

The Book of Ezekiel

6

Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God’s Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

Morning Study

This morning we study the book of **Lamentations**. This short book has a strong emotional impact, for it follows on directly from **Jeremiah** and describes the grief that the prophet feels at seeing his city and his people ravaged by invading armies.

Although the author of **Lamentations** is not identified, there are reasonable indications that it was Jeremiah. We know that Jeremiah composed other laments (**2 Chronicles 35:25**) and since the prophet survived the destruction of Jerusalem, he was in a position to write these particular laments. Ancient Jewish and Christian tradition also ascribes **Lamentations** to Jeremiah.

The Hebrew title of this book is *‘ekah*, which means “How...!” It comes from the first word of the book, found in **1:1**:

“How deserted lies the city, once so full of people! How like a widow is she, who once was great among the nations! She who was queen among the provinces has now become a slave.”

You will also find the same initial word used in **2:1** and **4:1**.

The book of **Lamentations** is written in poetic format. Each of the five laments (corresponding to the five chapters) contains exactly 22 verses – except the third (and middle) lament, which contains 66 verses (3 times 22). There are also many other poetic patterns in the book. For example, the first four laments are acrostic poems, which means each verse in the lament begins with a new letter of the Hebrew alphabet, starting with the first letter (*aleph*) and ending with the last (22nd) letter (*taw*). This shows that even though the book has high emotional content, it was composed with care and purpose.

It is never easy reading about the pain of others, but this doesn’t mean we should hide from such literature. It is important for us to remember those who suffered, and it is equally important for us to learn the lessons taught from history. For this reason, let’s now read the book of **Lamentations** in one sitting.

Memory Verse

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

Your Fishing Kit

This is the sixth verse in your fishing kit. **Romans 6:23** follows on from **Romans 3:23** by describing the consequences of sin. The earlier verse tells us that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” and the latter verse tells us that the result of this sin is death. But it doesn’t leave things there. It then goes on to give God’s solution to the problem of sin and death – an exchange of death for life in Christ Jesus.

This verse also parallels the consequences of sin and the consequences of faith in Christ. Death is called a “wage” – something that is obliged to be paid. But eternal life is not a “wage.” It is a “gift.” We can earn death through our sin, but we cannot earn eternal life. We can only receive it as a gift from God.

Here are the other verses in your “fishing kit”:

John 3:16	Proverbs 14:12	John 1:12	Matthew 10:32-33
John 3:18	Romans 5:8	John 3:3	1 Corinthians 10:13
John 3:36	1 John 4:10	John 5:24	1 John 5:10
Ephesians 1:7-8	Acts 2:38	John 6:37	1 John 5:11
Romans 3:23	Acts 3:19	John 10:10	1 John 5:12
Romans 6:23	Acts 4:12	John 10:28	Romans 2:4-5
Isaiah 53:5	John 14:6	Romans 10:9	Acts 17:30
Isaiah 53:6	1 John 1:8	Romans 10:13	John 14:1-3
Isaiah 59:1-2	1 John 1:9	2 Corinthians 5:17	John 16:33
Isaiah 54:6	1 John 1:10	2 Corinthians 5:21	Revelation 3:20

Store these verses in your heart. Memorize them until they have an “on the tip of your tongue” familiarity. You will find them of immeasurable value as you cooperate with the Lord in his mission of bringing the Gospel to this lost world.