Faith: Tested and True

YHWH Will Punish Iniquity
Lesson 7
Lamentations 4

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
July 19, 2020
Israel and God’s Plan of Salvation

- The Promise to the Patriarchs (Genesis 12:1-3 and 50:24)
  - A great nation in the Promised Land
  - Blessing for all nations of the earth (Psalm 133:3)
  - The dwelling place of God in Jerusalem (Zion)
  - The eternal rule of the Son of David – the Anointed One

- The formation of the nation Israel (Exodus 19:1-8)
  - YHWH’S special treasure; a nation of priests; a holy nation
  - “Tell us what to do and we will do it.”
  - The Law – defined Israel, but did not make them a great nation
  - Their history characterized by rebellion from the start

- The destruction of the nation in 586 B.C.
- Jeremiah observes, experiences, and weeps (Jer. 5:14-19)
- What does this mean for God’s plan of salvation?
5 Songs of Lament

- The Way of God in fulfilling the Word of God in the Work of Salvation
  - 2 songs from a human perspective of the disaster
  - 1 song looking at the character of God
  - 2 songs from the perspective of the character of God

- YHWH’s character revealed in His Salvation (Ex 34:5-7)
  - A divided nation – believers and unbelievers
  - A seemingly conflicted God – forgiving and unforgiving
  - Two attributes of God – justice and love
  - God’s judgment – wrath for unbelievers and chastening for believers
The Book of Lamentations

- The structure of the book focuses attention on the main point
- Chiastic Structure
  - A: He looks at the destroyed city and weeps (1)
  - B: Weeping in the siege – YHWH destroys His people (2)
    - C: Centerpiece – a personal testimony – YHWH, faith, hope (3)
    - B': Understanding the siege – YHWH judges the sins of His people (4)
  - A': He looks at the destroyed city and hopes – prays for YHWH to restore (5)
- Literary distinctives
  - Acrostic (alphabet): 22 verses (Lam. 1, 2, 4, 5); 66 verses (Lam. 3)
  - Paired statements (264)
- Lamentations 4
  - A second look at the siege (4:1-11)
  - A personal response to YHWH (4:12-22)
Great Expectations are Dashed (4:1-2)

- **ALEPH (4:1)**
  - How dark the gold has become, – How the pure gold has changed!
  - The sacred stones are poured out – At the corner of every street.

- **BETH (4:2)**
  - The precious sons of Zion, – Weighed against fine gold,
  - *How* they are regarded as earthen jars – The work of a potter’s hands!
The Depravity of the People (4:3-4)

- **GIMEL (4:3)**
  - Even jackels offer the breast, – They nurse their young;
  - *But* the daughter of my people has become cruel – Like ostriches in the wilderness

- **DALET (4:4)**
  - The tongue of the infant cleaves – To the roof of its mouth because of thirst;
  - The little ones ask for bread, – *But* no one breaks it for them.
The Fall of Jerusalem (4:5-6)

- **HE (4:5)**
  - Those who ate delicacies – Are desolate in the streets;
  - Those reared in purple – Embrace ash pits.

- **VAV (4:6)**
  - For the iniquity of the daughter of my people – Is greater than the sin of Sodom,
  - Which was overthrown as in a moment, – And no hands were turned toward her.
The Consecrated Ones (4:7-10)

- ZAYIN (4:7)
  - Her consecrated ones were purer than snow, – They were whiter than milk;
  - They were more ruddy in body than corals, – Their polishing was like lapis lazuli.

- CHET (4:8)
  - Their appearance is blacker than soot, – They are not recognized in the streets;
  - Their skin is shriveled on their bones, – It is withered, it has become like wood.

- TET (4:9)
  - Better are those slain with the sword – Than those slain with hunger;
  - For they pine away, being stricken – For lack of the fruits of the field.

- YOD (4:10)
  - The hands of compassionate women – Boiled their own children;
  - They became food for them – Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.
A New Perspective (4:11)

- KAPH (4:11)
  - The LORD has accomplished His wrath, – He has poured out His fierce anger;
  - And He has kindled a fire in Zion – Which has consumed its foundations.
Jeremiah’s Faith (4:12-16)

- **LAMED (4:12)**
  - The kings of the earth did not believe, – Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world,
  - That the adversary and the enemy – Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

- **MEM (4:13)**
  - Because of the sins of her prophets – And the iniquities of her priests,
  - Who have shed in her midst – The blood of the righteous;

- **NUN (4:14)**
  - They wandered, blind, in the streets; – They were defiled with blood
  - So that no one could touch – Their garments.
Jeremiah’s Faith (4:12-16)

- **SAMEKH (4:15)**
  - “Depart! Unclean!” they cried of themselves. – “Depart, depart, do not touch!”
  - So they fled and wandered; Men among the nations said, – “They shall not continue to dwell with us.”

- **PE (4:16)**
  - The presence of the LORD has scattered them, – He will not continue to regard them;
  - They did not honor the priests, – They did not favor the elders.
The Fall of Jerusalem (4:17-20)

- **AYIN (4:17)**
  - Yet our eyes failed, – *Looking for help was useless*;
  - In our watching we have watched – For a nation that could not save.

- **TSADHE (4:18)**
  - They hunted our steps – So that we could not walk in our streets;
  - Our end drew near, our days were finished – For our end had come.

- **QOPH (4:19)**
  - Our pursuers were swifter – Than the eagles of the sky;
  - They chased us on the mountains, – They waited in ambush for us in the wilderness.

- **RESH (4:20)**
  - The breath of our nostrils, the LORD’S anointed, – Was captured in their pits,
  - Of whom we had said, “Under his shadow – We shall live among the nations.”
Jeremiah’s Hope (4:21-22)

▷ SHIN (4:21)
  – Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, – Who dwells in the land of Uz;
  – But the cup will come around to you as well, – You will become drunk and make yourself naked.

▷ TAV (4:22)
  – The punishment of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion; – He will exile you no longer.
  – But He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; – He will expose your sins!
YHWH Will Punish Iniquity

- “The just shall live by faith” – the Word of God not hindered by the Way of God
  - The Word of God is the object of our faith
  - The Way of God is the proof of our faith
  - The knowledge of God as YHWH is the foundation of our faith
  - True faith: hopes, waits silently, and seeks God

- The life of Jesus Christ, YHWH in the flesh, reveals and empowers the life of faith

- We live by hope in the immutable God in Christ, and in His immutable Word