

"LEARNING FROM LAMENTATIONS"**Introduction**

1. The author of this Book is Jeremiah
2. It refers to 586BC – Fall of Jerusalem
3. The Lament is for the Judgements of God
Verses 22-41 here are full of tenderness + comfort

1. THE WAY GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO BEHAVE IN HARD TIMES

- 1) See **v.26-30**: What to do at such a time
REL: We today live in a time of declension
- 2) "Hope...quietly wait"
 - (i) not fall into depression
 - (ii) look up to God to work again
DOCTRINE: Declensions are measured (e.g. 70 years)
- 3) "Bear the yoke": be willing to suffer the reproach of powerlessness / barrenness / contempt.
OBSERVE: Different from Apostolic times
- 4) **v.28**: prepared to be different
- 5) **v.29**: profound humility, befitting our position – it is partly our sins to blame
- 6) **v.30**: not moved by people's cruelty, whether physical or psychological
APPLICATION: We need much grace to behave like this

2. THE COMFORT WE HAVE FROM THE CHARACTER OF GOD

- 1) See **v.31-38**: Our comfort is from God's Goodness

- 2) **DOCTRINE**: The believer's hope lies always in God:
 - (i) his character as good
 - (ii) his love to his people
REL: In our own day
 - (i) our judgement is less than we deserve
 - (ii) our certainty of God's wise plan

- 3) **v.31**: God will not cast off his people forever

- 4) **v.32**: grief in measure, balanced by love

- 5) **v.33**: God only afflicts for good + wise reasons.
God is constitutionally good: Common + Special Grace

- 6) **v.34-36**: 3 things which God does not approve of:
 - (i) to crush men underfoot
OBSERVE: He also has no pleasure in their death, according to Ezekiel 18:23+32 (Explain)
 - (ii) to turn away those who pray to God
Either: his prayer, or his innocence in law
 - (iii) to overthrow a good man who has a just cause
APPLICATION: So, see here the hope we have in God – encouragements to pray – even in hard times

3. THE CORRECT WAY TO REACT TO GOD'S CHASTISEMENTS

- 1) **v.39-41**: The way we should react to judgements.
OBSERVE: We must learn to be patient under God's disciplinary dealings – not to fret
- 2) So Jeremiah, teaches us how to react:
 - (i) **v.39**: not to complain
APPLICATION: How easy it is: "There is no blessing"; "Our fathers day was far better than ours".
ANSWER: But you cannot compare unequal times
ILLUSTRATION: it would be senseless for the prophet to compare his own day with Solomon's!
 - (ii) **v.40**: The summons to self-examination.
APPLICATION: Have you + I not got sins to repent of?

(iii) **v.41**: prayer, with confession:

APPLICATION: "to God in the heavens" (What a phrase!)

CONCLUSION

In a time like this, remember the words: "Who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zech. 4:10).

<p>PSALM</p> <p>79: 5 – 9</p> <p>44: 13 – 17</p> <p>43: 3 – 5</p>
