

Series: Lamentations

Sermon: Consequential Faithfulness

Passage: Lamentations 2 & 4

Illustration:

Need: The painful consequences of sin in the lives of God's people also represent His faithfulness to His promises.

I. The Consequential Backdrop of Lamentations?

- Cir. 1400 BC, God made specific & detailed promises to His people before entering the promised land.
- God promised to "bless" His people if they were faithful and obedient to Him. **Deut. 28: 1-5, 14 (NLT)**
- God promised to "curse" His people if they turned from Him & disobeyed. **Deut. 28:15-19, 32-33, 36, 49-52 (NLT)**
- **Ex. 34:6-7 (NLT)** - God is "slow to anger" but He will be faithful to His promises.
- In 723 BC, God began to exercise faithful consequences on the nation of Israel's disobedience through the pagan nation of Assyria. (see 2 Kings 17)
- In 605 BC, God disciplined the nation of Judah for her disobedience through the pagan nation of Babylon. (see 2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chron. 36; Jeremiah 39 & 52)
- Jeremiah was the son of a priest, Hilkiah, who lived in Anathoth located about 3 miles NE of Jerusalem.
- God called Jeremiah to be His prophet at a young age in the 13th year of King Josiah. (Jer. 1:1-3)
- Jeremiah's ministry extended through the last 5 kings of Judah (approx. 40 years).
- Josiah (18 of 31 yrs), Jehoahaz (3 mo), Jehoiakim (11yrs), Jehoiachin (3 mo), Zedekiah (11 yrs)
- Jeremiah faithfully warned Judah (specifically King Jehoiakim & King Zedekiah) but they refused to listen and treated Jeremiah with disdain and cruelty.
- **Lam. 2:1-9, 11, 14, 17 (NLT)**
- **Lam. 4:5-8, 11-13, 16 (NLT)**

II. God's Consequential Reminders to NT believers.

- **Rom. 5:8-9** - Jesus has removed the eternal consequences of sin for all who, by faith, believe!
- **James 1:14-15** (Rom. 6:23) - sin leads to death in our lives.
- **Gal. 6:7-8** - we reap what we sow.
- **Num. 32:23** - your sin will eventually catch up to you.
- **Heb. 12:5-13** - the beneficial discipline of a loving Father.

III. Coming to terms with consequences/discipline.

- Not all painful circumstances are necessarily consequences. But if we are truly followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit makes us aware of consequences when they come.
- Consequences provide believers an opportunity to view their lives through the lens of God's perspective.
- God given consequences are designed by our loving Father to draw us back to Himself.
- When we resist the hand of God's discipline we become hardened, choosing to live apart from His favor.
- When we submit to God's discipline, through repentance and confession, we experience His restoration.
- When we've been restored by God we can praise Him for His faithfulness even the painful consequences.