

**Message #5****Lamentations 3:22-39**

About 45 miles north of Nashville, Tennessee, on I-65 is Franklin, Kentucky, which, to most people, is known for horse racing. But it is known to us for a man who wrote a poem.

Thomas Chisholm was born in a “crude log cabin” in Franklin, Kentucky, in the 1800’s. His health wasn’t good and he was pretty much poor all of his life. He didn’t go to high school or any college, but he wrote poems. He trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior and he wrote many poems which have now been put to music.

Perhaps his most famous poem was taken from this very chapter in Lamentations. Based on Lamentations 3:22-23, Mr. Chisholm wrote one of his best poems and one of the most beloved Christian hymns for the entire church of God. His poem is the song “Great is Thy Faithfulness.”

The actual context of this text in Lamentations is the context of God chastising His own people because they refused to face their sin and turn from their sin. Lamentations is a book that describes a judgment that God is leveling against His own people because they will not deal with their own sin. Life was not happy and God was causing it to be that way.

Jeremiah, who is writing this, was at his lowest point in life because of national sin and perhaps even his own personal sin.

But in the midst of this, Jeremiah remembered some important theological realities about God and that is:

**WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING GREAT SORROW AND GRIEF THAT IS BEING CAUSED BY GOD, BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN SIN, GOD’S PEOPLE CAN TURN TO GOD AND ADMIT THE SIN AND WAIT ON HIS MERCY TO STOP THE CHASTISEMENT.**

God’s people, who have failed, are invited to return to turn to Him and turn from the sin. Face it, confess it and wait on Him to lift the penalty. These were theological realities Jeremiah thought about as he was experiencing the chastising judgment of God because of the sin of God’s own people.

We are in a chapter in Lamentations that is a triple acrostic of the Hebrew Alphabet. There are three verses that begin with the same Hebrew letter for the entire 22 letter alphabet. Last time we examined Aleph to Zayin and in this study we will examine Chet to Mem.

Aleph–b1-3; Beth–4-6; Gimmel–7-9; Dalet–10-12; He–13-15; Waw/Vav–16-18; Zayin–19-21; **Chet–22-24; Tet–25-27; Yod–28-30; Kaf–31-33; Lamed–34-36; Mem–37-39; Nun–40-42; Samech–43-45; Pey–46-48; Ayin–49-51; Tsade–52-54; Qof–55-57; Resh–58-60; Sin/Shin–61-63; Tau–64-66.**

There are people who say doctrine and Systematic theology isn't important. What we need are practical topics that are not deep, but relevant. Well frankly, that is malarkey. It is deep theological teaching and doctrine that brings Jeremiah out of his depressed rut and it is the same doctrine that can do the same for us.

**REALITY #1** – God's loving-kindness and mercy never cease. **3:22a (Chet)**

This is so important to see and know. When God's people have so angered God that He is punishing them, His mercy is always operative. In fact, it is His mercy that keeps His people from being completely destroyed. God's anger and chastisement is **ALWAYS** tempered with His mercy because His mercy to His people never ceases.

This is a key point we need to know because this point is what should motivate a believer to go to God and cry out for His forgiveness and mercy.

**REALITY #2** – God's compassion never fails. **3:22b (Chet)**

Look at this and learn this. Even though we have failed God, He has never failed us. When we have failed and we turn to God and confess it, we will find the mercy of God because God's mercy does not ever fail to be given to those who do.

**REALITY #3** – God's mercy and compassion is new every morning. **3:23a (Chet)**

Think of this and thank God for this. Every day is a new beginning. Every day is a new chance. Every day brings new provisions, new forgiveness, and new opportunities. Every day brings new strength to face new temptations and new trials and new service. Yesterday does not have to be the final story of life.

God's mercy and compassion are new every day. Start over again no matter how you have previously failed. Start tonight and start tomorrow morning. Even when God is judging His people, His mercy and compassion are fresh every new day.

When our children have a bad day, we look forward to another day when they don't have a bad day. We may have been disciplined one day, but tomorrow is a new day.

**REALITY #4** – God's faithfulness is great. **3:23b (Chet)**

When it appears as though everything has turned negative, it is good to remember the faithfulness of God. G. Campbell Morgan said God's mercy has never been absent even in His punishment. God is faithful to His mercy.

**REALITY #5** – God is my portion. **3:24a (Chet)**

God's people need to know this point. What they must focus on is their relationship with God. The soul is strengthened by the relationship with God. He is our portion. He is what we need and He is all we need. Everything we have and experience comes from Him. Every good thing in life has come from Him. He is our portion in everything.

**REALITY #6** – God is my hope. **3:24b (Chet)**

When we are being chastened, our only hope out of it is God. Hope for deliverance and hope for forgiveness and hope for being used comes from Him. Only a very foolish person would place hope in themselves when they have failed God.

**REALITY #7** – God is good to those who wait for Him. **3:25a (Tet)**

In all reality, if we are being chastised by God, what choice do we have except to wait on Him? When trouble hits us, the best thing we can do is purpose to remain faithful to the Lord and wait on Him for deliverance. God is good to those who take this approach. They look to Him and wait on Him.

**REALITY #8** – God is good to those who seek Him. **3:25b (Tet)**

This is so important. If a person wants the forgiveness and mercy and grace of God, they must seek it and they must seek it from Him. There is no other source.

**REALITY #9** – God is good to those who silently wait for His salvation. **3:26 (Tet)**

When we are being chastised by God, we need to be quiet and wait. Don't challenge God, don't complain to God, don't curse God, don't question God, but quietly wait on God, knowing if we deal honestly with things, we can wait on Him for mercy.

**REALITY #10** – It is good for a man to bear his yoke in his youth. **3:27 (Tet)**

The young person who learns that God chastises me for sin, and when I sin I experience some very negative things, is a very wise person. It is good that one learns this earlier in life.

As Spurgeon said, if one can learn these lessons of God as a youth, he will be saved from a thousand snares in life.

**REALITY #11** – It is good for a man to quietly realize God is sovereign. **3:28 (Yod)**

God is not pleased when His people are loudly and arrogantly questioning God. When He lets negative things hit, quietly accept it. Bearing a weight for sin is a good thing if one does it “without complaint or retaliation.”

The wise thing for a person to do is to realize that God is sovereign and has permitted it to come into His people’s lives.

**REALITY #12** – It is right for a person to humble himself and not complain when God is disciplining a person, realizing there is hope in God for deliverance.  
**3:29 (Yod)**

Let’s be honest here, who of us is in a position to question and complain about negative things God brings into our lives? Put our mouth in the dust and shut up and wait on God.

**REALITY #13** – It is right for a person to accept rebuke and abuse. **30:30 (Yod)**

God chastises His people and when He does they need to accept it. God may cause or permit some enemy to smite us or reproach us. That is God’s business.

**REALITY #14** – God will not let it go on forever. **30:31 (Kaf)**

God will not let it go on forever. Chastisement is time regulated and time calculated. This is a very important principle to see. Even when God is angry with His own people, because they have sinned against Him, His anger does not last forever and He does not reject them forever.

**REALITY #15** – God’s people may know that since He has caused the grief, He will have mercy and compassion upon them. **3:32 (Kaf)**

God wants His people quietly realizing that He has sovereign control over the trials and troubles and He will deliver.

**REALITY #16** – God does not chastise willingly. **3:33 (Kaf)**

God does not want to discipline His people. He does not want to afflict them or grieve them. But sometimes, His people force Him to do that to get them back in line and back on track.

**REALITY #17** – God does chastise His people to correct evil. **3:34 (Lamed)**

He does not willingly crush His people or make them captive; He does it to correct them.

**REALITY #18** – God is aware of the injustice being done in His sight. **3:35 (Lamed)**

God never approves of injustice and whatever God does or permits is just and right. I understand this to mean that God uses people in power who do unjust things for His purposes, but in the end justice will be completely meted out.

**REALITY #19** – God is aware of the legal defrauding being done in lawsuits. **3:36 (Lamed)**

God never defrauds anyone and He does not approve of anyone being defrauded. This is so important. Whatever God does and permits never defrauds someone; it is right. Whatever God permits to happen to His own people or to any people for that matter, is right.

**REALITY #20** – God is in sovereign control of everything. **3:37-38 (Mem)**

Let your eyes look at these verses. May I say we need to shut our mouths and believe what is said right here.

God is sovereign over everything good and bad. He is the One who authorizes positives and negatives. He is the One who authorizes blessings and cursings.

This idea that God would never permit bad things is not true to the word of God. This text says God causes what is good and bad. He authorizes it and commands it to carry out His plan.

**REALITY #21** – No human can offer any complaint to God in view of his own sins.  
**3:39 (Mem)**

This is the reason God disciplines His people, because of their sin. No one dares question God. The fact is the wages of sin is death and by virtue of the fact we are here right now and not dead is due to the mercy of God.

If we sense we are being disciplined by God, because of our failure and sin, go to God and confess it and quiet down and wait for His mercy. His mercy is new every day and Great is His Faithfulness.