

Sept 11th 2005: Lamentations: OT Review: Chapter 5

The book of Lamentations.....made up of 5 sad songs of mourning

They are songs read by...every year on the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple
In traditional RC liturgy.....during the last 3 days of holy week...leading up to Good
In the present time.....those that **read them aloud**...each week.....at the Wailing Wall

There is a special beauty about them....in their structure

4 of the 5..... have 22-----Hebrew Alphabet

The central chapter.....3.....has 66

Altho no authormost accept.....written by Jeremiah.....**after**.....& before
Legend has it....wrote it with tears...as he sat....north wall....knoll called Golgotha

If sodoesn't surprise me.....For the pain expressed by J in these laments.....
..gives us a small insight.....heart of Jesus

The pain He felt.....for His own people.....Would prefer to face Judgment alone...
..rather than receive Him as Saviour

Listen to the words Jesus spoke....as recorded by Matthew **23:37-39**
And at the time of His triumphal entry.....Luke tells us in 19:41-44.....

Charles Wesley saw a strong connection....between Lamentations 1:12-14.....& all
that Jesus endured.....in our place

Lam 1:12-14 reads.....Wesley's hymn begins:-

*All ye that pass by to Jesus draw nigh, To you is it nothing that Jesus should die?
Your ransom and peace, your surety He is; Come see if there ever was sorrow like His*

Jeremiah associated himself.....with the sin and the suffering of his people →even tho
He uses these 5 songs to express....the different reasons behind the immense sorrow

In chapter 1.....emphasis is on the Destruction of Jerusalem.....v1....v8.....

In chapter 2....we read of the anger of Jehovah.....2:1.....2:17....

In chapter 4.....we hear about the siege of Jerusalem.....about women cooking

In chapter 5.....account of the state of the people after...ends with a prayer 4 restoration

And then ..bang in the middle of the book.....In the largest chapter of the three.....
And right close to its centre.....there are words which are incredible

Words which give a picture of the heart of God.....open wide to His erring children
3:19-33.....

In these sad songs.....recognition of how much this judgment was deserved
They had sinned....failed to heed the numerous warnings
Consequently.....no complaint against God for injustice.....He Is Just

It is that.....which makes this statement about God's mercy...
compassion...unfailing love.....so amazingly wonderful

(This last week.....read about the terrible things happened in Jerusalem →New Orleans

I'm in no way suggesting.....God's Judgment

But it made me realise how Jeremiah must have felt...as he looked on his city
On Jerusalem.....that seemed so unchangeable

And saw the destruction of her people....and her beauty----
A destruction...even surpassed

Yet He knew.....that God's faithfulnesscould still be counted on
God's love....would never stop flowing their way

**God has not changed
His compassion.....mercy....unfailing love.....
Reaches out right now to those in New orleans**

And it reaches out to you and me
But for any person to receive it....in its fulness.....There is a need to come to Him thro
His compassion never fails.....His unfailing love.... And its ours thro the cross

When we link up with God.....Accept Him as our Father....and act as His children
Then we can be certain.....each new day....whatever it holds.....also contain faithfulness
And He will keep us.....and one day welcome us

(Story of the rose.....p158...)..... He...and my acception of His sacrifice
is the reason I know that God has me close to His heart

(Story of the night light.....p91..)

God does carry us close to His heart.....Each one of us
But we have to want to be there

Jeremiah knew that

.→As far as the Jews were concerned
He knew that there sins had separated.....The destruction all around....proof of that
And he also knew....that they just had to cry out to God for restoration

So that's how Lamentations ends → 5:21

That may well be the case for you too today

You recognize that you have moved away.....No longer have the closeness
There is a lament in your heart.....

God who has never stopped being faithful.....Calls you to return to Him

Or it may be that you have never opened your heart to Jesus.....

Never turned to Him in recognition....of your need...

He died for you.....Upon the cross He took your place

He wants to turn your sadness into joy.....Mourning into dancing.