



Learning to Hope

Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations while the Israelites were in exile with the Babylonians. This is why Jeremiah is lamenting. He recognises that in many senses, their exile was the result of the Lord's judgement upon their own sins, but yet at the same time, Jeremiah knows that salvation is only found in the Lord. Therefore, they need to trust, hope, and wait for the Lord. While at the current time they are going through suffering and affliction, one day the Lord will come and rescue them. In the meantime, they are to look to the Lord, and find their hope in God.

In the same way today, we trust, hope, and wait for God today. No matter what affliction that we are going through, we can only find salvation in the Lord. That is not to say that we will never suffer. The Israelites suffered, but they had a hope that transcends their situation. They were able to persevere because they unearthed their hope in the Lord. We don't trust in our situation here on earth. We don't trust in anything here on earth, but rather we find our hope in the Lord.

Launch

- 1) What do people normally put their hope in when they are going through suffering or despair?

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Read Lamentations 3:19-24

- 2) What does Jeremiah remember? (v19-20)
 - a. What does he feel as a result of those memories? (v20)
- 3) What is he choosing to do? (v21)
 - a. What kind of hope do you think he's referring to?
- 4) What two reasons does Jeremiah give that we are not consumed? (v22)



- a. In what way are the Lord's great love and compassions new every morning? (v23)

- 5) What does he say to himself?
 - a. Why do you think he needs to speak to himself?

 - b. What can we learn from Jeremiah about speaking to ourselves?

- 6) What does it mean to wait for the Lord and find our hope in him? (v24-25)

- 7) How do we "wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord"? (v26) What does it look like to wait "noisily"?

- 8) Which promises of God in the Bible that you can say to yourself during times of affliction?

- 9) What are some things in your life that you recognise are the Lord's daily compassion and love for you?

Conclusion

Jeremiah reminds himself of the fact that the Lord is his portion and that he will wait for him. Self-speak can be an important discipline to ourselves. We are bombarded by information and advice from all around us, that our mentality, thinking, and mind can be influenced by them without us realizing it. However, this "self-speak" is not about gearing up ourselves or drumming up adrenaline for ourselves to face the world, but rather we remind ourselves of God's love and compassion in our lives.

This is an important lesson because we can oftentimes feel like everything in this world is against us, and we fall into despair thinking that there's no hope for us. However, Jeremiah doesn't do that. He doesn't deny the affliction or suffering that he's going through, but over against his suffering and affliction, he reminds himself that the Lord is his portion. He reminds himself that the Lord's love and compassion are new every morning, and therefore he will wait for the Lord. That daily reminder of God's promises and truth helps him to persevere on in his suffering. What truths of God can you remind yourself daily to help you persevere on in and through your suffering?