

## Lamentations 4,5

12-10-98

### 1. Intro: Chapter 4

- 1.1. “No more agonizing questions here. No appeal to God. They except what God is doing. The tragedy remains. Misery abounds.”<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2. We start w/a serious of contrasts of how Zion **was** vs. how it is **now**!

### 2. ZION, BEFORE & AFTER! (1-12)

- 2.1. Vs.1,2 - The greatest destruction from sin is not to buildings but to people!
- 2.2. (2) In God’s sight, His people had been like Gold & precious gems.
  - 2.2.1. Ex.19:5,6 “Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a **special treasure** to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”
  - 2.2.2. Now they were only seen as cheap clay pots!
  - 2.2.3. Their **gold** had tarnished; their **Holy Stones** were scattered in the streets; They once were **worth** their weight in gold, now **reduced** to clay pots.
    - 2.2.3.1. Q: How does God see you today! **Clay Pots, or Gold?**
    - 2.2.3.2. **Story** - Ken shared today at lunch about when he worked for the airlines. “**A gold Bullion**(brick of Gold, raw form) was lost in shipment somewhere. It was found about 1 year later in (Newark N.J) as a doorstep in the ramp room(baggage handlers hang out). - It laid there for a year!
    - 2.2.3.3. *I believe we are the same if we seem misplaced for a time, we don't stop being gold! Just gold out of place!*

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<sup>1</sup> Barclay

- 2.3. **Vs.3,4** – During the final stage of the attack famine conditions were rampant.
- 2.3.1. The young were receiving far worse treatment than that provided by nature for the offspring of Jackals.
- 2.3.2. **Jackals** – How do Jackals treat their young?
- 2.3.2.1. **Background:** They are a wild dog. They have a long lasting “pair-bond”.
- 2.3.2.2. They raise their young together, & are dedicated to feeding their young. They may be away 40% of the time just to look for food for them.
- 2.3.2.3. **The point** – The Jewish women were less kind than the Jackals, in whom their maternal instinct was very strong.
- 2.3.3. **Ostriches** – How do ostriches treat their young?
- 2.3.3.1. **Background:** 8’; 330 lbs; largest living bird; run up to 40 mph; they are polygamous(3/4 females); Egg 3 lbs.; Male sits on eggs at night, female by day.
- 2.3.3.2. **Job.39:13-18** – (13) Proud bird yet can’t even fly. (14,15)Not very maternal leaves the eggs on her shift{lays the m in a hole scratched in the sand, then buried a little ways for the sun to incubate them for her.}. (16-18) The Arabs have a saying “*stupid as an ostrich!*”{the’ll swallow about anything,iron, stones, etc.}
- 2.3.3.3. **The point** – The Jewish women were showing cruelty leaving their young abandoned(see last ch.).
- 2.4. **Vs.5** – People of luxuries could not find the necessities of life.
- 2.4.1. Those that shopped at Nordstroms now were finding their clothes at the dump!
- 2.4.1.1. **From Riches to Rags!** – **Q:** How many have gone down that road?
- 2.4.1.2. **Q:** How many times has that been the **best** route though? (I hear it over & over again...thanks you Lord for stripping it all away...so I could see you)
- 2.4.1.3. **Q:** Is God doing a tearing in your life? (**Eccl 3:7 A time to tear, And a time to sew;**)
- 2.4.1.3.1. Why would he tear? Look at **1 Sam.2:6-8** – Awesome!

- 2.5. **Vs.6, 9-12** – Read w/vs. 9-12.
- 2.5.1. A **quick death** like a Hiroshima would be better than a **slow lingering death** by starvation, driving them to cannibalism.
- 2.5.2. Sodom was proverbial for its wickedness yet it was destroyed swiftly & thus didn't suffer prolonged agonies.
- 2.5.2.1. Remember **Sodom** was a pagan city vs. **Jerusalem** Gods city! – They rejected His covenant mercies, thus “His own” receiving the greater chastisement.
- 2.5.3. Again this is all because of **SIN!**
- 2.5.3.1. Regarding sin - “The grass may look greener on the other side, but often its not even edible!”
- 2.5.3.2. How many times have we bitten into the forbidden fruit only to find it sour?
- 2.6. **Vs.7,8** – Even their appearance changed.
- 2.6.1. Sin takes a toll on the body!
- 2.7. **Vs.12b** – It seemed impregnable, a mighty fortress.
- 2.7.1. But any wall we trust in, outside of God, is sure to have a crack in it somewhere!
- 2.7.2. **Zach & I** are building a real **castle**(small scale)walls of rock & mortar. – We got done last night w/the last stone, then looked at the face of the wall & saw breaches/crevices all over it.
- 2.7.2.1. We started with our mortar **too wet**, the rocks came a tumblin down.
- 2.7.2.2. Ezek 13:14 “So I will break down the wall you have plastered with **untempered mortar**, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.”
- 2.7.2.3. Let God be our only foundation, & let every stone in our wall be hewn by the hand of God Himself, in which no mortar is necessary!

### 3. **BECAUSE OF THE SINS! (13-22)**

- 3.1. **Vs.13** – All of this came about because the leaders of the land wouldn't obey the Word of God but listened to false teachers.
  - 3.1.1. Sin slipped through Jerusalem's cracks.
- 3.2. **Vs.15** - The very one's(the priests,13) to pronounce others(Lepers) "unclean", they themselves are being called, "Unclean! Go Away!"
  - 3.2.1. Now they are condemned to wander the streets(14); & welcomed by no one(15b).
- 3.3. **Vs.17-20** – Depression & hopelessness as the end drew near.
  - 3.3.1. (17) The nation that couldn't save them was Egypt.
  - 3.3.2. **Q:** What are you **trusting** in that can't save you?
    - 3.3.2.1. We need to trust in Him!...FULLY!& That is a journey of its own!
    - 3.3.2.2. **Read** Trust – "Pedal!"
- 3.4. **Vs.21,22** – Doom of the Edomites.
  - 3.4.1. (21) **Rejoice** = Facetious.
  - 3.4.2. **Zion's** doom is accomplished, **Edom's** just begun.
    - 3.4.2.1. **Is.40:1,2** "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand Double for all her sins."
  - 3.4.3. One now **covered**, the other now **uncovered!**
  - 3.4.4. **Zion** – A full judgment, but a covering of her sins.  
**Edom** – No promise of restoration, instead an uncovering of her sins.

### 4. **Intro: Chapter 5**

- 4.1. Not alphabetical!
  - 4.1.1. Now the people pray to God to describe their reproach.
  - 4.1.2. Maybe this is why the poetic value isn't as important here, instead we have just a poured out heart.

## 5. **A PRAYER IN DESPAIR! (1-22)**

- 5.1. **Vs.16** – They didn't try to wiggle out of personal responsibility!
- 5.1.1. Even thought heir fathers sinned(7)...**"we had also"**!
- 5.1.2. "If the seeds of disaster were sown in the **past**, the **present** generation had actively cultivated them."
- 5.1.3. **2 extremes: You can't claim to live in "isolation" from the past; nor claim we are "victims" of our past!**
- 5.1.3.1. **Q:** Do you stay in between those 2?
- 5.1.3.2. **Q:** What are some good things we can do w/our past sins or mistakes?  
{we can learn from it so as not to repeat it. - Help others by those lessons we've learned.}
- 5.1.3.3. **Q:** What's wrong with claiming "victim" status? {feel sorry for self, not productive}
- 5.2. **Vs.19-22** – Though no Judean king was sitting on the throne – **"Thy Throne" endures to all generations.**
- 5.2.1. There is a kingship **not of this world** (Jn.18:36 **"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."**)
- 5.2.2. A kingship which nothing that happens in this world can ever destroy(not even Y2K).
- 5.2.3. This is the great certainty to which Lamentations **clings!**
- 5.2.3.1. On it you can build for the future.
- 5.2.4. This doesn't stop the questions **(20)**.
- 5.2.5. **(22)** Jewish Rabbis insisted rereading 21 after 22 to end on a more positive & hopeful note.
- 5.3. I'll end with one last note regarding when Isaiah dealt with this very question about being forsaken(20).
- 5.3.1. Is.49:14-16!**
- 5.3.2. **(15)** Gods love, which is in distinction from the highest of human love, in that His will **never fail!**
- 5.3.3. **(15b)** He cannot forsake us!
- 5.3.4. **(16)** **The walls are continually standing before Him...**as a memorial!
- 5.3.5. **"Inscribed"** - **"to cut into or engrave"**. The name Zion is engraved on His hand! Your name is engraved on His hand.
- 5.3.5.1. **Maybe this means in Jesus hands...in the form of a spike?**
- 5.4. **"Mercy is God's ministry to the miserable!"** *Dwight Pentecost*