



## “Take Time To Mourn Over Your Sin”

### Lamentations 3:39-54

February 21, 2021

#### Lam 3:39-54

**39 Why should any living mortal, or any man, Offer complaint in view of his sins?**

40 Let us examine and probe our ways,

And let us return to the Lord.

41 We lift up our heart and hands

Toward God in heaven;

42 We have transgressed and rebelled,

You have not pardoned.

43 You have covered Yourself with anger

And pursued us;

You have slain and have not spared.

44 You have covered Yourself with a cloud

So that no prayer can pass through.

45 You have made us mere offscouring and refuse

In the midst of the peoples.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

**39 Why should any living mortal, or any man,**

**Offer complaint in view of his sins?**

- How can any person complain about the punishment of their sin, when it is so offensive to God?

- He who deserves to be hung, cannot charge the judge with cruelty.

- And we who deserve to be damned for our sin have no reason to charge God for being too severe when we escape with only a severe discipline.

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“examine” - חָפַח *chaphas* - to make a diligent search, broad search.

“probe” - חָקַק *chaqar* - to penetrate, deep search.

- What led me to sin? What were the conditions? What was the specific temptation? Was I deceived?

- What was down deep in my heart, my soul that caused me to sin? Was it an idol of the heart? Was it an absence of the Word?

- When I have done that, now I need to confess, repent, and return to the Lord.

- True repentance and confession is in response to God’s character – His holiness and righteousness.

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- Notice that it is not just the hands but the heart also.
- Lifting up of the hands is a prayer gesture to express what is in the heart.

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Here is the confession:

1. Transgressed the Law (disobeyed the Word).
2. Rebelled against God.

- God does not pardon sin if it is not confessed.

- God is simply not going to look the other way.

- All sin is a serious violation of the character of God. It is a capital offense (a serious offense punishable by death).

- So they experience judgment.

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**5 things God did when Israel disobeyed and rebelled –**

1. He covered Himself in anger – He wore His anger like a garment.
2. He hunted Israel down in His anger.
3. He put to death many in Israel.
4. He set a “roadblock” from Israel’s prayers getting through.
5. He has set Israel aside as worthless scum, garbage, trash, waste, dung (unfit for use), of no value to the world.

- Sin, when it is not pardoned, is as a cloud between God and his people.

- Note: Nowhere in Lamentations, and perhaps in the entire Bible, is God’s refusal to be present for His people more strongly expressed than here.

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- Like lions, Israel's enemies were ready to devour them.
- The Babylonian Army surrounded Jerusalem and was ready to pounce, to eat Israel alive.
- No mercy would be shown. Resistance only brought death.
- God was so angry, and this is so sad.

**47 Panic and pitfall have befallen us,  
Devastation and destruction;**

48 My eyes run down with streams of water

Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 My eyes pour down unceasingly,  
Without stopping,

50 Until the Lord looks down

And sees from heaven.

51 My eyes bring pain to my soul

Because of all the daughters of my city.

52 My enemies without cause

Hunted me down like a bird;

53 They have silenced me in the pit

And have placed a stone on me.

54 Waters flowed over my head;

I said, "I am cut off!"

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- Here is perhaps a description of the last days and hours before the destruction of Jerusalem.

“panic” - **פַּחַד** *paḥad* - terror, sudden alarm, great fear.

- The city was in “panic.” It is as though it had fallen into a pit. They were trapped.

- The believers looked around and there was nothing but devastation and destruction.

- He wants all of this to make an impression on us.

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Imagine reading the following classified ad in a Christian magazine:

### Preacher Wanted

- Must have unquestioned integrity and exceptional personal strength.
- Required to proclaim God's Word unwaveringly to a rebellious, ungrateful congregation.
- Personal harm and imprisonment guaranteed.
- Success, extremely unlikely.
- Mourning, weeping, and lament over sin will characterize your ministry, especially at the end of it.
- Deepened relationship with God will be your only payment.

**48 My eyes run down with streams of water  
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.  
49 My eyes pour down unceasingly,  
Without stopping,**

- Again Jeremiah bursts into tears.
- That brings before us the depth of Jeremiah's and Judah's mourning.
- When you mourn with someone who has been crushed by something so painful, so filled with sadness, and it causes great suffering to the point that over and over the person keeps recalling it all, and then crying, then recalling, then crying, then recalling, then crying.
- You feel the depth of their pain.
- Jeremiah is feeling that.
- Jeremiah is feeling the pain.
- Jeremiah does not want to leave it.
- He wants to mourn. He wants to lament. This is no small thing.
- It is the sin of Israel he is mourning.

Acoustic Blues	Kansas City Blues
African Blues	Louisiana Blues
Blues Rock	Memphis Blues
Blues Shouter	Modern Blues
British Blues	New Orleans Blues
Canadian Blues	NY Blues
Chicago Blues	Piano Blues
Classic Blues	Piedmont Blues
Classic Female Blues	Punk Blues
Contemporary Blues	Ragtime Blues
Contemporary R&B	Rhythm Blues
Country Blues	Soul Blues
Dark Blues	St. Louis Blues
Delta Blues	Soul Blues
Detroit Blues	Swamp Blues
Doom Blues	Texas Blues
Electric Blues	Urban Blues
Folk Blues	West Coast Blues
Gospel Blues	
Harmonica Blues	
Hill Country Blues	
Hokum Blues	
Jazz Blues	
Jump Blues	

- Lament is our response to suffering. It is when people are struggling with the reality of their lives.
- Lament is a time to be honest with God about our own sins, seek forgiveness, remember God's goodness, and recover our joy. That takes time.
- "Lord, I am so sorry for my sin. I know it hurt you deeply. And it now hurts me deeply. I am in pain and sadness for what I have done. I will spend some time thinking about this."
- Instead we are quick to proclaim, "God is so good, God loves me, God's going to take care of me. Everything is fine"
- Lament is the honesty that we often lack in the church. We don't present reality when we ignore the need to lament over our sin.
- Lament takes time. Lamentations spends 5 chapters on it.
- The length of lamenting is proportional to the seriousness and duration of the sin. All sin is serious. All sin should be mourned to some degree.
- Its like Good Friday – mourning, sadness, reflection over sin and its consequences. It does not end quickly. Friday doesn't skip right to Sunday. You have Saturday to mourn and reflect. We are quick to jump to the resolution but it is ok to stay in the pain for a period of time.
- How long has it been since we or someone we know has mourned and wept over their sin? How long has it been since you heard of a church who spent time lamenting over sin that had crept into the church whether idolatry, a moral failure of the leadership, or embracing false teaching?

**How does the world deal with the effects of sin?**

**Here is one way -**

- Because of sin in this world, life is tough, and the reality is, people find a way in music to express the pain and the hurt that they feel – it is a genre of music called the “blues.” In all likelihood it came out of slavery. Look at the varieties.

- Because of sin in this world, life is tough, and the reality is people find a way in music to express the pain and the hurt that they feel – it is a genre called the “blues.” Look at the varieties.
- Believers like Jeremiah feel the pain of sin as well, thus the need to mourn for our sin, to “sing the blues” over how we have hurt God.

- The Bible knows nothing of a quick confession, a quick repentance, with no regret, no mourning over sin.
  - God has been hurt, that should cause us to mourn for our sin as Jeremiah did.
  - A typical reaction to sin is usually expressed in 1 of 3 ways:
    1. Hide it.
    2. Make excuses.
    3. Confess it but don't dwell on it.
  - Its called “triumphalism” or “the victorious Christian life.” Always positive, always happy, never down, never sad over our sin. So sin gets treated lightly and believers don't live in reality.
  - Oh, its true that we are triumphant in Christ and its true we have the victory in Christ.
  - But the Bible teaches us that we still sin as believers, that sin still hurts God, that sin needs to be dealt with, and that all of that is a reality.
  - Look at the Psalms – 40% of the Psalms are Psalms of lament and if you count parts of Psalms expressing lament, then the number grows to 70%.
  - Think about that – 70 % of Israel's hymn book were Psalms of lament. These were designed to be sung by Israel whenever they came together.
  - How many hymns and songs that we sing in our worship services are songs of lament? Don't we sin anymore?
- There is a time to sing “Hallelujah” and there is a time to sing a song of “lament.”
- Ecc1 3:4**  
 4 A time to weep and a time to laugh;  
 A time to mourn and a time to dance.

47 Panic and pitfall have befallen us,  
Devastation and destruction;  
48 My eyes run down with streams of water  
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.  
49 My eyes pour down unceasingly,  
Without stopping,

**50 Until the Lord looks down  
And sees from heaven.**

51 My eyes bring pain to my soul  
Because of all the daughters of my city.  
52 My enemies without cause  
Hunted me down like a bird;  
53 They have silenced me in the pit  
And have placed a stone on me.  
54 Waters flowed over my head;  
I said, "I am cut off!"

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- Jeremiah will continue to mourn and lament until the Lord removes the dark cloud.
- When God acts in response to the repentance and confession of the people, then Jeremiah can halt his lament.

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- What Jeremiah saw with his eyes included the ruins of the city and temple of Jerusalem; and the multitudes of those that were slain in the streets, and the rest led captive out of the city.

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**52 My enemies without cause  
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- Notice “without cause” – no reason for Babylon to come after Israel. However God had a reason.
- The hunters surrounded the “bird” (Jerusalem).
- The hunt was on. The bird would have no chance.



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**53 They have silenced me in the pit**  
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- They have trapped Israel in a "pit." A picture of the Jews in captivity.
- The stone represents the restraints put on Israel in captivity. There will be no escape.

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- There is no way out. Pit – Stone – Water.
- Israel has been severed from Jerusalem.

