



my grandma time

...doing simple things together!

Week 34, Day 1 --- Habakkuk 1-3

Week 34, Day 2 --- Jeremiah 41-45

Week 34, Day 3 --- Jeremiah 46-48

Week 34, Day 4 --- Jeremiah 49-50

Week 34, Day 5 --- Jeremiah 51-52

Week 34, Day 6 --- Lamentations 1:1-3:36

Week 34, Day 7 --- Lamentations 3:37-5:22

Week 34, Day 1 --- Habakkuk 1-3

Here is an example of prayer at its best. Habakkuk and God are having a conversation. How does Habakkuk's prayer begin? How does God respond? What do you learn about God from this prayer? What is Habakkuk's attitude by the end of the prayer?

Week 34, Day 2 --- Jeremiah 41-45

The land of Israel had been emptied of people and the best of the people had been carried into captivity. The open land attracted Jews who had been taken into other lands in earlier times. Unfortunately, they did not return to Israel because they desired to be faithful to God. I think they returned because they thought there was great opportunity in the empty land. The king of Babylon does not think they are a threat so he has left very little force to enforce his will. There is great evil and many die. Those who remain have a choice. God tells them very directly to stay in Judah and He will bless them. He also tells them that if they flee to Egypt they will die there. They decide to flee. We are often tempted to run. God says to us, "Trust me and stay put. I will take you through what you are facing." I am often tempted to run and many times have given into that temptation. I have no idea what my life would be like today if I had stayed rather than run. I am blessed that God continues to give me opportunity to learn and to stay.

Week 34, Day 3 --- Jeremiah 46-48

There isn't any good news in these chapters. The whole world order is beginning to change. For the next several centuries the world will be in turmoil. War will be almost constant and one kingdom after another will fall. In the middle of all this chaos the Israelites will come together as a nation again. God is preparing the world for the arrival of Jesus. He is bringing to an end the worship of idols.

Week 34, Day 4 --- Jeremiah 49-50

Who is really in charge? After several chapters describing how Babylon will destroy the nations we are also told what will happen to Babylon. God is always in control. Often it doesn't look like it or feel like it, but He is. He has a purpose and a plan to bring about that purpose. His purpose at this time was to restore Israel to Himself and He did that by taking them away from their land to spend time in a place where they would learn to cry out to Him for help. Now, through Jeremiah, God is telling the people that their exile is not permanent. The Babylonians will not rule forever and there will come a time when the people can return home. It will be many years, but it will happen.

### Week 34, Day 5 --- Jeremiah 51-52

Jeremiah ends his prophecy by predicting the future of Babylon. It was one of the most famous cities of its day, but until very recently has been in ruins. We know where it was located because of the ruins. It is south of Baghdad in modern Iraq. Saddam Hussein attempted to rebuild it, but did not complete the task before his kingdom fell. Later, when you read Daniel, you'll discover how accurate Jeremiah's predictions were. It always amazes me how many Jews there are today given the very small number who actually survived and went into captivity. Jerusalem still stands while Babylon is mostly still ruins. Israel still exists while the Babylonian empire disappeared centuries ago. God is still in control.

### Week 34, Day 6 --- Lamentations 1:1-3:36

Today's reading may leave you a little depressed. This is partly because you have been reading a lament and you stopped reading in the middle. These two verses come toward the end of today's reading:

<sup>22</sup> Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,  
for his compassions never fail.

<sup>23</sup> They are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.

### Lamentations 3:22,23 (NIV)

There is hope. There is always hope in God. I received a devotion in email the other day that explains the lament and gives a modern example. I hope you find it helpful.

### DayBreaks for 08/02/10: A Modern Lament

If you've read the Psalms at all, you've encountered songs of lament. Lamentations is essentially a long lament. Michael Card has written a book recently titled *The Language of Lament*, and it shows that "lamenting" can be a very valuable, and indeed, Biblical, activity. At times I'm not sure where the dividing line between lamenting and complaining are, but there seem to be some very clear distinctives to me:

1. Audience: we complain to other people, David and Jeremiah lamented to God;
2. Purpose: in our complaining, often we simply want to just go on complaining, but in lamenting, one seems to be seeking understanding and wisdom;
3. Objective: complaining is generally done to elicit sympathy from people – lamenting's purpose is to plead one's case to God and seek relief.

I recently ran across what I thought was an excellent modern day lament, and wanted to share it with you.

On June 22, 2007, a hit-and-run incident left Daniel McConchie paralyzed from the waist down. Daniel says that since that traumatic day, "God has not healed my affliction, but he has taught me the power of lamenting to him about it." He adds: "To our detriment, one of the most overlooked portions of

Scripture in modern-day America are the psalms of lament. However, David repeatedly demonstrated that laments make obvious our intense faith in God, that he can and will intervene in our time of need. They demonstrate just how deep our relationship with the Father really is. After all, we don't communicate our grief and mourning to strangers. We save that for those we truly know and love."

With these words in mind, here is a lament Daniel wrote nearly a year after the accident, on April 9, 2008:

Oh Lord, my God! Why do you wait to show up?  
I cried out to you when trouble struck.  
I asked for your restoration.  
I know that you heard me. I know that you answered.

Yet nothing—nothing of meaning happens again today.  
Infinitesimal changes dog my days.  
I am hounded by the prayers of the fickle  
Looking to me to prove their faith.

Wearily I drag on  
Tiring of the waste, hating the horror,  
The pain, the suffering, the never-ending trial.  
The endless story drags on, and on, and on.

When will the clouds break?  
When will the night cease?  
When will the tunnel end?  
When will you smile again?

What a two-edged sword your voice is!  
You speak. And then wait?  
You give hope. And then vanish into the mist?  
Have you forgotten me? Have more important things arrested your attention?

Hope turns black. This evil I have seen.  
Nightly my dreams show me restored,  
And in the morning I am broken again  
Cursed to relive the horror of suffering's first day.

Please slay me! Blot my name from the ranks of the living!  
For in the grave can I finally rest.  
My wife can have her dreams again;  
My children a father who can provide as I should.

I wasted my youth. I dismissed the joys I should have embraced.  
Now I am a mere spectator  
Pretending to be consequential while others take my place.  
A position I threw away one fateful day.

How long? How long must I wait here in the middle?  
Between healing and hell,  
Between heaven and horror,  
I am unable to move ... unable to see ... lost in eternal confusion.

My demons torment me  
Batting me about like a toy, I spin and crash in endless cycle.  
I no longer know which way is up,  
Which way is right, which way to go.

Which way is the path to life?  
Is it up an un-climbable mountain?  
Or on a path tread by all but me  
And the others who are broken like I?

Surely it is impossible for me alone to find  
And impossible for me to transverse.  
Alone I am finished,  
Dust left for the broom.

Who am I that God should remember me?  
My only salvation is that he should not forget his image,  
Or let his word be broken.  
He is faithful to us because he is faithful to himself.

There is nothing I can do,  
In no way can I help.  
I sit in the ruins and wait,  
And take comfort in those who lie in the ashes with me.

But one day, by his promise, I will stand;  
Restored as his message of hope is fulfilled.  
The Lord will turn this horror into a fading dream,  
And I will honor his name forever.

Previously, I've suggested you write your own Psalms to God. Perhaps today you need to write a lament.

PRAYER: Thank You that we can be honest with You and find comfort in Your Presence! Heal those who hurt this day, In Jesus' name, Amen.

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Week 34, Day 7 --- Lamentations 3:37-5:22

Jeremiah's final prayer is that God would restore the people of Israel to Himself. This God will do. Many people look at the side of God that is seen in Jeremiah and Lamentations and turn away. They believe God exists, but want nothing to do with Him. I admit that this side of God makes me uncomfortable. God doesn't always fit my picture of what God should be like. This tells me that I still have much growing

to do. I hope that one of the things you've learned is that you can be honest with God. Neither David nor Jeremiah were punished for their laments. Let God know how you feel. He cares.