

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Lamentations: Productively Learning From Sinful Failure**

#### **Part VI: Dirge V - The Godly Remnant's Necessary Response To God's Discipline (Lamentations 5:1-22)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. In times of spiritual failure followed by God's discipline, the believer is ripe to learn from his failure, what constitutes the burden of the prophet Jeremiah in Lamentations. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1207-1208)
- B. Lamentations 5:1-22, the fifth dirge on Jerusalem's fall, explains the godly remnant's necessary response to God's discipline, what we believers need to know if and when we face divine discipline (as follows):

##### **II. The Godly Remnant's Necessary Response To God's Discipline, Lamentations 5:1-22.**

- A. In his most graphic description of Judah's suffering, Jeremiah in this dirge exemplified how the godly remnant was to ask God to take note of their sufferings to be motivated to help, Lamentations 5:1-18 ESV:
  - 1. The godly remnant was to ask God to remember, look and see their terrible disgrace, Lamentations 5:1.
  - 2. That terrible disgrace is graphically described in Lamentations 5:2-18 (as follows):
    - a. The land of Judah had been seized by foreigners who now dwelt in Judah's houses, Lamentations 5:2.
    - b. Judah's people were vulnerable to abuse by Babylon's soldiers as if they were orphans or widows, v. 3.
    - c. They had to pay money for their own water and firewood for cooking, Lamentations 5:4.
    - d. Judah's people were constantly open to abusive treatment by the foreign soldiers, Lamentations 5:5.
    - e. Because of errant treaties made with Egypt and Assyria by their forefathers, Judah's people were now paying the bitter price of reprisals by the Babylonian occupational force, Lamentations 5:6-7.
    - f. Indeed, Babylon's taskmasters were coarse men of low degree who enslaved them, Lamentations 5:8.
    - g. To buy bread, Judah's people had to brave areas where roving desert nomads who carried the sword roamed, threatening their lives, and the skin of Judah's people was feverish from hunger, Lam. 5:9-10.
    - h. The Babylonian soldiers had committed atrocities against the people of Judah: they had raped their women and virgins, they had hung up and impaled their princes on stakes, torturing them to death while they had also dishonored their elders, Lamentations 5:11-22 Ibid., p. 1222.
    - i. The young men who had survived the invasion had been forced to do the work of women in grinding grain while young boys had been forced as slaves to carry loads of firewood into the city, Lam. 5:13.
    - j. Though Judah's elders used to sit at the city gate administering justice and Judah's young men used to perform joyful music, both groups had ceased their former edifying practices in society, Lam. 5:14.
    - k. Joy had ceased for Judah's people, along with the dance of joy being turned into mourning, Lam. 5:15.
      - 1. The glory and majesty ("crown") that had once marked Jerusalem's people was gone due to sin, the people were faint from hunger, depressed and grieving while jackals prowled about Jerusalem, v. 16-18.
- B. Jeremiah then exemplified how the godly remnant was to petition God to restore them to blessing, Lam. 5:19-22:
  - 1. In an affirmation of hope, the godly remnant looked to God, asserting He remained forever, that His throne timelessly endured from generation to generation, even during Judah's current plight, Lamentations 5:19.
  - 2. Thus, the remnant asked why God forgot them so long, why He forsook them so many days, Lam. 5:20.
  - 3. The godly remnant then petitioned the Lord to restore them to Himself that they might be restored to the position of God's blessing, to renew them as in days of old, Lamentations 5:21.
  - 4. In a final note, the godly remnant pleaded with God that if He would not restore them, it would be because He had utterly rejected Judah, remaining exceedingly angry with Judah's people, Lamentations 5:22.
  - 5. [Ryrie notes that since Lamentations ends "on a negative note . . . when it was publicly read, verse 21 was customarily repeated after the reading of verse 22," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Lam. 5:22.]

***Lesson:*** *In response to the dreadful sufferings of the people of Jerusalem and Judah, the godly remnant was to call upon the Lord, confessing their sin and petitioning Him to take note of all they had suffered so as to act to restore them to their former roles of blessing from the Lord.*

***Application:*** *(1) If we note God is disciplining us for sin, may we confess it, pouring out our hearts unto the Lord regarding the suffering we face in that discipline and looking for restoration from the Lord. (2) Since Judah's forefathers had played a large part in influencing their descendants to experience this terrible suffering in God's discipline for sin (Lamentations 5:6-7), may we in our era watch our walk that we not lead our posterity astray into facing eventual, overwhelmingly dreadful divine discipline.*