

Message Study Guide

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on [thorncreek.church/live](http://thorncreek.church/live))

**Warming up**

1. What are you hoping for right now in life?
2. What 1-3 words best captures your intention for the New Year?

**Digging Deeper & Application**

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

3. Read Lamentations 3:24. What are your initial thoughts about this verse?
4. About 900 years before Jeremiah said these words, they were *predicted* by Moses in Deuteronomy 28. Read all of Deuteronomy 28, and see if you could find the verse that relates how Israel would be exiled for disobedience.
5. The entire book of Lamentations is an exposition of Deuteronomy 28. From 588 BC to 586 BC, the army of Babylon ground away at the defenses of Jerusalem. Judah went from excitement and euphoria to uncertainty and fear. Babylon was taking over Judah. It was finalized on July 18, 586 BC. The walls were breached and the Babylonian army began entering the city. By August 14, 586 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar secured the city and stripped it of its valuables. The armies of Babylon burned the temple, the king's palace, and all the other major buildings in the city. Only rubble remained. Hope was gone.

Chuck Swindoll described Lamentations like this, "It is a mute reminder that sin, in spite of all its allurements and excitement, carries with it heavy weights of sorrow, grief, misery, barrenness, and pain. It is the other side of the eat, drink, and be merry coin."

Can you identify with this spiritual state? Talk about it.

6. Read Jeremiah's words in Lamentations 3:13-20. Describe the emotion and grief in this passage. Who is verse 13 referring to?
7. Israel's real questions were...Is it possible to push God so far that He would abandon you forever? Is God's supply of love and compassion limited? What are your initial thoughts about these two questions?
8. Where was Jeremiah's hope placed in or on according to Lamentations 3:21-24?

What specifically is he choosing to do?

9. According to Lamentations 3:31-32, what type of love is Jeremiah hoping in? The Hebrew word for this love is, "Hesed". Hesed can be described as: A persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy. It expresses both God's loyalty to His covenant and His love for His people along with a faithfulness to keep His promises. Vine's Expository Dictionary says, "*Hesed implies personal involvement and commitment in a relationship beyond the rule of law*".

What does this mean to you?

10. Jesus demonstrated this type of love in many places. Read John 8:1-11.
- a. What does the law say?
  - b. What did Jesus do?

### **Application**

Below are some of the points or quotes shared in the message. Discuss how they apply to your life.

- "God gives me the hope to make it through each day. Good or bad, I can rely on God to give me strength and joy." - Pastor Ruben
- There's no circumstance you are facing that is greater than God's love for you. There's no sin that's piled too deep. There's no hurt that's beyond His touch. There's no wrong turn that God can't redeem.
- "Hesed is a bone-weary father who drives through the night to bail his drug-addict son out of jail. Hesed is a mom who spends day after thankless day spoon-feeding and wiping up after her disabled child. Hesed is an unsung pastor's wife whose long-suffering, tearful prayers keep her exhausted husband from falling apart at the seams. Hesed is love that can be counted on, decade after decade. It's not about the thrill of romance, but the security of faithfulness." (Lois Tverberg, *Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus*).
- Put your hope in God's hesed love for you. It's not too late. There's no circumstances greater than God's love for you.