

Lamentations (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Cottingham, Peter (1947 - 2014)

- [0 : 0 0] Lamentations chapter 3 and verses 18 to 21. Verses 18 to 21 of the chapter that we read.
- And I said, My strength, my hope is perish from the Lord, remembering my affliction and my misery at the wormwood and the gourd.
- My soul, I think still in remembrance, is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hoped.
- Therefore have I hoped. And he could go on to say that it was of the Lord's mercy sent. We are not consumed. The Lord held him up even in the dungeon.
- You see, he had those trials both within and without. He had those afflictions both within and the enemies that reigned about him.
- [1 : 0 7] He knew what it was to be in that darkness spiritually. He knew what it was to be in that darkness naturally down in the dungeon. And also we find here that although he had so much grief and trouble in his own soul and in his circumstances, but in this chapter he also mourned and grieved over the state of the Lord's people.
- As we mentioned in prayer, And mine eye tricketh thine, and ceaseth not without any intermission, because you could see the enemies coming up against them.
- You see the state of the nation, the state of the people. And the whole of this lamentations that Jeremiah is remembering and mourning over Zion because in the very first verse of the next chapter we have this, How has the gold become dim?
- How has the most fine gold changed? The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street in reproach as we are in our day. Know that there might be then true weeping and mourning in Zion over the state of England and over the state of Christianity and over the state of the churches.
- All Jeremiah's complaint here that he was known as the weeping prophet as I said, He had those things both within and with eyes and he wept over the state of Israel and over the Lord's people.
- [3 : 0 0] When the first part of it he is in great trouble, distress, and reproach. It seemed as if the Lord, the hand of the Lord had gone out completely against him.
- But there was one thing that a child of God and Jeremiah was a servant of the Most High God. There is one thing that they know.
- However cast down, however tried, however tempted, and however many enemies they may have, they know where to go with their trouble. They know where to find sweet relief.
- And it may not be seen or known at the time, but they know what it is to have peace in their soul. The circumstances may not have changed and sometimes they may become worse.
- But peace within. No, there are also the inward afflictions, the temptations of Satan, the unbelief, the doubting of, not doubting his promise or doubting his word, but doubting whether the reality of what is found within them.

[4 : 17] All these things try a true and living child of God so much. But what do we say? That there is underneath, there is hope.

They have to look, Jeremiah, naturally in the dungeon, whether he was at this particular time, I'm not sure. It seems possible that he was, but he knew what it was to be down in the dungeon.

Naturally so then, but also spiritually. And I ought to feel that the hand of the Lord had gone out against him. That the Lord had turned his back upon him.

The Lord himself had brought him down into this place. And perhaps he felt there to be so deserving of the chastening and the wrath and the judgment of the Lord upon him.

And still he had to plead for deliverance. Satan had a good go of Jeremiah.

[5 : 22] But Jeremiah was in the Lord's hand. And no power can pluck one that is brought with that precious blood of Christ out of his hands.

The concern. Whether this was the concern with Jeremiah or not, that concern is whether it is right with us, it is well with us.

And you find that as the years go by, that concern and then a need becomes more and more that the Lord would show himself. Then the Lord would give that word.

Now, Jeremiah being brought down to this place and yet now he finds that however low he was brought down, there was a rock.

Therefore, have I hope his feet were fixed there. They could not be moved off it. Even though he said, and I said, my strength and my hope is perish from the Lord.

[6 : 36] But then those three verses, four verses later he says, therefore have I hope. Because he'd see the hand of the Lord.

He could not necessarily see that there was going to be a good, right outcome or whatever the outcome was going to be. But he believed he was in the Lord's hand.

that the Lord had permitted these things to come upon him. And oh, was he to see a blessing in it. Was he to know the favor in it. Was he to know that the Lord was indeed full of mercy and of grace.

Yes. Because he could recall it to mind of how the Lord had brought him through to that time, how the Lord had raised him up, how the Lord had gone before him.

Deuteronomy 8. Moses' exhortation to the children of Israel. They shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years through the wilderness to humble thee and to prove thee to know what was in thine heart whether thou would serve the Lord thy God or not.

[7 : 48] They had those things that Moses brought before them there. They could say that as they were going to enter into the promised land they needed reminding.

And of course Moses knew what was going to come into their pathway because of their rebellious nature. He'd experienced it first hand we might say.

oh those many times he'd had to plead as one that stood between we might say as we have that great high priest now in heaven's high courts above Jesus.

And he stands and pleads his people's calls. Moses was raised up in his day and his age and his situation thus to plead with his God to have mercy upon the children of Israel.

But he knew that they would soon slip back soon go after those false gods. Therefore he said beware that they forget not that the Lord thy God in not keeping his commandments and his judgments and his statutes which I command thee this day when thou hast eaten and art full and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein.

[9 : 11] In other words when they're brought into that time of prosperity and peace and everything is going well. When thy herds and thy flocks multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied and all that thou hast is multiplied and thine heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

He goes on to say that they're they're left to themselves and it shall be if they do at all forget the Lord thy God and walk after other gods and serve them and worship them.

I testify against you this day you shall surely perish. But going back to what he was going to say was this and they shall remember all the way.

There were ways of difficulty. There were ways of their enemies. There were ways of trial. There were those ways that the Lord brought them into.

They had their ways of rebellion. They had their ways of memory. Oh, can we really blame them? When you're brought in, can we find a fault with them?

[10 : 32] When you're brought into those different troubles, you find that rebellious spirit rising up. Sometimes you say, Lord, why is this? Why has this been brought upon me?

Why do I have to suffer in this way? Why do I have to be tried in this way? But others seem to have such an easy pathway. When it is said, it is through much tribulation we shall enter into the kingdom and the tribulation into, in our outward circumstances, in whatever way, tribulation we might say, in our health and strength, tribulation within.

And Jeremiah knew, I believe we can say all those things. Jeremiah knew it all, but the Lord was still with him. Therefore, have I hope.

That hope, which is the groundwork of faith, which is God given, will be like the spark that cannot be extinguished.

No, the smoking flanks that will not be put out. The Lord thy God, the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness.

[11 : 54] And what was it for? To humble thee, to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, and thou would keep his commandments on earth.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not. And neither did thy fathers know that he might make thee know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word, and that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live.

This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. What a mercy it is, for brought safely through.

We know the truth that here that if he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, and then there the work begun will be carried on and be brought to a blessed conclusion, but still it will be that miracle of his grace if we're brought safely through.

And what was Jeremiah's inward trouble, personal trouble? Was it the same assurance? Sin?

[13 : 23] The Lord's servant, the prophet, yes, the Lord's servants know their sin.

But do we mourn over it? Do we repent over it? Do we confess it? Are we truly sorry? Do we grieve over it?

Do we see that our sins caused the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer? Do we? well, whatever it was in Jeremiah's heart, what is it then in ours?

The Lord brought Jeremiah down into this place to bless him. I'm not unloving, not unkind, not unsympathetic to any that might be in a place like Jeremiah.

But oh, that you may find that there is a blessing in it from time to time, upheld, favoured. Then you say, I would have to say, it is of the Lord's mercies that we're not consumed because his compassions fail not.

[14 : 39] Though you every morning great is thy faithfulness, see how all the darkness and the blackness and the thick lowering clothes that hang over Jeremiah here are all dispelled in a moment.

The Lord had appeared, the Lord had shone into his soul and he could say, great is the faithfulness of the Lord. And here he sees and can say in this way, it is good.

And a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord, for that deliverance not to rail against the hand of the Lord. But we have need then of the Lord to hold us and to keep us in need of that patience.

We will just mention again and then perhaps leave that in the Lord's hand. And it is the state, shall we say, because he speaks of us and how he mourns.

What mercy it is. And all our enemies have opened and fear and snares come upon us and all those different things. It seems if they had the enemies without.

[15 : 57] And what a mercy it was that there was one that as we've already said is I runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughters of my people. Mine eye trickleth down and ceaseth not without any intermission.

May there be those raised up in our nation that weep for Zion. And then mourn over the solemn state that we're in. While we believe, we try to pray and there are sometimes special meetings and prayer meetings for our nation and for the churches.

Lord, to know what it is that there are those that are raised up. For the Lord will appear. He will appear in answer to prayer, the united prayers of his people.

But let us not be unconcerned. Whether there are those times when it is brought before us, and I acknowledge this and accept this, when there are those times when the Lord's people are brought to prayer, but generally speak, that we live such an insular life, that we do not see those things that are going on around us and mourning over what Jeremiah was mourning over.

The state of our nation, thankfully, the Lord has raised up those that are not afraid to stand for the truth, not afraid to speak out.

[17 : 30] You might say, well, we're not in a position or a situation. No. But what do we believe, and even though the people may have seemed to have gone astray, the people of Israel at different times in their history, and yet still there was a remnant that feared God, and that cried unto the Lord their God, I believe this was so.

We know that Paul in his journeys came to that particular place, and he says the city was holy, given over to idolatry.

Well, if we say there, then there the whole city, every inhabitant, every man, woman, child, was given over to idolatry.

Perhaps it was. But the Lord sent his servant there. When we might say that this nation is holy, given over to idolatry and to the sins of Sodom, there would be an exaggeration because there is a remnant.

There is a remnant. But do that remnant, does that remnant cry unto the Lord that he would graciously appear?

[18 : 57] He would be here. Let us say then nationally, it is the Lord's mercies that we're not consumed because his compassion's found out. Because I believe of the cries of those that fear God, but there is the persecution.

many believers, Christian believers, have suffered over weeks and months and a few years.

They're in different ways because they stood for the truth. Thankfully, there are those organizations and different ones that they support and fight their cause, but it is the Lord, our God, that we need to graciously appear.

For those things brought to our attention, let us leave those things known. It is not Jeremiah's trouble, but our trouble, individually and also denominationally.

We believe the truth is proclaimed as we read in the seventh chapter of the book of the Revelation. All those nations, people, kindreds and tongues.

[20 : 20] That is where the gathering of the people is, in heaven's high courts above. That they washed their robes. I will think of that. Let me turn to it. What are these that are arrayed in white robes and whence came they?

Then the question was put to John there in that vision. and I said unto him, so are they nice.

He said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Oh, think of this. The Lord brought them through. There was the tribulations and in days gone by there was the persecutions and in other parts of our world of the earth there are those persecutions in other nations.

In our own lands it's been in times past there were those that were martyred for Christ's sake. But there are the inward tribulations.

[21 : 31] And was that Jeremiah's trouble? The worst trouble of all? The inward trials. they came out of and the Lord brought them through.

Pulled. He was shown those wondrous things in paradise brought up into the third heaven. Those things that whether he was in the spirit or out of the spirit in the body or out of the body he could not tell but there was shown unspeakable things he could not utter.

And he says lest I shall be exalted above measure. There was given unto me the thorn in the flesh the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him and thrice he pleaded before the Lord that it might be removed from him.

But what did the Lord say to him for my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities than the power of Christ might rest upon him.

He is thankful for it but he was found in it. But what was the promise and what was the hope in this that the Lord was in it? Is it what you want to see?

[22 : 56] Is it what you want to know more? That the Lord is in it and for good. the Lord was in it with fool not to destroy not to oh when we often when I read this and what do we read later on in this third chapter of the lamentations for he does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men to crush under his feet for the prisoners of the earth to turn aside the right of a man before the face of most high to subvert a man in his cause the Lord approveth not not to destroy but to bless he approveth not he might bring them down the prisoners of the earth

Jeremiah knew what it was literally to be a prisoner it was not to destroy him no there were those that were raised up there was one raised up in particular there poor Jeremiah was up to his knees in the mire there was no natural way that he could be pulled out without any harm there were those old cast clients he had to put under his armpits and there the robe was let down and he pulled out the Lord delivered him the Lord delivered him and that is the deliverance that we want isn't it the Lord to deliver us my strength my hope is perish from the Lord remembering my affliction my misery the wormwood and the gall my soul hath him still in remembrance and is humbled in me yes he was brought to see that this was the

Lord's doing in times past the Lord graciously appeared and he received a blessing in it and now he is humbled under the remembrance of the Lord's goodness there was deliverance and there will be deliverance this I recall to my mind therefore have I hope what a mercy it is that there is one that was humbled the flesh doesn't like it but you know that it is the best place the only place really that you should and could be found in goes against the grain and goes against reason and goes against our own flesh in this that he could see and we trust and you and I have known from time to time as we recall those things to our mind there is hope there that the

Lord has not left us to ourselves different circumstances each and every one of you in your different circumstances in providence different circumstances in your pathway those different circumstances in your soul the Lord knew where Jeremiah was and blessed be his name the Lord knows where each one is found here this evening that trust in the Lord that the Lord has a favour towards that the Lord has a purpose of grace unto why one of those that are caused to suffer more than others it is that his goodness and mercy might be more plainly seen and known all to his glory but for the good of that soul we can only say that with

Jeremiah here he found a blessing in it and he was greatly blessed this doesn't mean to say that he did not have further troubles and trials but as in days gone by that the Lord had been with him and delivered him now could he not hope hope in the Lord that the Lord would graciously appear and the Lord did I believe we said at the beginning there was all the darkness the clouds are overhead those dark thick clouds the storm clouds and suddenly brought into light there was that ray of light that shone into his soul and this is what we have this portion here before us the light shone in and now all that all his misery all his

[28 : 10] I was going to say complaining was he really complaining Graham's feeling not complaining against the Lord but his own heart we would not charge God foolishly would we in our right mind we wouldn't really complain against the Lord his dealings with us and when we feel that our lot is heart and there is that within and we feel that there are others who have such an easy peaceful path in life that there what can we do recall it to our mind and have hope that the Lord will graciously appear and the Lord did and the Lord will believe as they are theirs it's easy enough for us to speak in this way but to actually experience it and to experience deliverance to experience help in time of need to experience the Lord's gracious appearing love of God just turn if it will

I can remember it just for a moment it was in the over top of one of our hymns that we sung this afternoon it was that first verse in the 13th chapter of John's Gospel when Jesus knew that his hour was come and he should depart out of this world unto the Father having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end gave his life for them blessed be his name we do not know what Jeremiah saw there we do not know what a glimpse he had by the eye of faith of Jesus the son of God promised to take away the sin of the world that is the sins of his people but he had something there and there was none of his own experience it was by the

Holy Spirit sent down from heaven into his very soul it was the revelation there as it broke the snare it dispelled the cloud it gave him hope the groundwork of true and living faith the hope then springs eternal in a poor sinner's heart that as the Lord has gone before them thus far and brought them to that very real concern that he will never leave them nor forsake them but especially in their hour of need and the Lord came seems to be suddenly we know we know we know we know we know that these things shall we say would have been recorded in after days this is not we might say written down as he is actually experiencing them at the time and here he could look back upon that time and I record it and say that there see and understand the Lord's purposes in these things it is the purpose of grace it is the purpose of great mercy it is the purpose of his love that he will ever lead them forth by the right way that they might see and be brought to the

Lord to cry unto him that they may not be left to themselves you see the Lord knew how to deal with the children of Israel in the wilderness he knew how to deal even with Jeremiah here might say well was there a needs be was there a purpose well whether there was a needs be or not we do not know but there was a purpose it was to the glory of God and that purpose even this evening and it should be preached from and that purpose this evening it is for one or another well we trust it is you trust and I've been led to this I'm one of those that I have to wait upon the Lord for every word we might say for every thought in these things

I know there are times when we may preach from a certain word many different times in different places there are certain things we might be led into but still there is that waiting upon the Lord because the Lord knows where those waiting souls before that a poor man that stands in the pulpit what they need and that's what I see might be something your soul needs because it will be not to my honour and not to my glory but to the Lord in all these things I've often said give God the glory if your soul has been blessed and favoured from his word we have that promise that his word will not return unto him void there will be a fulfilling and accomplishing of all those things that he has purposed gave for his whole church the whole

[34 : 30] Israel of God but in the individual concerns the individual souls of those that the Lord has been pleased to bless and your soul it seems strange that Jeremiah in seeking to be as the Lord servant to encourage or to speak unto the people as the prophet of God and he should bring before them all his troubles no not strange at all because he was to be a sympathetic heart and mind and now we have Jesus who feels for his people and all their infirmities tempting all points like as we are yet without sin our great high priest that is passed into the heavens and we are exhorted to come without holy boldness to the mercy seat and to find grace to help in time of need

Jeremiah you feel poor soul you cannot pray perhaps Jeremiah was here also when I cried and shouted out my prayer and perhaps he said I'm not going to pray anymore you've been in that same place I give out I have not the strength I have not the breath I have not the will I have not the hope to pray anymore you still have to pray and so do you you still have to cry unto the Lord that the Lord would help that the Lord would deliver that the Lord would be with you this

I recall to my mind therefore have I heard it just comes into my mind that you've had two services faithfully loyally come and see me some of you weary some of you there are things before you in the coming week you'll need that strength for may you know what it is not only to be strengthened in your body but strengthened in mind and in spirit of what the Lord has done and perhaps this evening there's been the following on has been confirmed what I was really going to say was this although if we're governed by the time and by certain circumstances then there might say that there are moments to go a few moments five minutes or so to go to the end of the service and you see what is it you want you want that word to abide in your soul and we do not want to bring confusion

I'll just remind you of one circumstance you may have heard it and me speak of it one particular occasion when there was a word dropped into my spirit and I had to quote it and us ministers when a particular word comes upon us we might think in different ways of what we might say but it seems that the Lord said don't touch it and there was this one there that had been greatly tried and troubled and that very word had been given to them and so I spoke that word and I sat down and may the Lord be pleased to bless his own word here this evening amen I used singing in number 165 to the 2nd of the 129.

In number 165, Christ and his cross is on our feet. The mysteries that we speak are scandals of the Jews' theme and folly to the group.

[39 : 30] But so in life, if you are with joy, they see what wisdom, power and love shine in their day, the 10th or 100th.

And I think she can't do it. The End The End

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[44:08] Thank you.

Do thou forgive, we pray, all that thy pure eyes have seen amiss, that earth right this day.
And do pardon and cleanse us from her every sin.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[45 : 50] Thank you.

Thank you.