



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.

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!

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.”

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.

When the day came for him to punish Israel,

he did not even spare his own temple.

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.

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.

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!