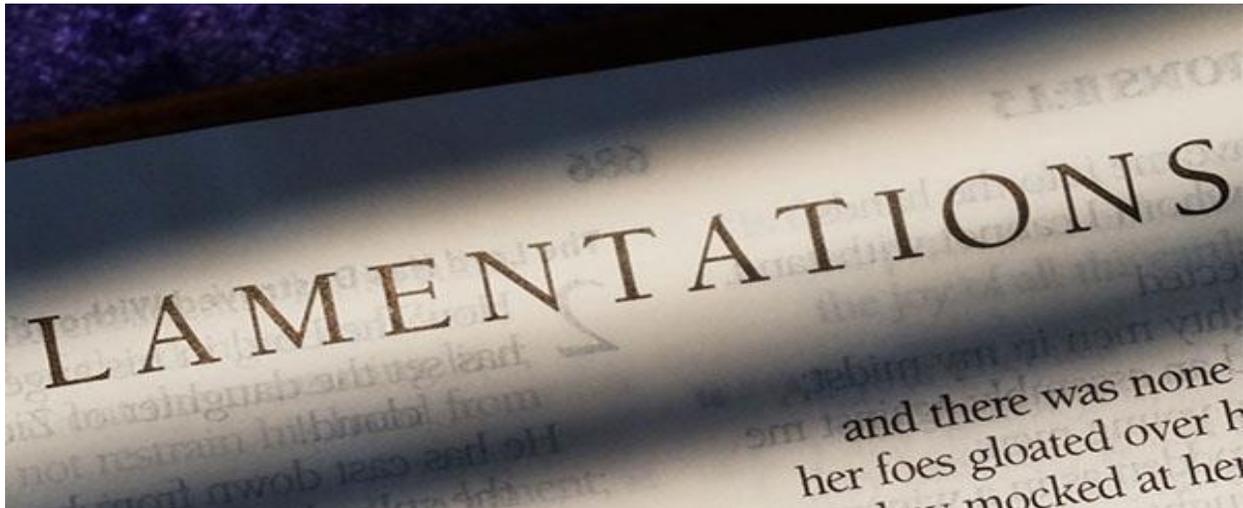


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## MINISTRY DIRECTION FOR 2021 FROM LAMENTATIONS

Kimbra Shaw



It's not often that I've found myself drawn to read Lamentations. We're familiar with Lamentations 3:22-23 and the songs new and old that it inspires.

<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.

But what comes before it that draws such a vivid verse from the writer? Like every curious Christian does, I turned to Google and followed the Bible Gateway link to the [overview](#) where I read what could have been a headline for 2020.

"The book of Lamentations, probably written by the prophet Jeremiah, is a dark but beautiful book that reflects the pain of injustice and human loss. It's filled with crushing emotions: anger, desperation, fear, loneliness, hopelessness."

The overview went on to say, "If you are personally wounded when reading Lamentations, you may feel strangely understood and comforted." I was hooked and immediately added it to my playlist.

The opening line, “How deserted lies the city, once so full of people!” immediately brought to mind the eerie images from April 2020 of our metropolitan streets [empty and desolate](#). With that on my heart, I continued to draw comparisons between the chaos of 2020 and the first chapter of Lamentations.



No one comes to her appointed festivals. All her gateways are desolate...<sup>4</sup>

Her fall was astounding; there was none to comfort her. “Look, Lord, on my affliction, for the enemy [Covid19] has triumphed.”<sup>9</sup>

My mind turned to the unrest and riots we watched every night on the news and the tension with other world leaders.

“The Lord has rejected all the warriors in my midst; he has summoned an army against me to crush my young men.”<sup>15</sup>

The Lord has decreed for Jacob that his neighbors become his foes;<sup>17</sup>

I thought, *the overview was right about feeling strangely understood* as I read verse 20, “See, Lord, how distressed I am! I am in torment within, and in my heart I am disturbed,” Then I read the last line of the verse... “for I have been most rebellious”. I stopped and went back through the chapter with a different lens, looking for Holy Father’s perspective.

“The Lord is righteous, yet I rebelled against his command.”<sup>18</sup>

The entirety of Chapter 2 and most of the next is about God doing what was necessary and right for His purpose; it’s hard to read if you don’t believe that God is Love. But we do believe and as I read through verses 20-29 of Chapter 3, I saw the recurring theme of HOPE

<sup>3:20</sup> I well remember them [my affliction],  
and my soul is downcast within me.

<sup>21</sup> Yet this I call to mind  
and therefore I have **hope**:

<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.

<sup>24</sup> I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;  
therefore I will wait for him."

<sup>25</sup> The Lord is good to those whose **hope** is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;

<sup>26</sup> it is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the Lord.

<sup>27</sup> It is good for a man to bear the yoke  
while he is young.

<sup>28</sup> Let him sit alone in silence,  
for the Lord has laid it on him.

<sup>29</sup> Let him bury his face in the dust—  
there may yet be **hope**.

As I sit and wait, remembering God is my portion, I am confident that His course for Love INC Boise through 2021 is anchored in hope.