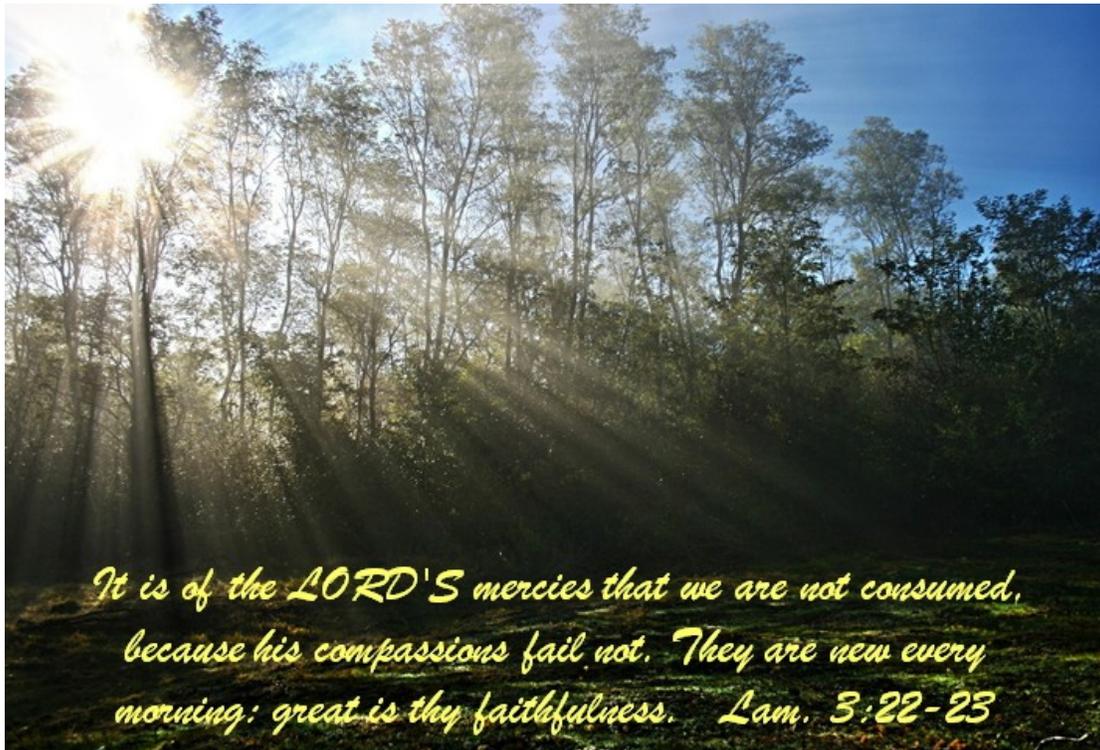


GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Lamentations 1:1-9 & 3:21-26



Introduction:

- a. The book of Lamentations is a series of dirges, or songs of mourning.
- b. It was written against the backdrop of the Babylonian invasion and destruction of Jerusalem.
- c. Why is Lamentations important?
 1. Like Job, Lamentations pictures a man of God troubled over the results of evil and suffering.
 2. A once great city experienced the judgment of a Holy God, and the results were devastating.
 3. Even in the midst of the frightful darkness shines a beacon of mercy to all those suffering.
- d. In this book, you can **feel** the awful sufferings endured by the people at the hand of their enemies.
- e. God recorded these events to bring glory and honor to His Name.
- f. The writer is believed to be Jeremiah, known as the *Weeping Prophet*.
- g. Jeremiah's life reveals a portrait of unending sadness and deep depression.
 1. He received an unwanted call to be a prophet - Jer. 1:5-6.
 2. He was called to a ministry of preaching judgment - **Jer. 1:9-10 (READ)**.
Note: There are 4 negative verbs and only 2 positive verbs. It is twice as hard to undo that which is evil as it is to build that which is good.
 3. He was forbidden to marry to give himself more fully to proclaiming the impending judgment of God - Jer. 16:1-13.
He felt the stinging insults of the people as he cried out to them to change their ways!
 4. He was a man of deep sadness and he wept openly about the sins of his people - **Jer. 9:1-6 (READ)**.
 5. In a ministry that spanned some 50 years, there is no record of even one convert.
Not one soul fell on their face beside him to mourn over the sins of the people!
 6. He was imprisoned by King Zedekiah because he did not approve of Jeremiah's preaching - Jer. 32:2-5.
 7. After Jerusalem fell and was taken captive, the prophet does not gloat or take an "I told you so" attitude.
 8. He becomes broken and willingly joins in suffering with them - Lamentations 1: 1-5 (READ).

9. After being rejected, hated, mocked, imprisoned, ignored; after seeing his beloved Jerusalem ransacked, Desecrated, and destroyed; after experiencing the horrors of war, and the brutality of the enemy, Jeremiah stood forth amid the rubble of the city and lifted his voice **in praise** to God for His great, unfailing faithfulness to His people, **Lam. 3:22-23 (READ). Demonstrates willful determination!**
- h. How was this possible?
 1. Jeremiah had a firm grasp on the reality of just **Who God is!**
 2. Jeremiah knew that even when everything went bad and fell apart, God would still be God and that God would be eternally faithful to His people, Lam. 3:21 (READ)!
 3. Jeremiah found hope in a hopeless situation because he believed in the faithfulness of His great God.
- i. We all go through times when life seems to unravel right before our eyes.
- j. When those times come we must also remember the blessed assurance that God is faithful!
- k. The Bible gives overwhelming evidence of the infinite, unchanging faithfulness of our Great God!
 1. The word “*faithfulness*” in verse 23 means “*firmness, fidelity, steadiness, steadfastness.*”
 2. We can be certain as we face the storms, the trials, and the dark valleys of life, God will **ALWAYS** prove Himself to be steadfast and faithful.
 3. Those four precious words show how Jeremiah was able to endure the trials.
- l. Some thoughts on what those words teach us about the great, unfailing faithfulness of the God.

I. Verse 22a - GOD IS FAITHFUL IN HIS GRACE

A. *Mercies* - is a very expressive word that conveys all the ideas of: *love, grace, mercy, faithfulness, goodness, and devotion.*

B. His Grace Saves Us

1. This word pictures God as *the Divine lover of men.*
2. The New Testament equivalent is God’s *love and grace.*
3. Jeremiah is remembering that it was the pure mercy of God that brought Israel out of their slavery.
4. It was mercy that **kept** them a redeemed people in spite of their failures and wanderings.
5. It is the same mercy (grace) that reached us in our lost, doomed condition, Eph. 2:1-4.
6. We could not possibly reach up unto God, so God came down to us!
7. He came in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ to die for our sins, Phil. 2:5-8.
8. He came in the Person of the Holy Spirit to draw us so that we might be saved, Jn. 16:7-11; Jn. 6:44.

C. His Grace Secures Us

1. Grace not only sought us out when we were lost in sin; grace keeps us in our saved condition.
2. We are prone to failure and to spiritual wandering.
3. If our salvation relied upon our ability to be faithful to the Lord, none of us would ever be saved.
4. Thankfully, salvation is the Lord’s doing and not ours!
5. We are saved by His grace and we are kept by His grace, 1 Pt. 1:5; Ps. 37:23-24, 28; Jn. 4:13-14.
6. Thank God for His unfailing, unchanging, faithful grace!

II. Verse 22b-23 - GOD IS FAITHFUL IN HIS GIFTS

A. *Compassion* - This word literally means “*womb*”.

1. It means “*to be moved in the heart out of love for another.*”
2. It is a picture of the grace of God **actively** working in the life of the believer.
3. As we pass through the storms and the dark valleys, we do not do so alone!
4. God knows our path **and** our stumbles and His grace gives us all we need for our journey.

B. Verse 23b God’s Gifts Are Faithful

1. God did not promise an easy road, but He did promise His grace would be sufficient, II Cor. 12:9.
2. Grace is defined as “*The unmerited love and favor of God.*”
3. Yes, but it means so much more than that. It refers to “*the strength of God to face battles and to have*

victory under times of difficulty.”

4. With that in mind, we should always remember that no matter what life sends our way, we can be confident the Lord will give us the necessary strength to face **ALL** the battles of life.
 5. If you do not think so, read the promise in **Is. 43:1-3 (READ)**.
 6. **The Gift of His Presence** - Heb. 13:5; Mt. 28:20.
 - a. These verses reveal the great truth that God is **ALWAYS** present with His children.
 - b. Even when He cannot be seen or felt, He is there.
 - c. If you cannot feel God in your life, I challenge you to come to the place where you can trust Him fully.
 - d. He **WILL NOT** force Himself upon you.
 - e. Lost sinner, if you are determined to live a life of sin and end up in Hell, He will let you!
 - f. Christian, if you are determined to serve sin and suffer loss, He will allow that also.
 7. **The Gift of His Performance** - Eph. 3:20
 - a. Focus on the word “*able*” in Ephesians!
 - b. That verse means God is greater than any problem you now have, or will ever have!
 - c. God will take care of you - **ALWAYS!** He promised - what else do you need?
 8. **The Gift Of His Provision** - Phil. 4:19 (Read); Mt. 6:25-33; Ps. 37:25
 - a. **Please** hear what the Lord means: **NOTE: He said *Need not Greed!***
 - b. God has promised to take care of His children, and He will!
 - c. His idea may be different than yours, but that is where faith in the trustworthiness of God comes in.
 - d. We **must** come to the place where we are willing to trust God to take care of us in the way **He** chooses.
 - e. Do you really believe that the Lord is absolutely faithful?
 - f. Do you believe that He has your best interests in mind?
 - g. Are you confident of the fact that God will provide for your needs?
 - h. Well then, perhaps you should act like it!!!!
 9. **The Gift Of His Person** - Heb. 13:8; Mal. 3:6.
 - a. These verses reveal the Truth about God’s nature that makes Him reliable at all times.
 - b. That Truth relies on the simple fact that He does not change - **EVER!!!!**
 - c. God is the same today as He *has been* forever, and the same as He *will be* forever.
 - d. He was faithful in the beginning and He will be faithful throughout eternity.
- C. Verse 23 **God’s Gifts Are Fresh**
1. According to this verse, the mercies of God are new or fresh every morning.
 2. The word ‘*new*’ means: *fresh* or a *new thing*.
 3. We do not have to worry about there not being enough.
 4. God’s mercies are infinite!
 5. But, God’s mercy is like manna, you must seek it every day, it cannot be stored up.
 6. Mt. 6:34, “*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*”
 7. Every new day brings its own set of burdens and problems, so each day you may (or must) depend on an unfailing, all-sufficient, supply of God’s marvelous, matchless, wonderful, amazing Mercy and Grace.

III. Verses 24-26 GOD IS FAITHFUL IN HIS GOODNESS

The word “*good*” has the idea of: *pleasant, agreeable, and excellent*.

It refers to the character of God.

It reminds us that God is always occupied in that which is best for His children.

A. Verse 24a - He Is A Satisfier

1. God is described as the soul’s “*portion*.” This word means *allotment, portion, or inheritance*.
2. He is all that a person needs to satisfy their soul, Ps. 103:5; Ps. 107:9.
3. God may not give you the things you *desire*; but He will give you that which is best, and He will give you that which can “*truly*” satisfy the soul, Rom. 8:28.

B. Verse 24b-25 - **He Is A Sustainer**

1. God will never fail those who place their trust in Him, Is. 49:23; Rom. 10:11.
2. Not one single Word of any of His precious promises will ever fail, Mt. 5:18; Ps. 119:89-90; Is. 40:8.
3. If you *truly* come to Him for salvation, He will not send you away lost, Jn. 6:37, Jn. 10:28.
4. If you look to Him for the needs in your life, you will never be disappointed, Lk. 12:32.
5. He will sustain you through this life and throughout eternity.

C. Verse 26 - **He Is A Savior**

1. In this context Jeremiah is saying, *“Those who wait upon the Lord will see Him bring them out of their troubles and trials. He will not fail His children, but, in His time, He will deliver them from all the dark valleys.”*
2. We need to remember that God is able to deliver both saint and sinner.
3. Dear friends, I would remind you that God knows exactly where you are today.
Yes sir, **EXACTLY!!! Is that comforting or frightening ???**
4. He knows what you are going through, Job 23:10.
5. He will not forsake you; He will faithfully keep you and bring through, in **His time**, Ps. 34:15-22.
6. If you are lost or hurting, it may seem as if you are doomed and without hope.
7. Not true! God can and will save your soul by His marvelous grace, if you will but look to Him in faith.

Conclusion:

1. Great is the faith that can stand amid the trials of life and still declare the praises of God.
2. Jeremiah was that kind of a believer. Are you?

During the early years of missionary activity in China, all members of one family accepted Christ as Savior, except the youngest boy. Later he came to his father and said he wanted to confess publicly that he also had received Christ as his Savior. The father thought he was too young, and explained to the young boy that he might fall back if he made a profession when he was so young. To his well-meaning father, the young boy gave this touching reply, *“Jesus has promised to carry the lambs in His arms. I am only a little boy. It will be easier for Jesus to carry me.”* The simplicity and genuineness of the boy's faith made a profound impression on the father. He quickly realized that his son knew exactly what he was doing. Soon thereafter that the young boy made known his faith in Christ and followed the Lord in Believer's Baptism.

Simplicity and ***genuineness*** is key to a Christian life well lived!

Another key thought is in Lam. 3:26 - **“... hope and quietly wait ...”**

As you and I face the battles, the burdens, the valleys, the storms, and the trials of life, we must **ALWAYS** remember: **We are His little lambs and He is well able to carry us safely through.**

What kind of battles are you fighting today?

Lay them at the Throne of Grace and trust in His unchanging, unfailing faithfulness.

If you are lost and need to be saved, you can come to Jesus today and He will save your soul.

If you are walking through a deep and dark valley and need help; God will provide the help you need.

If you are struggling with the flesh and some besetting sin; there is help for that as well.

I hope and pray that you can proclaim, as Jeremiah did: **“Great is Thy faithfulness.”**