Learning Lamentations – Part 16

A Jet Tour of Lamentations

* Background
  + Author: Jeremiah
    - He was called by God to prophecy to “the nations” (Jer. 1:5), but especially to the southern kingdom of Israel, called “Judah”
    - He preached during the reign of Josiah, Johoiakim, and Zedekiah, kings of Judah (Jer. 1:2-3)
    - He ministered for over 4 decades (625-586 BC)
  + History
    - Prophecy about faithless Israel (Josh 23:15-16 – 800 years prior)
    - Jeremiah preached to the people, warning them to repent or judgement would come (Jer. 1)
    - Destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25, Jer 39:1-11, 2 Chron. 36:11-21)
    - Jeremiah witnessed the destruction of the city (Lam 1:13-15 2:6, 9; 4:1-12
  + Timeline
    - Jeremiah called by God (c. 625 BC – Jer. 1)
    - Babylon begins invading Judah (605 BC)
    - Babylon penetrates the walls of Jerusalem and destroys it (586 BC)
    - Jeremiah is forced to go to Egypt (583 BC - Jer. 43:1-7)
* Outline
  + Lament #1 – How?
  + Lament #2 – How?
  + Lament #3 – I…
  + Lament #4 – How?
  + Lament #5 – Remember…
* What does lament mean?
  + To express sorrow or grief (especially over one’s sins)
  + To express sorrow or grief in a song
  + To mourn for someone
  + Often these expressions of grief, sorrow, and mourning are directed toward God
* Mourning or grief can be expressed because of:
  + Death of a loved one (Gen. 50:10, 1 Sam. 28:3, 2 Sam. 1:17, 3:31-33, 2 Chron. 35:25, Jer. 34:5, Luke 8:52, Acts 8:2)
  + Tragedy or sorrowful situation (1 Sam. 7:2, Is. 3:26, Jer. 48:38, Luke 23:27, John 16:20, Joel 1:13)
  + Sin or the consequences of sin/discipline because of sin (Is. 29:2, Jer. 4:8, 6:26, 7:29, 31:15, 49:3, Lam. 2:8, Ezek. 19:1, 14, 26:17, 27:2, 23, 28:12, 32:2, Amos 5:16, 8:10, Micah 1:8, 2:4, Luke 18:13, James 4:9)
* 3 questions to ask yourself in grief (Lam. 3)
  + Does anything happen apart from the lord’s command? (v. 37)
  + Isn’t it true that both good and hard times come from god? (v. 38)
  + Why should I complain when I suffer for my sin? (v. 39)
* Themes
  + God is faithful to His Word (Lam. 1:5, 2:17)
  + To love and trust something else over God is the highest offense (Lam. 1:18-19)
  + God’s discipline is a real threat (Lam. 1-5)
  + To judge and punish those in Israel who failed to repent
  + To discipline and yet preserve a remnant of true believers
  + God’s character and promises are our hope in affliction (Lam. 3:20-25)
  + Our only hope is the gospel (The New Covenant – Jer. 31)
  + Lament over sin and suffering is a godly response (Lam. 3:48-51)… but
  + Crying out to God is good, complaining is bad (Lam. 3:39, Phil. 2:14)
  + Grief over sin should lead to repentance (Lam. 3:40)
* How does God meet us in grief?
  + By being there with us. He never leaves or forsakes us (Ps. 46:1, Heb. 13:5)
  + By listening to us (Ps. 86:7)
  + By sympathizing with us through Christ. He is the “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Is. 53:3). He is our sympathetic high priest (Heb 4:15)
  + By carrying our sorrows and griefs (Is. 53:4)
  + By giving us rest (Matt. 11:29)
  + By showing us the extent of His power and grace in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
  + By helping us see that the good that we lost was His gift of grace (Job 1:21)
  + By reminding us of His character and promises (Lam. 3:21-33)
  + By showing us that having Him is of greater value than what we lost (Ps. 73:25-28)
  + By giving us songs to sing (Psalms)
  + By providing hope beyond this life (1 Thess. 4:13)
* How God helps in sorrow
  + In His humanity, Jesus both experienced sorrow and came to bear the sorrow of people (Is. 53:3-4). He is sympathetic to our struggles (Heb. 4:14-16)
  + God offers sufficient help in sorrow by:
  + Using sorrow to move us toward Him (Hannah-1 Sam. 1:9ff, Job, Psalmists, Paul-2 Cor. 7:10, Jesus-Matt. 26:38ff). God is near to the brokenhearted (Ps. 34:18, 147:3, Is. 61:1)
  + Causing us to examine our hearts because of sorrow (Gen. 4:3-7)
  + Granting a sorrow that leads to repentance (2 Cor. 7:10-11, 2 Tim. 2:25)
  + Calling us to trust in Him in our sorrow (John 14:1)
  + Overcoming the world through Christ so that we can have hope in it (John 16:33)
  + Providing other believers who can share in grief (Rom. 12:15)
  + Redeeming sorrow such that it works for our own good (Rom. 8:28-29)