

TRY IT ON

WHAT FITS MY GRIEF?

The Grieving of Zion's Children

Some features to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the circumstances are similar to your own:

- Deaths of friends and relatives
- Loss of a home
- Habits, plans, or favorite places have changed
- Trusted people leaving
- Loss of something beautiful or meaningful
- Questions about how something so terrible could happen

Some feelings to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the emotions are similar to your own:

- Confusion
- Loneliness
- Rejection
- Weariness
- Fear

A summary about what happened.

An entire city went from beautiful to broken. Jerusalem—also called Zion—was once a beautiful city, full of life and pride. Zion meant “bright”, and the young people were proud to be called “Zion’s Children.” Then suddenly, in the spring of 586 BCE, everything was destroyed by a Babylonian army. Many were killed. The survivors were left in shock. No one came to help—not even those they had helped previously. Some families had to trade their last valuables just to survive. When they went to the place of worship, they found only ruins. So the young people sat in the dirt and cried, groaned, and prayed through the night. They realized their festivals and celebrations were gone. They felt like God had forgotten or even turned against them. They were still alive, but how could they respond to such a horrible tragedy? They wrote four acrostic poems to express their grief. These poems became songs of sorrow. When they tried to write a fifth poem, the pain overwhelmed them. That song broke off suddenly—unfinished—just like their lives felt.



Some of the actions of Zion's Children that you can *TRY ON* to see if any fit you well:

- **Groan together** - Finding a worshipping community to express the sadness and shock of a tragedy can be important. Join with others to express deep sadness, even without words. Sometimes sounds like groaning speak louder than language. Groan with others when there are no words for the grief you feel.
- **Find others who are grieving** - Think about how others have gone through hard times. It might help to see how they grieved, or how God helped them. Explore ways to grieve like them.
- **Compose an acrostic** - Use structure like a poem or song to express what you feel. Structure can help when emotions are overwhelming. If it becomes overwhelming, It's fine to not finish it.
- **Sit on the ground** - Being close to the ground can calm you. It helps your body feel connected and grounded when your emotions feel out of control.
- **Cry in the dark** - Nighttime gives space for tears. With fewer distractions and less pressure, you may feel more free to weep honestly. At night you may not feel the pressures that others will see you weeping.

Some of the phrases of Zion's Children that you can *TRY ON* to see if any feel right for you:

- Lord, look at what happened!
- Lord, show me some consideration.
- What sorrow is like mine?
- My eyes fill with tears.
- Wail, Children of Zion.
- Please pay attention to me!
- It feels like the Lord is against us.
- There's nothing to celebrate.
- I am not consumed.
- I can hope in God.
- Let us turn to God.

Some ideas you can *TRY ON* with a child:

- **Compose a Poem/Song** - Write together. Try using a pattern like an acrostic. Let pictures or feelings guide your words.
- **Visit a site** - Go to the place where the loss happened. Remember, sit, and cry together. It helps to honor what was lost.
- **Stop abruptly** - Grief comes in waves. Grief doesn't follow a schedule. If you or your child need to stop an activity because emotions rise up, that's okay. Let the sadness come.
- **Learn and share the story** - Tell your child what happened. Share your memories and the lessons learned. Teach them how you still find hope and where you still see God. Grieving together can include remembering together.

A summary of what happens next:

The Children of Zion had to leave and live in another land for a long time. Some eventually came back and began to rebuild the broken city. They never forgot what happened. They prayed, read Scriptures, and taught their children the sorrowful song they had written. Later, a “Child of God” came to visit the rebuilt Zion—and He wept over it, too.

Where to find the *Grieving of Zion's Children*:

Lamentations 1-5