



Lesson 8 April 24th, 2021

A Plea for Restoration

JUNIOR LESSON

Study Scripture – Lamentations 5

Background Scripture – Lamentations 1-4

Key Verse:

Restore us to You, Lord, so that we may be restored; Renew our days as of old.

Lamentations 5:21

INTRODUCTION

There is a very important word in our Study, and it is the word **Lamentations**. This word means “a passionate expression of grief or sorrow, weeping”. This is a very strong word because it tells of strong feelings.

Jeremiah the prophet experienced this feeling. When his country, his city, and the Temple of God was destroyed by the Babylonian army the prophet Jeremiah wrote a book called Lamentations which spoke about the calamity that had happened. One of the verses in this book reads like this:

***“My eyes overflow with rivers of water
for the destruction of the daughter of my people
My eyes through and do not cease
without interruption”.***

What happened was dreadful for Jeremiah had been telling the people of his nation that this would happen because they had continued to sin against God by worshiping idols, treating the widows and orphans badly, robbing the poor people in the country, robbing strangers that came to visit them, and instead of offering the best animals for sacrifices in the Temple offered instead animals that were weak and sickly that nobody had wanted to buy. They had ignored all the Commandments of God and had broken the Covenant that they had established with God.

They had agreed with God that they would obey the Laws He had given to them and God had promised them that He would always look after them, give them a Land of their own so that they would grow abundant crops and be able to look after their families. God had kept His part of the bargain, but the people did not keep their part of the bargain and did bad things over and over again. They treated each other badly and even worse they disrespected God. The people who ruled the country were pretty bad.

God therefore had warned them through His personal representatives called the prophets that He would destroy the nation, their cities, and the Temple, and sent them into exile in a strange land where the people would illtreat them and put them into slavery.

Before we condemn them too much, we should examine ourselves and look at our experiences.

Have you been getting the cold or the flu on a regular basis? Or have you had a serious illness for a while, or have you known people who have got a serious illness for a while which was very painful and caused a lot of suffering?

If you have been through any of these situations you know that you need medicine. Medicine often tastes awful and sometimes it takes a little bit of time to work and cure you of whatever was wrong with you. Sometimes a doctor and the nurses have to keep reminding people that they should take all the medicine regularly and follow instructions that they have been given.

But we know that sometimes people are stubborn and think that they know what is good for their sickness and do not want to listen to people who know better than they.

We are looking at a case like that. This was the case of Israel and Judah. They had been helped by God through all kinds of difficulties and they knew the laws and commandments of God. God did take them out of slavery in Egypt, given them a land, houses, farms, a lot of children and other good things. But these people did not really care about making good choices and following what God told them to do. It was only when they got into serious trouble that they remembered God and called out to Him for help because of the situation that they were in. Sometimes God answered their prayers quickly, but sometimes He took a long time to correct the terrible situation that they have gotten themselves in. But no sooner than after God helped them out of their trouble and pain and shame they went back to their old ways and did everything that God did not like. They went back to idolatry, serving other gods, treating the people in their country and the strangers that came to visit them badly, oppressing the widows and orphans, and doing all kinds of misbehaviour.

When the real trouble came and their country was destroyed Jeremiah wrote this book of Lamentations, weeping about the disaster that had happened. God had predicted this disaster would happen.

So have you ever done actions and made foolish and careless and bad decisions which caused pain, shame, and suffering? Have you ever done things that have damaged you and which take a long time to heal? Did you ever feel guilty about what you did?

This Book of Lamentations advises you to face your mistakes and talk to God about it honestly. It warns us not to worship other gods but to make sure that God is the most important thing in our lives.

It reminds us that a Covenant that we have with God is a two-way street and that we have a responsibility to live up to our part of the bargain.



When we have difficulty in doing that the Spirit of God will help us for, we are never alone. God is always there to help us and keep us going.

God is a powerful God, and He does not joke when people continue to commit sins and do not want to listen to the warnings He has given.

Though Jeremiah wept and cried and lamented he knew that God would eventually help the people and restore them. God is that kind of God. He does not want people to suffer and to die in their sins. But even though God loves us and is kind and merciful to us, and is always ready to help us, He is straight. He does not like it when we keep on doing things that are not right.

So let us remember the love of God and remember that when we do what is wrong, we might lament just as the prophet Jeremiah did.

But we should also remember that God is right there, and we should ask God to turn our souls around, to renew the blessings and the great experiences that we have had before. When God is ready to turn us around, He will turn us around.

So we must even though we weep and lament, we have hope for we know that our God is a gracious God.

