

Lamentations 2

11-19-98

1. Intro:

- 1.1. Again ch.2 is an acrostic (22 letters/verses)
- 1.2. We see again that the God of Love is the God of Wrath throughout the bible!
 - 1.2.1. “God of all mercy is a God **unjust.**” - Edward Young
 - 1.2.2. “The vague and tenuous hope that God is **too kind to punish the ungodly** has become a **deadly opiate** for the consciences of millions.” – A.W.Tozer
 - 1.2.3. **God is Just!** – Abraham asked, “Shall not the God of all the earth do Rightly(justly)?”
 - 1.2.3.1. Oh God is **Just**, but the good news... “He can **Justify!**” (via redemption, in Christ’s atonement God’s justice is not violated, but satisfied!)
- 1.3. **Subject:** God’s Anger!
- 1.4. **Emphasis:** Jehovah brought this about!
 - 1.4.1. “**The Lord has...**”(1,2,6,7,8,17); & “**He has...**”(2-9,17); occurs **30 times.**
 - 1.4.2. Also, **verbs** like “**He burned**”, **He slew**, **He poured out**”.
- 1.5. Like ch.1 it has 2 parts: 1-12; 13-22.
- 1.6. **Outline:** [1] “**Destruction**” (1-12) [2] “**Disgrace**” (13-22)!

2. **DESTRUCTION! (1-12)**

- 2.1. Babylon wasn’t their enemy...God was!
- 2.2. **God supervises the destruction of:** its kingdom(2); strongholds(2,5); the Temple/altar/sanctuary(6,7); the wall(8); the people(10-12);
- 2.3. **vs. 7** – The **Noise** of the enemy, was like the noise of shouting in the days of the feasts!

- 2.4. vs. 9 – “The Law is no more”?
- 2.4.1. I thought His word would never pass away? – Q: What saith thee?
- 2.4.2. No, the Law was No More...with them!
- 2.4.3. “It is mostly prized where it cannot be had!”
- 2.4.3.1. For instance in the **middle ages** 25(lbs)was given for one page of it.
- 2.4.4. See **2 Chron.15:3,4**
- 2.4.5. In contrast to the Law being no more, Martin Luther said, “The Bible is **alive**, it speaks to me. It has **feet**, it runs after me. It has **hands**, it lays hold of me.”
- 2.4.6. Q: Which is a more accurate statement of someone viewing **your** life?
- 2.4.6.1. Would they say, “the Bible seems to be **no more in your life**”, or would they say, “**it has laid hold of you?**”
- 2.5. Vs.11,12 – a picture too sadly familiar today.
- 2.5.1. In Africa. In Haiti. Or, Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua & and Honduras (9000+dead; 13,000 unaccounted for; burning dead bodies so no disease problem; 75,000 land mines to deal w/)
- 2.5.2. **Haiti** -Naked malnourished baby crawling in the dirt down the street.
- 2.5.3. So we see kids wanting food from their moms, & walking around dazed & confused even in the news today, see also vs.19!

3. **DISGRACE!** (13-22)

- 3.1. We notice the change from 3rd to 2nd person.
- 3.2. Vs.13 - Comforting! – “To what shall I liken you?”
- 3.2.1. “Comparison” wouldn’t even work here...“The Midianites are worse off than you”...No they weren’t!
- 3.2.2. Comforting is not a suggestion it is a command! – **Is.40:1**
 ““Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God.”
- 3.2.3. Let’s look at some practical **Don’ts & Do’s!**

3.2.4. **Don'ts:**

- 3.2.5. Don't...avoid the person – it will look like you don't care!
- 3.2.6. Don't...wait for them to call – you need to reach out to them!
- 3.2.7. Don't say, "I know what your going through." – everyone's grief is unique!
- 3.2.8. Don't...try to answer when they ask, "why?"
 - 3.2.8.1. **One reason a dog is such a comfort when you're downcast is that he doesn't ask to know why.**
- 3.2.9. Don't...give cliches or trite expressions – {*can you think of any you've heard or said?*} "God knows", "God doesn't make mistakes", "The Lord works in mysterious ways".
- 3.2.10. Don't...automatically bore them with your similar incidents! – "Well I..."
- 3.2.11. Don't...dance around the subject – If your going to talk about it call it for what it is.
- 3.2.12. Don't...try to minimize the situation – "There are others far worse off than you!"
 - 3.2.12.1. That's what they were dealing with here in **vs.13 "comparison"** wouldn't even help them. – "*There are others worse off than you!*"... "NO THERE WEREN'T!"
 - 3.2.12.2. Their ruin was so bad it was..."**as wide as the sea!**"(13b)

3.2.13. **Do's:**

- 3.2.14. Do...share scriptures!
- 3.2.15. Do...let them know you are praying for them(& do it w/them)!
- 3.2.16. Do...listen to them!
- 3.2.17. Do...acknowledge their pain!
- 3.2.18. Do...feel free to cry with them(don't make them comfort you though)!
- 3.2.19. Do...find out what you can do for them! (ask specifically, can I bring dinner tomorrow, not vague)!
- 3.2.20. Do...understand they may say things they don't mean!
- 3.2.21. Do...give a warm embrace, or squeeze of the hand that conveys your sympathy(depending on your relationship w/the person, & what is appropriate)!
- 3.2.22. Do...remember often times people feel guilty for things they had no control over!
- 3.2.23. Do...hold out hope!
- 3.2.24. Do...allow them time to heal.
- 3.2.25. **Col.2:2** "that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love,"
- 3.2.26. "God does not comfort us to make us comfortable, but to make us comforters." John Henry Jowett (1817-1893)
- 3.2.27. "You don't have to be alone in your hurt! Comfort is yours. Joy is an option. And it's all been made possible by your Savior. He went without comfort so that you might have it. He postponed joy so that you might share in it. He willingly chose isolation so that you might never be alone in your hurt and sorrow." Joni Eareckson Tada
 - 3.2.27.1. **Thank You Lord!**

- 3.3. **vs. 15** – Those passing by not only offer no comfort but contribute to Jerusalem’s **shame!**
- 3.4. **vs. 16b** – The enemy boasts a great victory.
- 3.5. **Vs.20** – “eat their offspring”.
- 3.5.1. One of the most reprehensible crimes.
- 3.5.2. 2 kings 6:26-29
- 3.6. **Vs.19(end)** – All the faithful remnant could do was to “cry out” to Him for Mercy!
- 3.6.1. ***“He might not always smooth the path, but sometimes puts springs in the wagon!”***
- 3.6.2. **Cry Out:**
- 3.6.2.1. ***We need to cry out!*** Like the sign in a principles office That stated, “In the event of Nuclear attack, fire, or earthquake, the ban on prayer is temporarily lifted!”
- 3.6.2.2. **When?** At night, through the night, & early morning.
- 3.6.2.3. **“Arise”** – “utter your cries when others take their rest!”
- 3.6.2.4. **“Night watches”** = 12 hour night into 3, 4 hour watches (6-10; 10-2; 2-6)
- 3.6.2.4.1. Did you know **children** are Gods alarm clocks for this very purpose! {“Dad, what do you do when you can’t get to sleep”...*Pray for missionaries in diff. time zones!*}
- 3.6.2.5. **Ps.119:147,148** “I rise before the dawning of the morning, And cry for help; I hope in Your word. My eyes are awake through the night watches, That I may meditate on Your word.”
- 3.6.3. **Pour Out:**
- 3.6.3.1. “To be empty”, “generally involves the emptying of a container”.
- 3.6.3.2. Pray w/intensity, sincere prayer.
- 3.6.3.3. Prayer can’t be mechanical, must have passion.
- 3.6.3.4. “pour out your heart like water” – “utter the sorrow of their heart in tears to the Lord.”¹

¹ Keil & Delitzsch

3.6.4. Lift Up:

3.6.4.1. **Lifting up your hands** – the practice itself is not sufficient, the lifting of hands is the result of a lifted heart!

3.6.4.2. **Hands normally reveal the direction of the heart, do they not?**

3.6.4.2.1. If the heart is **Forlorn** – (hang down)

3.6.4.2.2. If the heart is **Proud** – (on hips)

3.6.4.2.3. If the heart is **Giving** – (reaching out)

3.6.4.2.4. If the heart is **Praising** – (up)

3.6.4.2.4.1. **Sarah**(Kindergartner) – to mom & dad (Dave & Brenda Bledsoe - learned from miss Karen) while singing a praise song & lifting hands, “**I know why we lift our hands**”... why... “**It’s just like when you want your dad to pick you up!**”

3.6.4.2.5. Jesus said, **where your treasure is there your heart will be also!** I also believe that, **where your heart is there your hands will be also!**

3.6.4.3. Paul calls all believers to lift up their hands → yet again, **a rt. heart must precede it**, “**I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;**”

3.6.4.4. Why Lift up hands? - “**for**” the starving children(context).

3.6.5. My devotion this morning – **Ps.141:2**

3.6.5.1. **As incense** – Incense was always **equally mixed** (Ex.30:34); (7)says incense was to be **sweet**; (8) **perpetual** before the Lord; **no strange** incense allowed(9);

3.6.5.2. **Famous Hymn** - penned by Joseph Scriven upon learning of his mothers serious illness & unable to be w/her in Dublin. He wrote a letter of comfort enclosing he words(later picked up & put to music) - “**O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!” (read all)**