have nothing to eat.

LAMEDH

12 The children cry out to their mothers,

“We need food and drink!”

They collapse in the city streets like fatally wounded soldiers,

and they die slowly
in the arms of their mothers.

MEM

13 People of Jerusalem,
there is nothing I can say to help you.

Nothing that has ever happened to anyone else compares to what has happened to you people who live on mount Zion;

I do not know how to comfort you.

The disaster that struck you is as vast as the sea;

no one can restore you.

NUN

14 The prophets among you claimed to hear messages from Yahweh,

but what they said was false and worthless.

They did not rebuke you when you sinned

so that you could have changed your ways and avoided disaster.

Instead, the messages they told you were lies that caused you to do wrong things.

SAMEKH

15 Everyone who passes by on the road

claps their hands to mock you.

They hiss with contempt and shake their heads

at Jerusalem:

“Can this really be the city that people used to say was

the perfectly beautiful city,
the city that made all the earth rejoice?”

AYIN

16 All your enemies open their mouths wide against you to mock you.

They hiss with contempt and grind their teeth with hatred;

they say, “We have devoured her!

This is the very day we waited for;

we have lived to see it!”

PE

17 Yahweh has done what he planned to do;

he has carried out the threat that he announced long ago.

He has torn the city down and shown no mercy;

he has let your enemies celebrate over you,

and he has made those who attack you more powerful than ever.

TSADHE

18 The people of Jerusalem
cried out to the Lord from deep
within themselves.

People of Jerusalem,
let your tears flow like a
river

all day and all night!

Do not stop weeping;
do not let your eyes rest
from crying.

QOPH

19 Get up and cry out during
the night,

right when the night
watches begin!

Tell the Lord everything that is
in your heart, holding nothing
back, like water pouring out.

Raise your hands and pray to
him

for your children to survive,
because they are fainting from
hunger

on every street corner.

RESH

20 Yahweh, look at what you
have done and pay attention!

Think about whom you have
treated this way!

Women should never have to
eat their own children,

the babies they lovingly
cared for!

No one should kill priests and
prophets

inside your own holy place!

SIN

21 People of every age lie dead
on the ground in the streets.

The enemy has killed all our
youth.

On the day you were angry, you
let the enemy kill them;

you let them slaughter them
mercilessly.

TAW

22 You called enemies to attack
me from every direction,

as if you were summoning
guests to come to a feast.

On the day Yahweh was angry,
no one escaped and no one
survived.

The children I carried and
raised,

my enemy has destroyed
them all.

3 ALEPH

1 I am a man who has suffered
greatly

because God punished me
when he was very angry.

2 He sent me into a place
where I only suffer
and nothing good happens to
me.

3 He keeps acting against me
again and again,
all day long.

BETH

4 He afflicted my body
and broke my bones.

5 He attacked me on every side
and caused me to suffer
terribly.

6 He made me feel hopeless,
like no one remembers me.

GIMEL

7 He has completely trapped me

so that I cannot escape.

8 Even though I beg him to help me,
he refuses to listen when I pray.

9 He has blocked every way forward for me
so that I cannot make any progress in my life.

DALETH

10 He waited to attack me like a bear hiding to ambush its prey,
like a lion crouching in a hidden place.

11 He ruined my plans
and destroyed me;
he made me poor.

12 He deliberately chose to attack me
and made me the one he would harm.

HE

13 He deliberately caused me intense suffering.

14 All my own people mock me constantly with their songs.

15 He has caused me to suffer so much that I cannot bear it.

WAW

16 He completely humiliated me
and degraded me.

17 God took away all my peace;
I no longer remember what happiness feels like.

18 So I said to myself, "I cannot endure any longer,
and I have no more reason to hope in Yahweh."

ZAYIN

19 Yahweh, remember how I have suffered and wandered;
I have suffered so very greatly.

20 I keep thinking about it over and over,
and it makes me deeply depressed.

21 Yet when I think about this one thing,
I find reason to hope:

HETH

22 Yahweh never stops faithfully loving us,
and he never stops showing us mercy.

23 Every morning he shows us mercy again;
he is always faithful to us.

24 I said to myself, "Yahweh is all that I need;
so I will confidently wait for him."

TETH

25 Yahweh is good to everyone who depends on him,
to everyone who hopes that Yahweh will help him.

26 It is good to wait quietly for Yahweh to save us.

27 It is good for a person to endure suffering patiently while still young.

YODH

28 A person should accept his situation quietly and not complain

when God causes him to suffer.

29 He should bow down with his face to the ground, because there may still be reason to hope.

30 He should offer his cheek to the one who hits him and accept all the insults people give him.

KAPH

31 The Lord does not reject people forever.

32 Even though he causes people to grieve, he will show them mercy because he always faithfully loves them.

33 He does not enjoy causing people to suffer or making them grieve.

LAMEDH

34 When people crush all the prisoners in a land under their feet,

35 when they cheat someone and deny him what he deserves right in front of the Most High God,

36 when they treat someone unfairly in his legal dispute—the Lord does not approve of any of these things.

MEM

37 No one can simply speak and make something happen unless the Lord has commanded it.

38 The Most High God is the one who decides both the bad things and the good things that happen.

39 No living person should complain when God punishes him for his sins.

NUN

40 Instead, we should carefully examine how we have been living, and we should turn back to Yahweh.

41 We should sincerely pray, raising our hands to God in heaven:

42 “We have sinned and rebelled against you, and you have not forgiven us.

SAMEKH

43 Because you were angry, you chased after us; you killed us without showing us any mercy.

44 You made yourself unreachable so that you did not hear any of our prayers.

45 You have made the other nations treat us as though we are nothing but garbage and filth.

AYIN

46 All our enemies

have spoken hateful things
against us.

47 We have experienced
nothing but fear and danger,
ruin and destruction.”

48 Many tears flow from my
eyes
because enemies have
destroyed my people.

PE

49 My tears pour out and will
not stop;
they will not end

50 until Yahweh looks down
and sees us from heaven.

51 What I see makes me grieve
deeply
because of what has
happened to all the women
of my city.

TSADHE

52 My enemies relentlessly
pursued me without any reason,
even though I had done
nothing wrong.

53 They threw me into a pit to
kill me
and dropped stones on top of
me.

54 Water rose over my head,
and I said to myself, “I am
going to die!”

QOPH

55 I called out to you, Yahweh,
from the deepest part of that
pit.

56 You heard me;
do not ignore me when I cry
out to you for help!

57 You came near when I called
to you

and said, “Do not be afraid!”

RESH

58 Lord, you defended me;
you saved my life.

59 Yahweh, you have seen how
my enemies have wronged me;
make things right for me!

60 You have seen how they
want to take revenge on me
and all the things they have
planned to do to me.

SIN

61 Yahweh, you have heard
them insult me
and all the things they have
planned to do to me.

62 Those who oppose me
whisper and mutter things
about me all day long.

63 Look at them! No matter
what they are doing,
they make fun of me in their
songs.

TAW

64 Yahweh, pay them back
for what they have done!

65 Make them stubborn,
and let your curse fall on
them.

66 Because you are angry with
them, chase them and destroy
them
so they no longer exist
anywhere on earth.

4 ALEPH

¹ How terrible that the people
of Jerusalem, who used to be so
valuable, have now become
completely worthless!

The enemy has thrown out the
precious young men
at every street corner.

BETH

² People once considered the
young men of Zion to be
extremely valuable,
but now everyone treats
them as completely
worthless,
like ordinary clay pots that a
potter makes.

GIMEL

³ Even jackals nurse their
young,
but the women among my
people have neglected their
own children
and have stopped caring for
them.

DALETH

⁴ The babies are so thirsty
that their tongues stick to
the roofs of their mouths.
The children beg for food,
but no one gives them any.

HE

⁵ People who used to eat the
finest food
now starve in the streets.

People whose parents raised
them wearing expensive clothes
now search through garbage
heaps for something to eat.

WAW

⁶ God has punished my people
more severely
than he punished the people
of Sodom.
He destroyed Sodom in an
instant,
and nobody cried for it.

ZAYIN

⁷ Jerusalem's most honored
people used to look very pure
and healthy.
They had strong, attractive
bodies
and appeared very vigorous.

HETH

⁸ But now they look so dark
and thin
that no one recognizes them
in the streets.
Their skin has shriveled tightly
over their bones
and has dried out
completely.

TETH

⁹ Those who died quickly in
battle were better off
than those who died slowly
from starvation,
because the starving people
wasted away gradually
since no food grew in the
fields.

YODH

10 Women who were normally
very compassionate
cooked their own children.
They ate them as food
when the enemy destroyed
Jerusalem.

KAPH

11 Yahweh expressed all of his
anger against Jerusalem.
He burned the city with fire
and destroyed it down to its
very foundations.

LAMEDH

12 No king anywhere on the
earth,
and no one else in the whole
world,
believed that an enemy
could ever enter the city of
Jerusalem.

MEM

13 But it happened because
Jerusalem's prophets sinned
and her priests did evil
things.
They killed innocent people
right there in the city.

NUN

14 Those prophets and priests
wandered through the streets,
confused and unable to find
their way.
The blood of the people they
had killed made them so

unclean that no one would
touch even their clothes.

SAMEKH

15 People shouted at them, "Go
away! You are unclean!
Do not touch us!"
So those priests and prophets
fled and wandered from place
to place,
but even the people in other
nations said, "They cannot
stay here."

AYIN

16 Yahweh himself scattered
them
and no longer watches over
them.
People in those nations do not
respect our priests
and do not show any
kindness to our elders.

PE

17 We kept watching and
waiting for a nation to come
and help us,
but no help ever came.
The nation we hoped would
rescue us could not save us.

TSADHE

18 Our enemies tracked us so
closely
that we could not even walk
through our own city
squares.
The time for our destruction
was near,
and our final days had come.

QOPH

19 Those who chased us were extremely fast.

They pursued us over the mountains
and ambushed us in the desert.

RESH

20 Our enemies captured the king whom Yahweh had chosen to lead us,
the one who kept us alive.

We had said about him,
“He will protect us even if we have to live among other nations.”

SIN

21 The people of Edom who live in the land of Uz
may be happy now about what has happened to Jerusalem,
but Yahweh will punish them too.
He will cause them to suffer greatly and be completely humiliated.

TAW

22 Yahweh will finish punishing the people of Jerusalem,
and he will not keep them in exile any longer.
However, he will punish the people of Edom
and expose all the evil things they have done.

A prayer for God's mercy

5 ¹ Yahweh, think about what has happened to us.
Pay attention and see how people have disgraced us.

2 Our enemies have taken our property and given it to people we do not know;
they have seized our homes and given them to people who are not Israelites.

3 We have no fathers to care for us;
our mothers have no husbands.

4 We have to pay money to drink our own water,
and we have to buy the wood that we need.

5 Our enemies chase us and never let up;
we are exhausted, but they do not let us rest.

6 We surrendered to Egypt and Assyria
so that we could get enough food to survive.

7 Our ancestors sinned and then they died,
but we are the ones suffering for what they did wrong.

8 People who used to be slaves now rule over us,
and no one can rescue us from their power.

9 We risk our lives when we go out to get food,
because violent people in the wilderness will kill us.

10 Our skin burns with fever

because we are starving so badly.

11 Our enemies raped women in Zion
and young women in the towns of Judah.

12 Our enemies hung our leaders by their hands;
they did not respect our elders.

13 They forced our young men to grind flour with millstones,
and boys staggered under heavy loads of firewood.

14 Our elders no longer gather to make decisions,
and our young men no longer play music.

15 We no longer feel happy;
instead of dancing, we grieve.

16 We have lost the honor that we once had.
How terrible it is for us,
because we have sinned!

17 Because of all this, we feel sick inside;
because of these things, we cannot stop crying.

18 We are sad because Mount Zion lies empty with no one living there;
foxes roam through it.

19 But you, Yahweh, rule forever!
You have authority over every generation.

20 It feels as though you have forgotten us completely
and abandoned us for such a long time.

21 Yahweh, please bring us back to yourself so that we may return;
make our lives as good as they were before.

22 Please do not completely reject us
or stay extremely angry with us forever!