

Lamentations 3

12-3-98

1. Intro:

- 1.1. Here we find ourselves at the heart of this 5-fold memorial.
- 1.2. This is the turning point in Jeremiah's experience of grief & prayer.
- 1.3. The verses or stanzas run in triads {1,2,3, = a}
- 1.4. **Outline:** He looked to Himself; He looked to the Lord; He looked to the people!

2. LOOKING AT HIMSELF! (1-18)

- 2.1. Here we have Jeremiah's anguish.
 - 2.1.1. Dakes finds 32 sufferings & sorrows of Jeremiah in these 1st 18 vs.
 - 2.1.2. Also note the "He has" statements. (17 x's)
- 2.2. Vs.4-10 - He saw himself an aged man, on a winding path, in the dark, being pursued by lions, tigers, & bears, oh my!
 - 2.2.1. Well a lion & a bear(10,11).
 - 2.2.2. He depicts God as [1] 2 wild animals ready to tear in pieces whatever crosses its path. [2] A skilled huntsman finding his amrk in such vulnerable organs as the kidneys.
- 2.3. Vs.12,13 - He felt like William Tell's son.
 - 2.3.1. **William Tell**, legendary 14th cent. Swiss hero/marksman. He refused obeisance to Gessler(the Austrian governor). As punishment he was forced to shoot an apple off his young son's head. He did w/a crossbow, but told Gessler if he hit his son he would kill him. He then was imprisoned. In revenge, Tell killed Gessler, setting off the revolt that ousted the bailiffs on Jan. 1, 1308. The legend is a distortion of actual events that led in 1291 to the formation of the Everlasting League among the forest cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. ¹
 - 2.3.2. (13) – Then he felt like Gessler...direct hit.
- 2.4. Vs.16 – "broken my teeth w/gravel" - A form of punishment in which food-stuff were contaminated before being administered.
 - 2.4.1. Here's an example you'll remember! - Ex.32:20 "Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it."

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2.4.2. Solomon said(Prov.20:17) “Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.”

2.4.2.1. Grit got into the bread during the baking process.

2.5. **Vs.18** – The more he considered his feelings the more helpless he felt.

2.5.1. Then! He looked away from himself, & by faith...”LOOKED TO THE LORD!” (19-39)

3. **LOOKING TO THE LORD! (19-39)**

3.1. Job 13:15 “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

3.2. **Vs.21** – Now he can say he has hope...WHY?

3.2.1. [1] Because of what is about to follow...God’s divine character.

3.2.1.1. Mercy, compassion, faithfulness!

3.2.2. [2] or because, Jeremiah’s very weakness gives him the hope of God giving him **His** strength.

3.3. **Vs.22-24** –

3.4. **Mercies** - “God's **wrath** comes by measure; his **mercy** without measure.”

3.4.1. Why not enough Mercy for a whole year or for a lifetime...up front? - Rabbi Ben Jochai's parable - "Once there was a king who had a son to whom he gave a yearly allowance, paying him the entire sum on the fixed date. It soon happened that the day on which the allowance was due was the only day of the year when the father ever saw his son. So the king changed his plan and gave his son day by day that which was sufficient for the day; and then the son visited his father every morning. How he needed his father's unbroken love, companionship, wisdom and giving! Thus God dealt with Israel and deals with us."

3.5. **Compassion's** – unending, unfailing, never ending, never failing!

“Compassion is love in action!”

3.5.1. **Mt.7:10,11** "...what man is there among you who, if his son asks for **bread**, will give him a stone?" Or if he asks for a **fish**, will he give him a serpent? "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

3.6. **New Every morning** - If God’s compassion’s are “new every morning” you have the right to claim them daily!

3.6.1. Let each day be the dawn of a new day.

3.6.1.1. Isn't this the concept of “**not letting the sun go down on your wrath?**”

- 3.6.2. Start over again! – no matter how many times you failed the day before!
- 3.6.3. **One day at a time!** - “A newspaperman who had written a book about the **Eskimos** and their customs and beliefs. He said the Eskimos believe that when they go to sleep at night they die -- that they are dead to the world. Then, when they wake up in the morning, they have been resurrected and are living a new life. Therefore, no Eskimo is more than one day old.
* Maybe that’s why you never see an Eskimo who seems worried or anxious?
They have learned to face one day at a time!”
- 3.6.4. {Karen Mains} “Nature shouts of this **beginning-again-God**, this God who can make all our failures regenerative, the One who is God of risings again, who never tires of fresh starts...God is a God of starting over, of genesis and re-genesis. He composts life's sour fruits, moldering rank and decomposing;...“He freshens the world with dew; He hydrates withered human hearts with his downpouring spirit.”
- 3.6.5. The psalmist says, **For His anger** is but for a moment, **His favor** is for life; **Weeping** may endure for a night, **But joy** comes in the morning. (Ps.30:5)
- 3.7. **(23) Faithfulness** – “He is faithful, & His faithfulness will not fail!”
- 3.8. **(24) “The lord is my Portion!”** - The Climax!
- 3.8.1. **Numbers 18:20!!!**
- 3.8.1.1. Instead of an inheritance inland, the Lord gave Himself to the priests!
- 3.8.1.2. **Ps.16:5** “O LORD, You are the **portion** of my **inheritance** and my **cup**;
You maintain my lot.”
- 3.8.2. God alone is sufficient for us!
- 3.8.3. “If you are not **fully satisfied w/God alone**, you are immediately seized w/impatience when any calamity hits!”
- 3.9. **(24,25) Triple Trust! Hope in Him – Wait for Him – Seek Him!**
- 3.9.1. “Fix our minds on God alone, so “**whatever**” happens in your situation you would not cease to glorify Him!”
- 3.10. **Vs.27** – “**yoke in his youth**” - **Eccl.12:1** “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”
- 3.11. **Vs.30 – Q:** Who exemplified this to the highest degree?
- 3.11.1. **Is.50:6** “I gave **My back** to those who struck Me, And **My cheeks** to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide **My face** from shame and spitting.”

- 3.12. **Vs.31** – He may hide His face for a moment, yet He will **Never** cast us **out**, nor cast us **off**!
- 3.13. **Vs.33** – “**Willingly**”(from His heart)...As if He had pleasure in it!
3.13.1. **Ezek. 33:11** – “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways!”
- 3.14. **Vs.39** – Looking to the Lord now causes him to “look to the people”!

4. **LOOKING TO THE PEOPLE! (40-66)**

- 4.1. We have a prayer-appeal to God **Nationally**(40-51); & **Personally**(52-66)
- 4.2. **Vs.40** – He calls for a time of **Prayer & Confession** of sin!
4.2.1. I concur w/**Billy Sunday**(famous Amer. Evangelist/professional baseball player/firefighter, died 1935) **when he said**, “I’m against sin. I’ll kick it as long as I have a foot, & I’ll fight it as long as I’ve got a fist. I’ll butt it as long as I’ve got a head. I’ll bite it as long as I’ve got a tooth. When I’m old & fistless & footless & toothless, I’ll gum it till I go home to Glory & it goes home to perdition!”
- 4.3. **Vs.41** – **lift hearts & hands!** (other places – head, soul, eyes, voice).
4.3.1. This is the cure to hypocrisy.
- 4.4. **Vs.45** – So were the apostles yet they rejoiced in it.
4.4.1. **1 Cor.4:12b,13** “Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as **the filth of the world, the offscouring** of all things until now.”
- 4.5. **Vs.57** – What did God do for His suffering & agonizing servant?
4.5.1. [1] He “**drew near**” to Jeremiah.
4.5.2. [2] He comforted him with the words, “**Do not fear!**”
4.5.2.1. **Is.41:10** “Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”
- 4.6. **Application** – “If only we’d turn our **Helplessness** unto the **Hope of Hopes**(21); our **Mourning** to **His Mercies**(22); our **Cry’s** to **His Compassion’s**(22); our **Failings** to **His Faithfulness**(23); our **Grief** toward **His Goodness**(25).”
4.6.1. **This would bring light into our darkest dungeons!**

5. **Communion:** Vs.40