



**“Is God Right About Sin?”**

**Lamentations 1:16-22**

January 10, 2021

**Lam 1:16-22**

**16 "For these things I weep;**  
**My eyes run down with water;**  
**Because far from me is a comforter,**  
**One who restores my soul.**  
**My children are desolate**  
**Because the enemy has prevailed."**

17 Zion stretches out her hands;  
 There is no one to comfort her;  
 The Lord has commanded concerning Jacob  
 That the ones round about him should be his adversaries;  
 Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them.

18 "The Lord is righteous;  
 For I have rebelled against His command;  
 Hear now, all peoples,  
 And behold my pain;  
 My virgins and my young men  
 Have gone into captivity.  
 19 "I called to my lovers, but they deceived me;  
 My priests and my elders perished in the city  
 While they sought food to restore their strength themselves.

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**Jerusalem is weeping for 4 reasons:**

1. No comforter.

**The 12 Ministries of the Holy Spirit**

1. **Convicts** (Jn. 16:8)
2. **Regenerates** (Jn. 3:5-8)
3. **Baptizes** (I Cor. 12:13)
4. **Seals** (Eph. 1:13; 4:30)
5. **Comforts/Illuminates/Teaches** (Jn. 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:13)
6. **Gives gifts** (I Cor. 12:4-11)
7. **Assures** (Rom. 8:16,17)
8. **Prays** (Rom. 8:26,27)
9. **Produces fruit** (Gal. 5:22,23)
10. **Controls** (Eph. 5:18)
11. **Leads** (Rom. 8:14)
12. **Empowers** (Acts. 1:8)

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**Jerusalem is weeping for 4 reasons:**

1. No comforter.
  2. Empty soul.
  3. Desolate children.
  4. The enemy won.
- Luke 19:41**  
 41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,

- Unchecked, blatant sin among the people of God should bring us to the same place brought the Lord Jesus.

### **Iam 1:16-22**

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### **Dan 4:28-33**

28 "All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.  
29 "Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon.  
30 "The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which **I myself** have built as a royal residency by the might of **my power** and for the glory of **my majesty**?'  
31 "While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,  
32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'  
33 "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

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**Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them.**

- Jerusalem looks for help & comfort but she comes up empty, only clutching the air.
- Let's not attribute any of this to just "circumstances."
- **"the Lord has commanded"** – this is His sovereign plan.
- Rev. 19-22, Eccl. 3:1-11, Philemon 1:10.
- "unclean" – God humiliated Jerusalem to the point no one wanted anything to do with them.
- Those things that are out of our control and influence are left to the sovereignty of God.
- Those things that are under our control and influence (obeying God and His Word) we are to do in a way that pleases God and leave the rest to his sovereignty.

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### **Jer 25:8-13**

8 "Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words,  
9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the Lord, 'and I will send **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant**, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.  
10 'Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.  
11 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.  
12 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the Lord, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.'

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- **"The Lord is righteous"** – if there is any question, any doubt that the Lord is right in what He does, here is the statement to prove it.

## **Zeph 3:1-5**

- 1 Woe to her who is rebellious and defiled,  
The tyrannical city!
- 2 She heeded no voice,  
She accepted no instruction.  
She did not trust in the Lord,  
She did not draw near to her God.
- 3 Her princes within her are roaring lions,  
Her judges are wolves at evening;  
They leave nothing for the morning.
- 4 Her prophets are reckless, treacherous men;  
Her priests have profaned the sanctuary.  
They have done violence to the law.
- 5 The Lord is righteous within her;  
He will do no injustice.  
Every morning He brings His justice to light;  
He does not fail.

- There are believers who have serious doubts about God's righteousness. Things have happened to them, or to people they love, or to things they love, and they have concluded that God's ways are wrong, and that He cannot be trusted.
- A believer must begin with this basic cornerstone of his theology: God is right in what He does.
- Don't ever question God when He punishes sin.

## **Gen 18:23-25**

23 And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

24 Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?

25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"**

## **Deut 32:3-4**

3 "For I proclaim the name of the Lord;

Ascribe greatness to our God!

4 "The Rock! His work is perfect,

For all His ways are just;

A God of faithfulness and without injustice,

Righteous and upright is He.

## **Dan 4:37**

7 "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

## **I. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS IN HIS CHARACTER.**

### **II. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS IN HIS LAW.**

### **III. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS IN HIS PUNISHMENT.**

## **IV. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS IN HIS TREATMENT OF THE OBEDIENT.**

- It is impossible for the disobedient to escape suffering. It is equally impossible for the obedient to lose their reward, their joy, their peace and their blessedness.

The light that reveals righteousness is the same light that also reveals sin.

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- Notice Jerusalem's rebellion against God's Word – "rebelled against His command,"

### **Ps 19:7-10**

- 7 The law of the Lord is perfect, **restoring the soul**;
- The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.
- 8 The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
- The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.
- 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
- The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.**
- 10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
- Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
- Jerusalem has lost her life – "virgins and young men"

### 19 "I called to my lovers, but they deceived me;

*My priests and my elders perished in the city*

*While they sought food to restore their strength themselves.*

- Jerusalem was deceived. Those whom she thought were her lovers, were not. Why is she calling out to them?
- This is what happens when believers fall into idolatry. Their affections are directed toward others, and not God.
- Here in Lamentations when Jerusalem needed help her lovers are no where to be found as the city starved to death.
- Everyone was guilty – "my priests and my elders" – no one escaped because all were guilty.
- At the end it was "every man for himself."
- Whether in the O.T. or the N.T., the pattern always runs the same – "like priest, like people." (Hos. 4:9)
- Those who lead the people of God will incur the stricter judgment.

### 20 "See, O Lord, for I am in distress;

*My spirit is greatly troubled;*

*My heart is overturned within me,*

*For I have been very rebellious.*

*In the street the sword slays;*

*In the house it is like death.*

- Jerusalem repents. Notice the 2 steps of repentance:

1. Repentance starts with conviction:

- "in distress"
- "greatly troubled"
- "heart is overturned"

2. Moves to **confession**:

- "I have been very rebellious"
- Resulted in consequences.

- Your confession will ring hollow in the air, if there has not been conviction in the heart.

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21 "They have heard that I groan;

There is no one to comfort me;

All my enemies have heard of my calamity;

They are glad that You have done it.

Oh, that You would bring the day which You have proclaimed, That they may become like me.

22 "Let all their wickedness come before You;

And deal with them as You have dealt with me

For all my transgressions;

For my groans are many and my heart is faint."

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- Jerusalem is appalled because she receives no comfort from those around her.
- Even her enemies know that it is Yahweh, the God of Israel, who has done this.
- Jerusalem cries for punishment to Babylon, a godless pagan nation.
- God uses nations in 3 ways: 1. to keep a balance of power in this world. 2. to punish His people when they stray. 3. to taste of His wrath for their sin. He may do this directly through natural disasters or through the instrument of war or through the self-destruction of moral decay.

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- This may be the wish of Jerusalem, but it needs to be remembered that God often deals differently with the unbeliever than He does with the believer.
- A parent deals differently with the behavior of their own children than they do with children belonging to other parents.
- As we know, God will deal with Babylon in less than 50 years.
- Unbelievers have a judgment to face after death that believers do not.
- If God wanted to, He could delay all of His judgment of unbelievers to the GWTJ.
- But He does not and chooses at times to inflict judgment now.

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**How does this apply to me?**

1. If I question God for His judgment of my sin, it is my fallen nature that is distorting my concept of sin.
2. If we find ourselves in this world in a place of pain and suffering because of our sin, then the sovereign God who has us there will be the same sovereign God who will deliver us.
3. The holiness and righteousness of God will always produce right thinking toward sin.

"Worldliness is whatever makes sin look normal  
and righteousness look strange."

- Kevin DeYoung