

***“Punishing Poetry”***  
The Book of Lamentations  
September 2, 2012

**VIDEO:**                   *“Where I Belong”*

**Intro: This world is a “mess in motion”**

Example of looking at totally unnecessary tragedy... ***wrath in the aftermath!***

**Such is the case with the O.T. book of Lamentations...**

We’re going to see the ***“reality”*** or God’s wrath ***today***...  
...so you won’t ***require*** God’s wrath ***tomorrow***.

**Context:           “The Word of God” in 2012...**

- A.    Historical books...
- B.    Psalms & Proverbs (“wisdom”)
- C.    Prophets... (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk...)
- D.    Lamentations:
  - Jerusalem has just been destroyed...
  - People had been warned...
  - Nightmares are now becoming reality...
  - God comes as both a Lamb & a Lion...

\*\*\*       ***Lamentations = “the Aftermath of Wrath”***

To give you a “big picture” perspective...

\*\*\*       We are ***telling & learning*** God’s story; in His “truth in love”

- E.    It won’t be long until we cross over into the N.T.
  - 1.     *Pre-CROSS-Christ*
  - 2.     *At-CROSS-Christ*
  - 3.     *Post-CROSS-Christ*
  
  - 4.     *CROSS-ignoring-Cretans*
  - 5.     *CROSS-saving-Children*
  - 6.     *CROSS-carrying-Christians*

T/S: Back to today's chapter of God's overarching love-story... Lamentations...

III. To rightly interpret Lamentations...

you need to have 2 critical perspectives:

- **Historical perspective** - i.e. "what's going on..."
- **Grammatical perspective** - "how it's being told"

A. Lamentations = 100% Poetry.... 5 poems combined into 1 poem...

1. Hebrew poetry:

a. Rhythm over Rhyme

b. Stories are told thru "Systems"

- Acrostics
- Chiastic "archs"
- Lamentations = 1&5; 2&4; ...climax = 3...

NOTE: God's anger in EVERY chapter!

2. Knowing "what you're reading" & "how to read it" = Key to interpret!

\*\*\* We will study it in 3 tiers...

1&5.... Catastrophe to Crying Out

2&4... Cause to Consequences...

3... Cure!

## I. **CATASTROPHY** ("She" = Jerusalem/people)

**1 How lonely sits the cityThat was full of people!She has become like a widowWho was *once* great among the nations!She who was a princess among the provincesHas become a slave!**

**2 She weeps bitterly in the nightAnd her tears are on her cheeks;She has none to comfort herAmong *all her lovers*. All her *friends* have dealt treacherously with her;They have become her enemies.**

**Note: Change... contrast... cunning...**

**Note: "NONE to COMFORT her amongst lovers/friends"**

**5 ...the Lord has caused her grief*Because of* the multitude of her transgressions...**

**Note: Good God gives grief... to great & growing sin!**

**8 Jerusalem sinned greatly, Therefore she has become an unclean thing. All who honored her despise her... 9... She did not consider her future. Therefore she has fallen astonishingly; She has no comforter...**

**Note: Great sin = Great stain... and great stain brings distain!**

**Note: Sin is ALWAYS short-sighted! ("*did not consider future*")**

**Note: Amazing grace... gives way to "astonishing falls"**

**Note: "She has NO COMFORTER..."**

**12 ...Look and see if there is any pain like my pain Which was severely dealt out to me, Which the Lord inflicted on the day of His fierce anger.**

**Note: Whatever God gives (pleasure OR pain) sets the standard!**

**Note: God delivers discipline & pain in appropriate proportions.**

**Note: The Lord both... inflicts... AND gets fiercely angry!**

**14 "The yoke of my transgressions is bound; By His hand they are knit together. They have come upon my neck...**

**Note: "YOKE" – contrast "our yoke" & "Christ's yoke"**

**16 "...I weep... Because far from me is a comforter, One who restores my soul... 17 Zion stretches out her hands; There is no one to comfort her...**

**Note: "...far from me is a comforter..."**

**Note: THE Comforter... "One who restores my soul"**

**Note: Even when "Zion stretches out her hands; there is NO ONE to comfort her..."**

**18 "The Lord is righteous; For I have rebelled against His command...**

**Note: God is both right & righteous to punish me, you... sin!**

**19 "I called to my lovers, but they deceived me... 21...There is no one to comfort me...**

**Note: Sin creates façades, fakes, & phonies... devils deceive!**

**Note: Poem 1 ends... "There is NO ONE to COMFORT me"**

**Note: Imprecatory prayer laced in... see vv.21-22**

**V. CRY** ("We" = the exiles & the remnant)

**5:2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,**

**15 The joy of our hearts has ceased; Our dancing has been turned into mourning. 16 The crown has fallen from our head; Woe to us, for we have sinned!**

**19 You, O Lord, rule forever... 21 Restore us to You, O Lord, that we may be restored...**

**VIDEO:** "Hope of the Broken" (Selah)

**II. CAUSE** ("He" = God)

**2:1 ...the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion With a cloud in His anger!**

**5 The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all its palaces, He has destroyed its strongholds And multiplied in the daughter of Judah Mourning and moaning.**

**14 Your prophets have seen for you False and foolish visions; And they have not exposed your iniquity So as to restore you from captivity, But they have seen for you false and misleading oracles.**

**17 The Lord has done what He purposed...**

**22 ...there was no one who escaped or survived In the day of the Lord's anger.**

#### **IV. CONSEQUENCES** ("They" = the nations/foes)

**4:1 How dark the gold has become, How the pure gold has changed!**

**5 Those who ate delicacies Are desolate in the streets; Those reared in purple Embrace ash pits.**

**6 For the iniquity of the daughter of my people Is greater than the sin of Sodom...**

**10 The hands of compassionate women Boiled their own children; They became food for them Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.**

**11 The Lord has accomplished His wrath, He has poured out His fierce anger; And He has kindled a fire in Zion Which has consumed its foundations.**

**12 The kings of the earth did not believe, Nor *did* any of the inhabitants of the world, That the adversary and the enemy Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.**

**13 ...because of the sins of her prophets And the iniquities of her priests, Who have shed in her midst The blood of the righteous... *the Lord has scattered them, He will not continue to regard them...***

**21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom... *But* the cup will come around to you as well,**

**22 *The punishment of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion; He will exile you no longer. But He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; He will expose your sins!***

VIDEO: "Be My Heart, Hands, Voice" (Selah)

**"III. CURE** ("I" = author/poet)

**1** I am the man who has seen affliction Because of the rod of His wrath.  
**2** He has driven me and made me walk In darkness and not in light.  
**3** Surely against me He has turned His hand Repeatedly all the day.

**18** "My strength has perished, And so has my hope from the Lord."

**22 *The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; Great is our faithfulness.***

**24** "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

**57** *You drew near when I called on You; You said, "Do not fear!"*

**58** *O Lord, You have pleaded my soul's cause; You have redeemed my life.*

VIDEO: "I Am Redeemed" (Big Daddy Weave)

How about you... will you choose to be...

***Redeemed or Rejected?***

***Worship or Wrath?***

**66** You (God) will pursue them in anger and destroy them...

### **Heaven or Hell?**

*God tells us the truth about His wrath...  
so we'll choose worship instead.*

Often... **"Lamentable Lessons are Lessons Long Learned!"** - JDP

With that said... **dear family, friends, faithful, & faith-less...**

REMNANT... Lamentations cries out...

REMEMBER!

REMIND!

REPENT!

REDEEMED

### **Important:**

*Remember... There are no "victims" in hell!*

Forewarned is to be forearmed.

Let's Pray...

**Songs: "I Look To You"** (Selah)

**"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"**

**"The Way"** (Jeremy Camp)