

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Lamentations: Productively Learning From Sinful Failure

Part II: Dirge I - Jerusalem's Desolation Due To Her Sin

(Lamentations 1:1-22)

I. Introduction

- A. Ideally, God wants His people to learn from their first exposure to His Word to obey it for blessing.
- B. However, mortal man is a sinner, and at times even we believers in Christ with our sin natures yield to the temptation to disobey God's Word only to pay a dear price in doing so in the form of painful divine discipline.
- C. Nevertheless, in times of spiritual failure, the believer is ripe to learn from his sinful failure, what constitutes the burden of the prophet Jeremiah in his book of Lamentations. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1207-1208)
- D. Accordingly, Lamentations 1:1-22, Jeremiah's first dirge over the fall of Jerusalem, voices the pain and sorrow of loss in noting the desolation of Jerusalem due to divine judgment (as follows):

II. Dirge I - Jerusalem's Desolation Due To Her Sin, Lamentations 1:1-22.

- A. Jeremiah first described Jerusalem's desolation due to her sin from an **objective** viewpoint, Lam. 1:1-11:
 1. Invaded Jerusalem sat lonely, emptied of its people and destitute as a widow in her loss, Lam. 1:1a.
 2. Where the city had been great among the nations, her people had become slaves to others, Lam. 1:1b.
 3. Jerusalem wept bitterly in the night with none to comfort her as all had become her enemies, Lam. 1:2.
 4. The nation of Judah had gone into captivity, finding no rest, overcome by her enemies, Lam. 1:3.
 5. All the people -- priests, maidens, children, princes -- had faced calamity in God's punishment, v. 4-6.
 6. Jerusalem had sinned greatly, so she ended up unaided and uncomforted even by the Lord, Lam. 1:7-9.
 7. The temple lay desecrated and looted by invaders and the people were hungry and despised, v. 10-11.
- B. Jeremiah then described Jerusalem's desolation due to sin **subjectively** as **one** of its *sufferers*, Lam. 1:12-22:
 1. Personifying the city as a sufferer, Jeremiah called out to those who passed by desolate Jerusalem to feel remorse for the city's loss and grief brought on by divine punishment, Lamentations 1:12.
 2. Jeremiah then described Jerusalem's pain under God's discipline, noting how stunned it had left her as the people reeled under pain too great to bear and suffered under foes too strong to withstand, Lam. 1:13-14.
 3. The destruction of her mighty men, the crushing of her young men, the desolation of her children coupled with the lack of God's comfort or any other comforter was the constant pain Jerusalem faced, v. 15-17.
 4. Jeremiah admitted that the Lord was right to level such discipline, for Judah's people had rebelled against God's Word (Lam. 1:18a), but the suffering of that discipline in the form of the captivity of the people (Lam. 1:18b), the failure of Gentile allies to help as priests and elders, leaders in society, perished while seeking food to revive their strength was too much for Judah's people to bear, Lamentations 1:19.
 5. The prophet representing Jerusalem's people called upon God to take note of their distress brought on by their sinful rebellion, what had led to death throughout the city, Lamentations 1:20.
 6. Instead of sympathy from neighboring peoples, the Gentiles were happy that God's judgment had fallen on Jerusalem (Lam. 1:21a), so Jeremiah asked God to take vengeance on these Gentiles for it, Lam. 1:21b.
 7. Indeed, Jeremiah asked God to remember all the evil deeds of Jerusalem's Gentile foes that He might punish them like He had punished Jerusalem with all of her sufferings, Lamentations 1:22.
- C. Significantly, **five** of the descriptions of Jerusalem's woes in Lamentations 1:1-22 match **five** predicted punishments from God for His peoples' sin in the Mosaic Covenant of Deuteronomy 28 (Ibid., p. 1209):
 1. In Lamentations 1:3, Jerusalem dwelt among the nations without rest, fulfilling Deuteronomy 28:65.
 2. In Lamentations 1:5, Jerusalem's foes had become her masters, fulfilling Deuteronomy 28:44.
 3. In Lamentations 1:5, Jerusalem's children were exiled as captives to foes, fulfilling Deuteronomy 28:32.
 4. In Lamentations 1:6, Judah's people had fled before their pursuers, fulfilling Deuteronomy 28:25.
 5. In Lamentations 1:18, Judah's young men and maidens had gone into exile, fulfilling Deuteronomy 28:41.

Lesson: *When God eventually fulfilled His Word severely to punish His people for sin, the pain they experienced was physically, mentally and emotionally overwhelming. Nevertheless, such great suffering revealed the TRUTHFULNESS of God's predictions and His righteous demands, what turned into instruction for God's rebellious people to REPENT of their sin in order to OBEY the Lord for future blessing.*

Application: *(1) May we learn from Jerusalem's great sufferings caused by God's discipline that His Word is true, that He will surely fulfill it, even where it warns of severe discipline for sin. (2) May we then obey the Lord!*