

Lamentations 1:1-2:22

Read chapter 1

Israel is in exile at the time of writing Lamentations. What sort of picture is painted in chapter 1?

What is the reason for Israel's grief? (chapter 1) What warnings have they been given in the past?

In what way might we understand a little of the trauma Israel is suffering?

We tend to think that if we wander away from God to other gods that we will be popular and fit in with society, but in v8 what picture do we get?

Read chapter 2

What does it mean in verse 1 that God has "not remembered His footstool"?

According to verse 22 who escapes the judgment of God?

What sort of picture do chapters 1-2 paint in your eyes?

As Israel bears the pain of God's wrath here in chapters 1 & 2 we get a feel for what awaits on Judgment Day. We see what it is like to stand guilty before God. Israel here suffer the wrath of God. Jesus at the cross suffers the wrath of God (see Mark 15:33-34). How do we avoid the wrath of God?

How is all this judgment and distress a just judgment?

How have we been warned of what is to come? What is it that makes us guilty before God?

How is it that we come to God with such confidence given what we see here (see also Hebrews 9:27)?

Lamentations 3:1-66

Who do you call when you are in trouble? Why?

Right through Lamentations so far it is clear that Israel are in serious trouble from their enemies. But even bigger than this, their enemies taking over is seen as a judgment from God. Here in chapter 3 we get a very personal account of the suffering that Israel is going through.

Read Lamentations 3

What does the author describe in 3:1-18? What view of God does this give us?

How do you think sin, judgment and suffering **might** be linked?

What is the author's response in 3:19-39? How does this encourage and instruct us in times of difficulty and suffering?

What is the humble response of those who are suffering in 3:40-57? What realisation and change of thinking came about from 40-57?

Where was God in the suffering and tragedy of the Exile of Jerusalem?

What is Israel's future despite where they find themselves?

From chapter 3 what do you think is the right response to sin, judgment and suffering?

Where is our only hope going to be in the Day of Judgment? Why is this the case?

What major thoughts comfort the author in Lamentations 3:55-66? How might these ideas relate to your situation and the situation of the church, and be of comfort?

Lamentations 4:1-22

How would you feel to have to share every thought, deed and action? What might be the result of such sharing?

Read Lamentations 4

What is the state of the city compared to its former glory? (vv. 1-2)

What is the result in the punishment of the people? (4:1-22)

In reading Lamentations 4, who escapes God's punishment?

How might this point us forward to the final judgment?

Is there any hope in this chapter for God's people? (v. 22)

Is this punishment just? Why/Why not?

The demise of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians and Edomites came about as a judgment and discipline for God's people. They were warned over and over again but failed to take any notice.

In reading Romans 5:6-11 who is God's forgiveness available to? Where is our hope for this forgiveness?

What is the difference between the consequence of sin and forgiveness of sin?

What does it mean for you to be forgiven?

How is your life, thinking, actions, speech being changed by the fact that you are forgiven?

Lamentations 5:1-22

Read Lamentations 5

What is the state of the nation in this chapter?

Compare the Israel who entered the promised land to the one we see here in chapter 5. What has changed?

What is so sad about 5:15? How does help summarise where God's people are, at this point?

What encouraging signs do we see in 5:16-19? How might this be a helpful response for us at times also?

What is so important about prayer and confession?

Note: Again we note the catalogue of people whose lives have been shattered by the loss of Jerusalem. Women, princes, elders, men etc, etc. This shows the full force and how wide spread judgment is.

How does 5:5 represent human failure and what failure produces? What does Jesus say about being weary and having no rest?

Read Luke 2:25-32

Who did Simeon say salvation is for?

Where is the hope of all people today?