

The Steadfast Love of the Lord; Lamentations 3:22-27

I. Lamentations

- A. "The book of Lamentations is made up of five poems, each an expression of grief over the fall of Jerusalem.
- B. Like a eulogy at a funeral, these laments are intended to mourn a loss—in this case, the loss of a nation."
- C. In the midst of this woe and despair is an expression of hope in spite of suffering
- D. "Steadfast love" - covenant love, loyal love; loyalty, faithful love

II. Never Ceases

- A. Lamentations 3:22–24; 22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."
- B. There is no end to the covenant love of God
- C. In the Garden after the first sin God cursed Adam, Eve, and Satan
 1. But even in that curse we see God's love (loyalty) for His creation
 2. Genesis 3:14–15; 14 The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."
- D. At Noah we see God's covenant love
 1. God found Noah and his family righteous and spared them from the flood (killing everything and everybody else)
 2. Genesis 8:20–22; 20 Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. 22 While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."
- E. Spying out the land
 1. God has Moses send out 12 spies to see the land the He had promised them
 2. When they return, 10 say that it is too much to try and conquer the people of the land
 3. Two of them say that they should go and conquer, because God is with them
 4. The 10 spies convince the people that they would die if they were to try and conquer the people and receive the land God had promised them
 5. Numbers 14:17–20; 17 And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 18 'The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.' 19 Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now." 20 Then the Lord said, "I have pardoned, according to your word.
 6. Numbers 14:30–34; 30 not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. 31 But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. 32 But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years

and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness. 34 According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, a year for each day, you shall bear your iniquity forty years, and you shall know my displeasure.'

F. Three Strikes Law

1. Also known as the Habitual Offender, Persistent Offender, Prior and Persistent Offender
2. The three-strikes law significantly increases the prison sentences of people convicted of a felony who have been previously convicted of two or more violent crimes or serious felonies
3. The law limits the ability of these offenders to receive a punishment other than a life sentence.
4. The human race is a habitual and persistent offender
5. We should have had life sentences a long time ago... but we don't
6. As a matter of fact, those that are children of God don't have any strikes against them
7. And our recidivism rate is far less than those who have been in prison or jail
8. His mercies never end, they are new every morning
9. Great is His faithfulness!!

III. Those Who Wait

A. Lamentations 3:25–27; 25 The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. 26 It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. 27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

B. Wait

1. "Him whom you protect"
2. The Lord is good to those whom he protects
3. Isaiah 40:31; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.
4. Also, taut, like a rope that someone is hanging on to
5. Everything works according to God's timetable
6. Habakkuk
 - a) Habakkuk 1:2; O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save?
 - b) Habakkuk 1:5–6; 5 "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. 6 For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own.
 - c) Habakkuk 1:12–13; 12 Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof. 13 You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?
7. All too often we have our own idea of what God should do and fail to wait for Him to act
8. Instead of acting on God's behalf we should seek Him

C. Seek

1. To search with care, to study

2. Deuteronomy 4:27–31; 27 And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you. 28 And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. 29 But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. 30 When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the Lord your God and obey his voice. 31 For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
3. 2 Timothy 2:15; Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.
4. Acts 15:16–18; 16 “ ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, 17 that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things 18 known from of old.’

D. Quietly

1. Daniel 6:10; When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.
2. Daniel 6:14; Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed and set his mind to deliver Daniel. And he labored till the sun went down to rescue him.
3. And Daniel is not the only example we have of quietness in the face of adversity
4. Isaiah 53:7; He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

IV. Steadfast Love

- A. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases
- B. Wait for Him
- C. Seek Him
- D. Quietly
- E. Psalm 46:10; “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”