

Sunday School Lesson, July 7, 2024
Rev. Mark A. Seals, Instructor/Teacher
Mike Moore, Superintendent

Lesson—Hope Comes in the Morning¹

Text—Lamentations 3:16-24

I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. Explore the situation that gives rise to the pain and despair expressed in the book of Lamentations.
2. Value the relief that comes when expressing pain and despair to God.
3. Confess pain that feels hopeless in our human experience and seek relief in God's steadfast love.

Why This Lesson Matters: The writer of Lamentations reminds us that God's steadfast love and faithfulness triumph over despair.

Key Verse—(Acts 26:6) *This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* (KJV)

Song of Praise and Worship: “My Hope is Built on Nothingless” by Edward Mote (1834)

II. Points to be Emphasized

- ❖ *The book of laments describes the fall of Jerusalem in 587 to 586 BC and is traditionally associated with the prophet Jeremiah, who witnessed the fall.*
- ❖ *As the beginning of this chapter makes clear, rather than portraying God as the defender of Jerusalem, in the first half of this chapter the speaker sees God as using the Babylonian conquerors as the “rod of God's wrath”.*
- ❖ *This New Hope is rooted not in God's might as a warrior, rather, in God's love and mercy, and faithfulness (vv. 22-23).*

III. Historical/Biblical Background and Lesson Context

Lamentations is the second of the two books written by Jeremiah. The first bear is his name, Jeremiah, and it predicts the destruction of Jerusalem the second, Lamentations, reflects on the consequences of that destruction, for example, the

¹ Outline Content courtesy of the Sunday School Publishing Board Teacher Manual, which should be purchased at www.sspbnb.com

captivity experience itself. The city of Jerusalem, and the temple, the center of Israel's religious life, had both been destroyed.

The Hebrew title of the Book of Lamentations is translated as “how”. Very literally, “How” is an expression of dismay and the beginning of a song of wailing. Jeremiah wrote Lamentations as an eyewitness as soon after this Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians. Lamentations message is a relevant reminder of the importance of heeding God's word, mourning over sin, and turning back to God. Most significant, however, is the book's message of hope, celebrating God's compassion and great faithfulness to forgive and restore those who repent and return to him in faith.

IV. *Prominent Character(s) in the Lesson*

Jeremiah: the weeping prophet who was distraught over the unnecessary captivity and bondage of the people of Judah; They had been warned.

V. *Key Terms in the Lesson (KJV)*

<i>Affliction</i>	<i>Peace</i>	<i>Perished</i>
<i>Remembering</i>	<i>Soul</i>	<i>Strength</i>

VI. *Topical Outline of the Lesson*

1. Introduction
2. This Is About “Me” (Lamentations 3:16-18)
3. A Ray of Hope (vv.19-21)
4. Because I Love You (vv. 22-24)

Food for thought and question for consideration: (What have we learned Charlie Brown?)

- Why is it often challenging to believe that God is with us when we face overwhelming difficulties in life?
- We must realize that God loves us even when he is chastening and disciplining us for the things that we have done against his will.