



Scriptural Background: Lam 3

*"22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
23 they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness." Lam 3:22–23*

We need to learn to lament. It can be easy when facing hardship to waffle between extremes. We may try to stuff our feelings and act like everything's totally fine. On the other hand, we may become defiant, shaking our fist and angrily demanding God give an answer for what has taken place. We may become defeated and gloomy, succumbing to the temptation to think nothing will ever be right again. Alternatively, we may take matters in our own hands (or try to), pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, and seek to make everything right in our own power. Lamentation rejects all of these lopsided responses. It honestly expresses the sorrow that is there (as opposed to shoving our emotions down). In appealing to God for intervention, the psalmists and prophets refuse to take matters in their own hands. Yet, they also find ways to convey their angst to God without crossing into outright defiance. Finally, throughout the vast majority of biblical laments, somewhere in the poem there is a thread of hope. Dark though things may seem to be, in lamentation the authors resist being completely swept under. Often in the psalms this glimmer of expectation occurs near the end. In the book of Lamentations, which is a finely structured work, the confidence in God is placed in the very center of the book: right in the middle of the middle chapter. This is what we need. In a world that can feel shot through with trials and difficulties from start to finish, it is deep-seated confidence in the covenant love of God that gives us the grace we need to endure. We see this steadfast love of God most fully in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who endured every trial and temptation, all the way to the cross, to give us the great, merciful faithfulness of God day after day after day.

Prayer:

*LORD Jesus, thank You for Your mercies that are new every morning and for Your faithfulness that never, ever ends! Teach me to look for Your faithfulness with each new day. At dawn, fill me with Your love and mercy that I might face whatever trouble each day brings as You would have me.
Amen.*