“They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:23).

The word “faithfulness” has to be one of the loveliest terms in our English language. The word brings to mind such associations as being honest to one’s word, committed, constant, loyal, true, and having singleness of heart. It is a word communicating an attitude and behavior that is deeply cherished.

“Faithfulness” is an intricate part of God. Above all else God is “faithful.” “Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant. . . .” (Deuteronomy 7:9). As Moses spoke to an Israelite assembly, he reminded the nation of God’s faithfulness: “The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4; cf. Psalms 89:1, 2, 5).

God’s faithfulness enables man to endure earthly trials and remain confident regarding eternal salvation. Paul’s closing exhortation to the Thessalonians was, “Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (1 Thessalonians 5:24; cf. 1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13; 2 Peter 3:9). In the midst of struggles against worldly injustice, the Christian is able to remain hopeful because of the great faithfulness of God!

One of the greatest texts explaining God’s faithfulness is Lamentations 3. Lamentations is seldom studied. Many Christians never give serious thought to its contents. Most will confess that they would rather spend their study time in a joyous epistle of the New Testament rather than in that Old Testament book’s cheerless “sea of sobs.” The book does begin with a mournful cry, “How lonely sits the city that was full of people! She has become like a widow who was once great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces has become a forced laborer!” (Lamentations 1:1). But this book presents a masterful lesson regarding God’s faithfulness.

The background of Lamentations is generally known. It is Jeremiah’s recollections of Jerusalem’s capitulation to Babylonian troops in 536 B.C. To appreciate the book fully, one must recall some historical facts. In 722 B.C., Assyrian forces stormed through the territory possessed by the ten northern Israelite tribes. The ten tribes were taken into Assyrian exile while the southern Kingdom (Judah) was spared. But idolatry led
the southern Kingdom into exile as Babylon was
riding the crest of world supremacy. In three
successive invasions, ending in 536 B.C.,
Babylonian troops swept through Judah and
Benjamin. The final siege of the proud city of
Jerusalem lasted eighteen months. During that
siege the city slowly died. Finally, the gates were
breached and captivity was begun. Some twenty-
five thousand inhabitants, except for the poor-
est, were deported, and the city lay as a rubble
heap for fifty years.

Lamentations records Jeremiah’s feelings as
he surveyed the ruin and rubble of the once great
city. He recalled the greatness that lay in ruin.
His heart was broken. He walked through the
debris and remembered her splendor. For the
weeping prophet, all seemed lost. No hope glim-
mered. The great Jehovah, who had once pro-
tected Judah from the Assyrians, seemed far
away as the nation’s leaders marched into Babylo-
nian exile.

Imagine Jeremiah’s mannerisms as he walked
through those streets. No doubt he shook his
head in unbelief. He would stoop and pick up a
familiar object that had become the rubble of
war. He would be numbed, confused, and strug-
gling with his own faith.

Jeremiah’s despair is revealed in Lamenta-
tions 3:1-18. He frankly confessed his despair
and hopelessness. He viewed himself as the ob-
ject of God’s anger. As such he was in “dark-
ness,” “broken,” “besieged,” and “alone.” Listen
to the cry of one struggling in utter despair:
“When I cry out and call for help, He shuts out
my prayer. He has blocked my ways with hewn
stone” (vv. 8, 9). The prophet’s only conclusion
was, “My strength has perished and so has my
hope” (v. 18).

Just as Jeremiah reached the deepest point of
despair, a dramatic change is noticed. It is as if he
suddenly slapped himself and recognized facts
that had been before him all along. “. . . This I
recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The
Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for
His compassions never fail. They are new every
morning; great is Thy faithfulness” (Lamenta-
tions 3:19-23).

As Jeremiah remembered God’s character,
he changed his outlook. The words of verses 22
through 24 turned the blackness of despair into
the brightness of hope; confidence replaced un-
certainty; inner peace began to rule instead of
turmoil and unrest.

Jeremiah’s change was due to his recollec-
tions of God’s faithfulness. He remembered that
God was always present. Just as one awakens to
the light of dawn every day, so one may confi-
dently expect God to be loyal every day. The
divine care and bountiful compassions are all
brand new every day! I can hear Jeremiah almost
shout, “Great is Thy faithfulness,” as he stood on
the debris-strewn street.

**GOD’S FAITHFULNESS:
THE ANSWER TO DISASTERS**

In this neglected Old Testament Scripture we
discover a marvelous lesson about our great
God: His faithfulness is mankind’s answer to the
world’s disasters!

This fact is stressed throughout Scripture. In
the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-25),
this is emphasized. The wasteful son was desti-
tute of food, money, and self-respect. He had
been used by pretended friends and finally found
himself stuck in the mire of a pigsty. He came to
his senses and returned home. How was he met?
Such is the manner of God. “The Lord’s loving-
kindnesses indeed never cease, for His compas-
sions never fail. They are new every morning;
great is Thy faithfulness.”

The adversaries of life may beat and batter
the believer, but God remains faithful. The trium-
phant words of Romans 8:35, 37-39 are spoken to
Christians to encourage them to overcome trials
by trusting in God’s faithfulness: “. . . But in all
these things we overwhelmingly conquer
through Him who loved us. . . .”

Let this lesson from Jerusalem’s rubble con-
tinually be in your mind. When disasters come,
God’s faithfulness remains! When you fail, His
faithfulness is there. When you make bad choices
about life, God’s faithfulness remains. When
your marriage falls apart, when your business
goes bankrupt, when your children rebel and
forsake your counsel, God’s faithfulness remains
constant! God’s faithfulness never, never, never
diminishes. It is always “great.”

**HOW TO SEIZE THIS ANSWER
WHEN TRIALS HIT**

In Lamentations 3, Jeremiah tells us how to
refocus our faith on God’s faithfulness in the midst of disasters. The “Weeping Prophet” took the following steps when disaster struck his life. Jeremiah regained confidence in Jehovah’s help and strength and so can we. Consider how each step enables you to be confident in God’s faithfulness.

Wait patiently (v. 25). Patience is not a prominent virtue in our impatient world, especially whenever personal hurts are concerned. But Jeremiah’s counsel is for Christians to “wait for Him” whose faithfulness never fails. In the anxious moments of life, a patient searching for and study of God will bring comfort.

Sit silently (v. 28). A somber meditation of God’s faithfulness will encourage perseverance in trials. Let us be assured of the divine care. We must understand the newness of divine compassion. God’s concern is as certain as the dawn of a new day after a stormy night.

Submit willingly (vv. 29, 30). When problems overwhelm us, we have a tendency to react without trusting God’s strength. We want to answer the despair with our own strength, and when that fails, we only fall further into despair. Jeremiah encourages us to recognize the importance of mortal strength and trust in God’s power. His abilities can work out any distress!

Whenever Christians use these guidelines to refocus confidence on God’s faithfulness, a trust in God will answer life’s trials. As Christians struggle with adversity in life, they will remember that God’s mercies have never stopped; His compassions have never failed; and His faithfulness has never been diminished (3:31, 32).

CONCLUSION

“Early in the morning,” all have the opportunity to begin the day by focusing upon God’s faithfulness. As we greet the dawn’s light of every day, let us first, remember that God’s faithfulness is “new every day.” Just as the new day breaks through the darkness of the past night, divine blessings will come to all with a wonderful freshness after the darkness of trials has passed. Memories of God’s faithfulness should be unfailing as the morning’s light, as bright and joyous as the sun’s rays, as brilliant and sparkling as the morning’s dew, and as sweet and invigorating as the morning’s air!

The returning daylight is a perfect symbol of nature’s constancy. As such, it well describes God’s faithfulness. This constancy in nature illustrates the constancy of God’s faithfulness. “Every morning,” even if it is cloudy, brings us a reminder of God’s faithfulness.

Second, let us think of the “greatness” of God’s faithfulness to us. You may become faint and weary, but God will not. I may fluctuate as my feelings and moods change, but our God is unchangeably the same. I may fail and be left alone, but I cannot be totally alone, since God has faithfully promised, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

The greatness of God’s faithfulness allows a renewal of our exhausted strength. God will either change our weakness into strength, or else He will provide our weakness with suitable support to endure the trial. This faithfulness reminds all that He is wise to foresee and provide for all dangers; He is rich to relieve and succor all our wants; He is faithful to perfect and perform all divine promises.

Early every morning let us return to the debris-strewn streets of Lamentations 3 and rejoice because with the dawn’s pure light comes a testimony of God’s faithfulness. Let us exclaim with the Psalmist, “Thy faithfulness continues throughout all generations” (Psalms 119:90).

©Copyright, 1991, 2004 by Truth for Today
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED