

Message #3

Lamentations 2:1-22

There is a teaching in the O.T. and N.T. Scriptures that most believers know, but ignore. In the O.T. Solomon taught his own son that God disciplines His people when they get out of line (Prov. 3:11-12). In the New Testament, Jesus Christ, Himself said, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent."

Now many believers read that and make no personal assessment of their own lives. It's like they are reading the box score of some sporting event. But this is a real threat warning that God is giving to His own people. If you do not spot and eliminate evil, sinful things, I will chastise My own people. God can and will make life miserable for His own people.

One of the saddest things to see in the Christian life are Christians who are miserable because they have chosen to sin. They know what could have been and they know what should have been, but they would not listen to the word of God and, as a result, they find themselves in desperate times.

That is the whole emphasis of the book of Lamentations. God's people were a disaster caused by God because they would not turn away from their evil. But even in the disaster, there was some hope and even a book like Lamentations presents that hope.

There are many people who take God's word and warnings lightly. They don't take them seriously. The warnings about turning away from sin seem to be no threat to most people. They don't seem to sense the urgency of the hour or the misery or be convicted and they don't seem to want to do anything to end the pain.

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE ANGER GOD BY THEIR CONTINUAL SIN, HE WILL PERMIT DEVASTATING JUDGMENT AND DESTRUCTION TO HIT HIS PEOPLE AND THERE WILL BE NOTHING THEY CAN DO TO STOP IT; BUT IF THEY WILL TURN TO HIM AND TURN FROM THE SIN, HE WILL BE GRACIOUS TO THEM.

What is described in this chapter is the total misery God sent against His own people because they refused to listen to His word and obey Him. It is serious, it is sad, it is scary. They would not respond to God and His word.

God's people must not ever view sin as a light matter. When we fail we need to address it before God. We need to be sick of ourselves and our sin. If we don't face and deal with it, sin can reach a point where it angers God and when that happens, He will use an arsenal of things to make His own people miserable.

FACT #1 – God is so angry with His people that He covers them and casts them into His angry judgment and permits them to be trampled. **2:1 (Aleph)**

When it comes to God, we want to be covered by God's grace and not by God's anger.
God's anger and judgment covered His people (v. 1 - Daughter of Zion; v. 2 - Daughter of Judah). It came straight out of heaven and was aimed straight at them on earth. Two names for God each used six times: "Lord" - Sovereign God who controls everything (v. 1, 2, 5, 7, 18, 19); "LORD" – Sovereign Covenant God of Israel (6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22).

Instead of Israel being a glorious reflection of His grace, He allowed them to be trampled. During the Tribulation, which will be the ultimate "day of His anger," He will permit 2/3rds of Israel to die.

It is possible to live life under the umbrella of God's grace and it is also possible to live it under the umbrella of God's anger.

FACT #2 – God is so angry with His people that He has torn down and thrown down His people and His kingdom. **2:2 (Bet)**

The proud and arrogant people of God were torn down and ripped to shreds. When the people looked at Israel, they did not see a strong kingdom; they saw a kingdom that had been torn down.

FACT #3 – God is so angry with His people that He has taken all strength away from them and has removed His right hand of protection and blessings. **2:3 (Gimel)**

Instead of God coming to help and defend His people, He completely withdrew from His people to let them be destroyed. Refuse to turn from sin and God can and will take away one's strength and protection and blessings.

FACT #4 – God is so angry with His people that He has become their enemy.
2:4 (Daleth)-5 (He)

Verse 4 says God will shoot destructive things at His own people. **Verse 5** says He is their enemy and brought the entire nation to mourning. Even though there were enemies that came against Israel, such as Babylon, it was God who directed them and permitted them to have victory over His own people. Do not miss this point; God is completely sovereign over what is happening to His own people. Babylon was not the enemy; God was.

FACT #5 – God is so angry with His people that He has rejected their worship place and worship services. **2:6 (waw)-7 (zayin)**

Verse 6 says He destroyed His temple and has destroyed this place of worship, and has caused them to forget about worship.

Verse 7 says God has turned the property over to His enemies.

The Temple represented a place where people could do business with God. They could resolve sin issues and enter into fellowship with God. By permitting these places to be destroyed, God is basically saying you have no contact with Me anymore.

FACT #6 – God is so angry with His people that He has destroyed their city. **2:8 (het)-9a (tet)**

Notice **verse 8**, it was the LORD who determined His city and temple would be knocked down. According to **verse 9**, He permitted His city and temple to be smashed to bits. Look at what is said in **verse 9** - “the Law was no more.”

These very places were rebuilt by Nehemiah (i.e. Chapter 2) when the Persians permitted Israel to return to the land to rebuild the Temple and the city.

What these verses teach us is that it was God who deliberately planned out and carried out the severe judgment. When we analyze our own life, would we say the word of God has more of us or less of us or is no more in us?

FACT #7 – God is so angry with His people that He has removed her political leaders.
2:9b (tet)

The political leaders were wicked and they led God’s people straight into judgment.

FACT #8 – God is so angry with His people that He has removed His word. **2:9c (tet)**

The law is no more. God saw to it that there was no one left who would accurately teach the word of God. The people did not want it.

FACT #9 – God is so angry with His people that He has removed His prophets. **2:9d (tet)**

God stopped speaking to and through His prophets. They did not receive visions or messages from God any more.

FACT #10 – God is so angry with His people that all the elders can do is mourn. **2:10a (yod)**

The elders sit and have nothing to say. They are totally humiliated. They have no positive message to present to the people.

FACT #11 – God is so angry with His people that the virgins are mourning. **2:10b (yod)**

All that His people do is to stare at the ground. They have no hope of having a normal, good life.

FACT #12 – God is so angry with His people that godly people weep and are sad. **2:11 (kaf)-12 (lamed)**

Godly people are not happy when God pours out His judgment and chastisement on His people. It is a sad thing to see. Jeremiah cried and his stomach was in knots. When God's people are out of fellowship with God, that is the way it is.

When faithful people see God permitting horrible things to happen to their nation, it makes them sick to their stomachs. Look carefully, God is still a God who can comfort His people.

FACT #13 – God is so angry with His people that their ruin is not comparable or healable. **2:13(mem)**

God made His people miserable and there was no one to whom they could turn who could heal them.

FACT #14 – God is angry with His people because they have listened to false prophets who have misled them. **2:14 (nun)**

False prophets are a main reason God's people were led astray. They told people false things such as they were protected and they would prosper and they didn't need to worry about making God angry.

What these false prophets didn't tell the people is if you don't obey God's word, you will suffer serious consequences and chastisements.

I believe that there are many ministers today who are leading congregations away from reverent worship and the study of God's word and the people are just fine with it.

God's ministers have a responsibility to warn God's people of judgment. If a minister just preaches a message of forgiveness and toleration without facing and repenting of sin, it is a false message and he will be held highly accountable for leading people astray.

FACT #15 – God is so angry with His people that enemies see them and talk about them. **2:15 (samek) -16 (pe)**

According to **verse 15**, those who see God's people laugh at them. They sneer and clap their hands and make fun of the fact that this was once called the beautiful city of God and the source of joy to the whole world.

In **verse 16**, the enemies were gloating over the fact that they had seemed to win.

FACT #16 – God is so angry with His people that He causes the enemies to rejoice and succeed.
2:17 (ayin)

God did what He promised to do. He gave His people plenty of time to repent and they would not repent so He pulled the plug on His blessings and actually let the adversaries have power over His own people.

FACT #17 – God is so angry with His people that even though they cried out to Him, He allowed them to be slaughtered. **2:18 (tsade), 19 (qof), 20 (resh), 21 (sin/shin)-22 (Tau)**

Verses 18-22 do present the only hope God's people have for reversing things when God is angry.

Verse 18 says that God's people need to cry out to Him.

Verse 19 says get up and cry out in the day time and the night time. Seek the face of the Lord. Lift up your hands and cry out to Him. Get down on your knees and lift up your hands and pray to God.

Verse 20 says ask God if this is the way it should be. Appeal to God and describe the truth and admit that God has done this.

Verse 21 says admit what God has done and that you deserve it. Call out to Him because just as God has an angry side, so He has a grace side.