

Mount Zion A.M.E. Church of New Brunswick, NJ
07/07/2024

By Paul T. Bennett Church School Superintendent

Hope In the Lord

Expressing Hope

Ceaseless Love

Lamentations 3:16 – 24

Background

- Lamentations is thought to have been written during the waning days of the Southern kingdom of Judah - 586 and 575 BC

Background

- It is attributed to the prophet Jeremiah as he observed the Babylonians destroying Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 35:25; 36:21-22)
- Jeremiah was a contemporary of Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Ezekiel

Background

- The book is divided into 5 chapters – each chapter is a separate poem.
- He recognizes that Babylon was a tool to punish Jerusalem (**1:12-15; 2:1-9, 4:11**)
- Likewise, the Assyrians were used to punish the Northern Kingdom

Background

- In the book he 'laments', expressing his raw emotions over the destruction of the city.
- Yet he still declares God is a God of hope. No matter how far we've strayed from God, He is still forgiving and will restore

Commentary: From Faith to Hope

Hope

= Faith + Sufferings +
Perseverance + Character

START (FAITH)

FINISH (HOPE)

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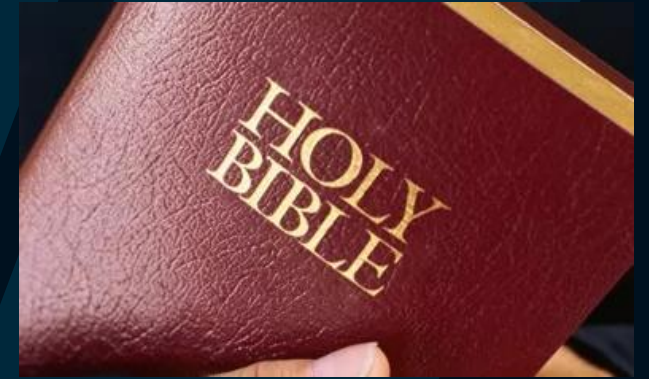
Lesson Text

LAMENTATIONS 3:16-18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ He has also broken my teeth with gravel, And [^a]covered me with ashes.

¹⁷ You have moved my soul far from peace; I have forgotten [^b]prosperity.

¹⁸ And I said, "My strength and my hope Have perished from the Lord."



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Commentary: The Weeping Prophet

- Lamentations is not only about anguish over Jerusalem, but Jeremiah's personal anguish, which he laid on God (v. 3:1-15)
 - *"I have become the ridicule of all my people—Their taunting song all the day. He has filled me with bitterness, He has made me drink wormwood. (v. 14-15)*

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Commentary: The Weeping Prophet

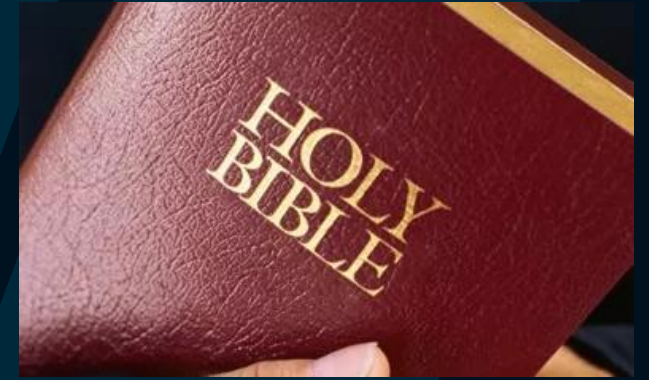
- While there is no basis to insist God intentionally afflicted Jeremiah or allowed suffering the way God allowed Job to suffer, both men's perspectives become similar as despite their suffering, they remain faithful to God.

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Lesson Text

LAMENTATIONS 3:19-21 (NKJV)

19 Remember my affliction and
roaming, The wormwood and the
[c]gall. 20 My soul still remembers
And [d]sinks within me. 21 **This I
recall to my mind, Therefore I have
hope.**

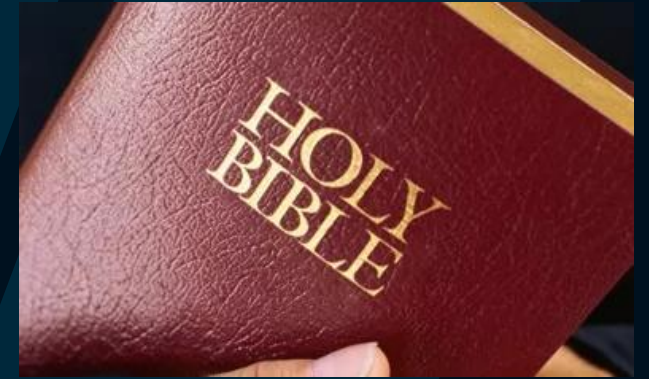


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Lesson Text

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24 (NKJV)

²² Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"



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Commentary: A New Hope

- In **verse 18**, Jeremiah states that he his hope perished, yet in **verse 21**, he declares that he does have hope
- To be clear, the hope he had in **v. 18** was for the people and the city to be spared if they repented as stated in the **Book of Jeremiah**

Commentary: A New Hope

- The hope in **v. 21** is now based on his recall of the LORD's faithfulness and compassion.
- Though a remnant will be in captivity 70 years, God protects them in those years with the promise to restore them (**Jeremiah 29:11**)

Commentary: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS



- Thomas Obediah Chisholm (1866-1960) was an ordained Methodist minister who became ill and left the ministry, opening an insurance office in Vineland, NJ

Commentary: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS



- He wrote many poems and was inspired by Lamentations 3:22-23 and wrote the words to 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness', despite his poor health and average income

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Commentary: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS



- He sent his poem to a friend William Runyan (1870 – 1957) who also was a Methodist minister and musician.
- He created the tune to the poem we know of today

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Commentary: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

- It is often in the worst of times, we can lean on this verse and this hymn, trusting God even when it looks bleak, but having Hope that He will protect and restore us when we acknowledge our sin and repent
(Lamentations 3:40-42; 5:21-22)

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Scripture References



Trusting God in Suffering

Job 13:15

Habakkuk 3:17-18

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Church School Creed

Our Church School must grow & grow
And we must help to make it so
Every member a Christian
Every Christian a worker
Every worker trained
A worker that will not be ashamed
This we ask in Jesus' name

-AMEN

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Church School Benediction

We have come

We have studied

We have learned

So until our next coming together

To study God's word

May His rich blessings reside with you

And may His Grace be eternally yours

-AMEN