

The practical consequences of God's displeasure

(Quality: Very good)

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[0 : 00] The word of the Lord that is upon my heart to speak from this morning, you will find in the twelfth verse of the first chapter of the book of the Lamentations.

The chapter that we read together is our lesson, first chapter in Lamentations and at the verse 12. Is it nothing to you or ye that pass by?

Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

What a sad period in the world's history was that which associated with the person and the ministry of Jeremiah.

Now God is a sovereign and our lives are cast in certain situations, certain periods, certain circumstances which are totally beyond and outside of our control.

[1 : 27] The lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. You have been born in this time.

I was born to a great degree in a previous time when things were different then from what they are today. And I'm here to declare plainly that we've witnessed a deterioration in many respects in regard to our society, generally speaking, and those things which are brought before us by government and by law that seem at discord in certain respects with the pure teaching and standard of God's holy truth.

And my friends, to depart from the word of the Lord is to depart from peace. To experience the peace of God which passeth all understanding is found when our hearts are sanctified and our spirit is inclined to consider and obey what God has spoken.

Now God speaks to individuals and I believe there are those of us here this morning that can go to certain times and places when the word of the Lord was powerfully applied to our souls.

But God not only speaks to individuals He speaks to church to the church and to churches and we have a solemn responsibility as professing people to consider the will and way of God in the context of our profession as established churches but also and to this I rather hasten this morning in my meditation the solemnity of nations and the accountability of nations with respect to the position that God holds in their thinking and in the direction of society broadly speaking but especially in the direction of society as under government and under law and answerable to God for the prevailing conditions as God sees them.

[4 : 29] Now this text is taken in respect to the lamentation of Jeremiah as he experienced the developments of God in respect of the nation or nations of Israel and Judah the Jews the Lord's people who the Lord set apart among the nations of the earth for a particular blessing and they've had a blessing and we've had blessings through them as the Lord has blessed them and caused their influence and history to be a universal prophet.

and Jeremiah he comes into a situation not under the smile and blessing of God as periods of history before had proved to be.

I cite the kingdom of David the kingdom of Hezekiah the kingdom of Solomon there have been times of great blessing and you can go back can't you in your knowledge of the Bible to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob when the Lord was very good to Abraham and his seed and caused blessings to multiply in a very real sense and so we could gather up as it were a historic witness from our Bibles of things that actually took place in a nation and among nations and was it all a development of chance was it all a pattern of uncontrolled happenings or was there one upon a throne was there one who created all things was there one who brought into existence nations with boundaries was there one who looked down from heaven having given his word to his people watching their reaction to his revealed will and command my friends the Lord

God omnipotent reigneth and he reigneth today as much as all those days that I've covered in my simple presentation of history God is on the throne and God looks down from his throne to the world world and he looks down particularly to nations that he has caused to develop as the history of time has been fulfilled and God sees things as they are there's no question of deceiving him there's no question of creating an impression that's not absolutely true

God sees everything about everything in perfection and absolute accuracy now God gave his word to Moses Moses and Moses the Lord giver passed it on and the Lord raised up people faithful to his truth to declare the prophets and there were those individual persons who truly feared God who in their manner of life as it were not as I claim perfection in presenting any individual to you as a type an illustration but my friends there were those that realised they were under government that they were not just their own person to do their own thing that they were not their lives as it were didn't just develop on a succession of circumstances which for good or evil they had no control over at all the

[9 : 51] Lord God omnipotent reign I'm here this morning to preach to you at Attleboro by God's decree that gives me a terrible sense of responsibility because you are going into eternity having listened to what I have to say and my friends as we sung in our hymn oh that my lips should be sanctified and my heart made right before God to speak constructively that you may be equipped and prepared for eternity now the people of Judah and Israel too sinned against God they transgressed the evident mind of the Most High they were favoured with a gift to know in a very wonderful way what the will of the

Lord was for them Moses was given the tables of the law to declare to the people in consequence there were a succession of men that God sent with the message to reinforce generation by generation in the proclamation of his word and this God hasn't spoken and then shall I say left as silence to prevail which as it were gives license to people generation by generation to please themselves we're accountable every generation for what we say and what we do as before

God and there is a reaction there's a reaction to what we do there's a reaction to the way we choose to go there was a great reaction against the Jews because they chose to go their own way and we read in the lesson and you read through Jeremiah and the book Lamentations and you'll appreciate that they'd rejected they'd rejected God's way and they'd chosen to go their own way and they thought they were going to benefit by pleasing themselves but what did they bring they brought indescribable trouble indescribable trouble to their contrary and rebellious ways toward their maker my friends there's one indescribable and inescapable consequence to sin and that's trouble trouble and oh how solemn it is when we are brought personally to have to say my sins have procured this to me to me

God who has a sovereign right to execute his will has seen my antagonistic spirit toward him his will and his ways and therefore in mercy he's come out of his place to chasten an offending child whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth there's not a child of God a stranger to heavenly discipline and heavenly discipline leads us to a twofold conviction one there is an almighty God on the throne and the second thing is there is a father in heaven there is a father in heaven a father of all his family a father of all his chosen one who so loved his people that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish there's multitude of reasons why God should have cast them away from his presence and sent them to hell they've got nothing as it were to boast of as a claim for God's mercy but God freely and fully in his love and grace sent in the due time his son what to accomplish the pardon of sin the pardon of sin and the reconciling of God in his attitude towards sinners that they may know forgiveness that they may know peace and pardon from the one who they so blatantly opposed rejected and sinned against well now

Judah I want to look at this in the national context I'm very concerned about the prevailing situation in our nation being a consequence of our national sin my friends things are not happening haphazardly they're happening under the sovereign control of the most high God who's looking with disfavour upon this once greatly favoured land into which you and I have been born and I've got no place in the world that I'd rather belong to than to England because I see so many blessings in the heritage naturally received by being born in this part of

[16 : 53] God's world look a Christian nation and look at the world in the creative glory of him that made all things what a lovely country we've got what a lovely outlook there is naturally speaking God made everything and placed everything in his will in necessary positions and places and he's cast our lot in a lovely country he's given us so many many advantages over most other nations in the world with us little England or little Britain if you like because I want to include the Scotch and the Irish and the Welsh too because God has favoured them as well as their own the

British Isles in the world has a wonderful aspect that thousands want to leave their homelands and come here to live look at your immigration statistics and why do they come they see our country better than their own and they want to leave they're willing to leave their roots they're leaving their culture and everything and they want to come here and partake of the blessings and benefits that God has bestowed upon these little islands insignificant upon the globe if you look at the world abroad great great areas of sand and destitution and desolation but here we are seed time and harvest summer and winter all adding as it were to the picturesque scene in which you and I are caused to live in and enjoy words just

I get lost in words I feel I can't exaggerate sufficiently the pleasures that are lawfully given to us by the creator in our specific experiences as born in Britain God not only in his creative mercy but in the fullness of his grace brought the gospel to our country not immediately not immediately it was virtually a heathen country with the other countries of the world for a time but in the fullness of time God in his wisdom sent the truth of the gospel to our country he raised up men in our land to take the truth of God's word and to declare it and to publish it nobody nobody would find hindrance in seeking to read the word of God in their own tongue you think of what a blessing it is to have a

Bible that tells us the truth beyond question the truth the truth about us personally the truth about us collectively the truth about us nationally it's all in here it's all in here none can say God didn't tell us God told us plainly by print and by preaching the gospel among those anointed and sent to our country through the darker periods of early history and more so as it has multiplied and spread the truth abroad well now we're consequently accountable to the blessings

God has showered upon us I believe it's right to say and I don't want to compare detrimentally without substance in my thoughts I believe that generations especially the reformation and subsequent to the reformation through the history of our land that the fear of the Lord has had a great influence on the whole of our society but my dear friends I say this as a member with you of the present situation that there's been an awful decline in respect of God his word his day and the relative responsibilities and attitudes of man to man in a

[23 : 06] Christian context we're not living in the context of God making us part of a society we're living largely for self interest aren't we the word of God said thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart with all thy soul with all thy strength and thy neighbour as thyself and my friends the consideration of neighbourly responsibility is largely swallowed up in an awful demand that I want my rights I want my needs satisfied in my own way and for my own pleasure God is not pleased with us and God has ways of chastening us and I'm here this morning to suggest to you certain ways in which we are the subjects of divine displeasure is there peace in our society is there peace in our society is there prosperity in our society are we not trembling as various things are happening in the context of the nation do we see this awful word recession taking hold leaving as it were some of our qualified young people to leave university and come into society and there's no place for them they can't find an occupation as it were to reward them for their many many years of devoted learning look at our finances look at our finances look at those in control of our banking you say but you're getting you're getting away from this my friends

I'm trying to say that God is punishing us God is punishing us as a nation is it nothing to you or ye that pass by are you just living as it were in a fog and it's just nothing to you you're not thinking that you're part of a nation you're part of a society that's under judgment and in consequence you're not enjoying the benefits of Christianity as Christianity exercised and applied is for the good and welfare of people on earth as well as people in heaven not to the same degree on earth but

God is merciful God is gracious to his people and those that obey him seek to follow him do his will and consider his ways God smiles God smiles and my friends I'm here as a witness to say one smile of God resting upon your spirit can bring you pleasures that never can be purchased with a thousand million one smile one blissful smile of life exceeds all the pleasures that can be acquired by selfish determination and ambition under the sun well no Judah was under judgment and the nations were witnessing is it nothing to you all ye that pass by you know is it nothing to you all ye that pass by we're we're known aren't we among the nations of the earth we're being greatly humbled just think of entering into a war in

Afghanistan and Iran and for years witnessing certain of our young men being sacrificed and we can't bring it to a successful conclusion we've been struggling we've been fighting we've been sending our troops and we've been doing this that and the other there's no constructive successful victory is there it's elusive and my friends who's preventing peace in consequence of human effort God I see the Afghanistan situation I see these awful experiences of people being brought home to

Lynham airport with a union jack over their coffin and I think of the poor relatives I think of the poor people children that have lost their father wives have lost their husbands and so forth and the consequent parents have lost their children and I think of the multiplied and what what is the cause some of us remember when God gave us victory over a mighty mighty threatening force in 1945 when in 1940 and 41 the cause looked lost and there were plenty of nations in the world ready to write us off as a thing of the past but God came in God came in he caused

[30 : 21] America he caused Japan to upset the Americans and the Americans came into war and the combined efforts of the allies brought under God's good hand victory and we're still reaping the benefit to this present moment of time my friends circumstances are under control the will of God is fulfilled he can give peace he can take peace away he can overcome the evil devices of wicked men and yet he can suffer those things to continue like running swords to chasten a sinful people is it nothing to you or ye that pass by are you analysing the situation are you looking facts in the face are you saying why is this why is this look our churches are virtually empty

I read in the newspaper yesterday the church of England is nearly bankrupt bankrupt nearly bankrupt our churches are nearly empty our prisons are full and they let even murderers out short of their sentences because they don't know what to do with the crowds that deserve punishment justly pronounced by the judges of our nation is it nothing to you all ye that pass by and now I must hasten to it and amen look I'm a grandfather I love my grandchildren I would that they saw better days

I would that they might live to see God sparing the earth where the prisons are emptier and the churches well stocked with prayerful and practical believing people I would that the family context was Christianized in outlook father in his place mother in her place the children recognizing the benefit of the superior knowledge that parents possess children are given into the hands of their parents their parents furnished with experiences through 20 30 40 years they're able to counsel their children as to the difference between right and wrong the difference between the favor of

God and the punishment of God for wrongdoing is it nothing to you or you that pass by are you suffering the consequence of national decline without any impression being given to you or any dismay at the thought of the heritage that our generation is passing to the next generation and the next generation still as our children are growing up into the occupancy of the positions that we now hold is it nothing to you is it nothing to you my friends if it's nothing to us how stony hearted we must be how poor is our assessment of our responsibility and the succession of influence that we're shedding upon those that are seeing our example and following in our course of life is it nothing to you is it nothing to you

I believe that there's high time in our nation for us to stop and consider our ways and I'm here to declare to you as a professed minister of Jesus Christ that there is one remedy one remedy national repentance national repentance before God and while we're pleased with our situation and while we're taking our foreign holidays and while we're running about in our motor cars and while our storehouses are well stocked I say we're endeavoured that God's made us for his glory God set us upon this earth that he might be glorified and there's multitudes going through a week without even the thought of God except as they might be sadly inclined to use his name in blasphemy is it nothing to you my friends let's get on our knees let's get on our knees there is a future prospect in the mercy of God and God grants restoration to repentant souls

[37 : 07] God brings as it were out of the earth a harvest a harvest of blessing as he sees his people turn again to him weeping for their sins and their violations of his known will and way and desiring grace to be forgiven and grace to live in the light of his word is it nothing to you all ye that pass by behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his anger is it nothing to you is it nothing to you is your head in the clouds or are you living as it were in the knowledge that things are not as they ought to be things are not as they used to be we've fallen and we've brought many many punishments in our rebellion in our wayward determination to please ourselves irrespective of what our maker requires of us and made us capable of producing and practicing

I've hoped to speak this evening on a different note is there nothing to you I hope this evening the Lord may help me to direct our minds to the perfect answer against all the activities of evil whether they be in the world or whether they be in the church whether they be in our own hearts and lives there is an answer the Lord is good and gracious slow to anger and of great mercy he will not always chide he will not always keep his anger forever repentance is the herald of restoration recovery prosperity and peace

I know the principle I brought to you this morning is worthy of our consideration when you hear of a certain thing happening now I heard yesterday and I heard yesterday of a terrible train train happening in Russia 26 killed and 120 injured and so on and you say well oh dear that's very very difficult for the Russians to cope with such a reaction against authority and these people that are determined to get their own thing and go their own way are blowing up trains irrespective of the consequence causing sadness and sorrow death and destruction to multitudes my friends

God's the God of Russia God's the God of every nation of the earth let us turn try our ways return to the Lord and see that he will reestablish reestablish his former favors yet again that our children and our grandchildren the Lord sparing the earth will know much better days than these trying days through which we're now called to pass bear with me forgive if you feel I've overstayed my limits I close the service saying I'm a happy man because the Lord is my

God and I've sinned he chastens I know it I experience it but when we bow and kiss the rod when we confess our sins mourn over our departures from him he comes in his rich mercy and blesses blesses us and we wouldn't change places with a soul when so favored of the most high God he that has made my heaven secure will hear all good provide while Christ is rich I can't be poor what can I want beside amen