

Bible Challenge 2018

Week 29b: July 21

Outline:

Lamentations 1-2: Acrostic Laments over the fall of Jerusalem

Lamentation 3: Triple Acrostic Lament as a result of Jerusalem's Fall

Lamentations 4: Acrostic Lament over Jerusalem's Fall

Lamentations 5: Final Lament (non-acrostic) and promise of hope

Lamentations is one of the most under read books of the Bible. Indeed, it is a sad and despairing book. Jeremiah is inconsolable and hence he is often referred to today as the "Weeping Prophet." Yet, that being said, there is much more to Lamentations than just a prophet who cannot stop lamenting what he has seen take place. The poems are highly structured and four of the five of them are acrostics, each line beginning with the next successive letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Have you ever tried to write an acrostic like this? It is no simple task, not to mention that it contains meter, allusions, and a great deal of figurative language. It is a piece of artwork with which we ought not trifle.

There is another aspect of this book that is often missed and that is that the Hebrew lament normally contains words of hope in God's deliverance. Truly, why would they write such an elaborate piece if they did not think it would be preserved for their posterity. In some ways, the Lamentations are the Hebrew equivalent to the American Blues. If you think of these words this way, perhaps it makes more sense as you read them through or think about them being sung.

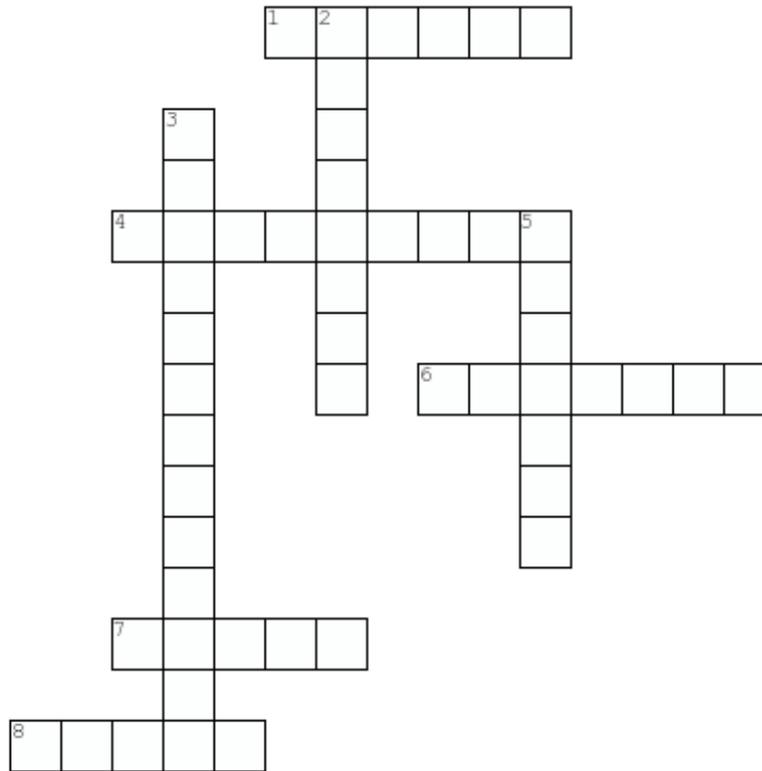
Chapter 3

Chapter 3 is perhaps the most well known portion of this book and contains much cherished language. There is also a shift here from laments over the fall of the city to laments for oneself as one grieves the loss of such a city. Yet, as the first half of this lament comes to an end, there is a great remembrance of the promises of God and in that remembrance, Jeremiah declares that he is assured that the steadfast love of God is new every morning. How we all can relate to this promise and can find assurance in hard times that indeed, the Lord is our portion.

Chapter 5

There is debate as to why this last chapter does not form an acrostic poem like the rest. Some have suggested that this is the original form of all of these poems, yet only the first four were rewritten into acrostic form. This seems odd as one might ask, "Why not the 5th too?" Others have suggested that perhaps this lament was added by Baruch after Jeremiah had been taken to Egypt. All these answers, though, are speculation. We just don't know for sure.

Week 29b: Lamentations



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Across

1. Some think that Lamentations 5 was written by this secretary of Jeremiah.
4. The Lamentations are written around the fall of this great city.
6. The opposite of Psalm 30:11, Jeremiah says that his _____ has turned into mourning.
7. Jeremiah said that the chastisement of God's people was more severe than of this ancient city.
8. Pastor Win thinks that the Lamentations parallel this kind of American music.

Down

2. Four of the five Laments are this kind of poem.
3. 'The _____ of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end.' (2 words)
5. The mercies of God are new every _____.