



**ENTER** God's presence

**Psalm 77:1-12**

- <sup>1</sup> I cried out to God for help;  
I cried out to God to hear me.
- <sup>2</sup> When I was in distress, I sought the Lord;  
at night I stretched out untiring hands,  
and I would not be comforted.
- <sup>3</sup> I remembered you, God, and I groaned;  
I meditated, and my spirit grew faint.
- <sup>4</sup> You kept my eyes from closing;  
I was too troubled to speak.
- <sup>5</sup> I thought about the former days,  
the years of long ago;
- <sup>6</sup> I remembered my songs in the night.  
My heart meditated and my spirit asked:
- <sup>7</sup> "Will the Lord reject forever?  
Will he never show his favour again?"
- <sup>8</sup> Has his unfailing love vanished forever?  
Has his promise failed for all time?
- <sup>9</sup> Has God forgotten to be merciful?  
Has he in anger withheld his compassion?"
- <sup>10</sup> Then I thought, "To this I will appeal:  
the years when the Most High stretched out his right hand.
- <sup>11</sup> I will remember the deeds of the Lord;  
yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.
- <sup>12</sup> I will consider all your works  
and meditate on all your mighty deeds."

- **Pray:** Heavenly Father, sometimes, when we look at the world around us it can feel like you have abandoned humanity. As we gather now around your word, remind us of your mercy and faithfulness and restore our hope and trust in you, even as we lament the mess that we see around the world. Amen



**SHARE** life together

1. **What are your highs and lows for this past week?**
2. **What has happened in the news this week that caused you to grieve?**
3. **Do you think there any benefits to grief? What are they?**

Week beginning:  
**Monday 22nd July 2024**

Worship series:  
**Fully Engaged**  
#4 – in Grief



**VERSE** for the week

"You who are my comfort in sorrow, my heart is faint within me. Listen to the cry of my people from a Land far away: 'Is the Lord not in Zion? Is her King no longer there?'"

**Key Verses: Jeremiah 8:18-19**

*Full Text: Jeremiah 8:4-9:1*



**REMEMBER** this week

**You can't fix the emptiness of what sin has broken, but in weeping over it, you will experience the fullness of the God who can.**



## LISTEN attentively

Grief is something we all experience, no one makes it through this life without being touched by grief in one way or another. Grief usually is an emotional response to the loss of someone or something. It might be the loss of a loved one, a good job, a marriage, or your health. Grief can come even at the loss of something you never physically had, like an unrealised dream or a missed opportunity. Usually people do what they can to avoid it because we don't like it, it reminds us of our loss and makes us deal with a reality that doesn't match with the ideal we hold of what life *should* be like. Read **Jeremiah 8:4-9:1** in your own Bible or online at Bible Gateway [HERE](#) and listen to the grief Jeremiah expresses.

4. **Try to summarise this text in your own words.**
5. **What verse/concept/teaching in this reading caught your attention and what was challenging/confronting/comforting about it for you?**
6. **Jeremiah is clearly upset. What do you think is causing him to feel this way?**
7. **Sometimes Jeremiah's own words can be difficult to distinguish from the words God gives Jeremiah to speak. Do you hear any of God's grief at the situation in this passage also? Where?**



## GROW deeper

Without a doubt, Jeremiah has a level of personal grief in this story. He talks in verse 19 about the cry of *his* people from a far off land. Jeremiah recognises that his nation, his people have been carried off into captivity and he mourns for what used to be, for the time when God's people feared the Lord and he dwelt with them. Yet his grief is also not just for his own loss, but for the situation of those who have lost their connection to God. He grieves for the lost opportunity of his people to have listened to the message that God had been trying to get them to hear for generations. He grieves that it has come to this. He grieves that God's judgement is coming and that there is nothing that is able to stop it. In that regard we are in a very similar situation to Jeremiah.

8. **What parallels do you see between Jeremiah's situation, being a messenger of God living among a nation that has turned its back on God, and your situation as a disciple of Jesus living in the world today?**

Jesus spoke regularly about his return in judgement, particularly in the Gospel of Matthew (ch 24&25). We also have the book of Revelation that makes it clear that Jesus is coming again and that this next time there will be mercy and eternal life for those who have placed their faith in Jesus, but judgement and eternal death and separation from God for those who refused to turn to Jesus for life and salvation. The final judgement is not a secret, God has made it very clear to those who read his word, that it is coming. We might not know when, but we can be certain it will happen. Just like God's judgement was inevitable at the time of Jeremiah, the final judgement is also inevitable, those without faith in Jesus will encounter God's judgement. For Jeremiah, the judgement was immediately apparent, the armies of Babylon were parked right outside the walls of Jerusalem, the reality of the situation was unavoidable. The second coming of Jesus is sometimes easier to push to the back of our minds.

9. **If you knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow, what would you do differently today?**
10. **When is the last time that you mourned or felt grief over the eternal future of your non-Christian friends, family or colleagues?**
11. **What do you see in the world around you that could be interpreted as the consequences of humanity's turning its back on God. How have these things caused you to grieve?**



**LIVE** purposefully

**MAKE IT REAL:**

Jeremiah could have responded to the situation in many ways. He could have expressed anger at the people's stubbornness, or even at God's refusal to relent. He could have simply responded with indifference and said, "the people are only getting what they deserve", and yet he responds with grief. He allows the situation of the people to affect him deeply and personally, and although he knows God is behind the coming judgement, he also knows that he will only find comfort in turning to God with his grief.

12. **We're going to end this LifeGroup a little differently. You may notice there are no prayer points listed below. To engage with grief together, share together as a group, the things that cause you grief when you look at the world around you. Who are the people whose persistent rejection of Jesus causes you deep sadness? What experiences have you had that have shown you how far the world has moved away from God's plan. Be brave and share the deep concerns you have for the people and the world that is so lost. Listen to one another, listen to the grief and engage with it, then together as a group, turn to God in prayer and bring your grief to him. (you can take notes in the empty space below)**
13. **During the week, take time to notice and acknowledge your grief at the things God helps you to see. Don't rush past it, sit with it, pray about it and acknowledge it and let God use it to give you a heart that beats and breaks like His.**

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily [LifeWay Devotions](#)



**PRAY** intentionally



**BLESS** one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

**[Name], Christ is your life. Amen.**