

Title: Things to Recall  
Text: Lamentations 3: 21-26  
Date: June 19, 2014  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our text is Lamentations 3: 21-26. Jeremiah begins, “**This I recall to my mind.**”

**Title:** Things to Recall

Believer, there are things we think upon which can cause us to become downcast: our temporal state, our trials and afflictions, our health. We think of our spiritual state: our sin against God, on how so many are preaching a man-exalting gospel with no truth and how most flock to hear that message.

Jeremiah had many of the same thoughts. Take time to read the book of Jeremiah and the book of Lamentations. When God sent Jeremiah God told him from the beginning that the people would not hear him. It caused him sorrow for the sake of those who perished. Plus, Jeremiah’s message was of judgment, very heavy. He was persecuted by those who heard him. At the time he preached, Israel was in a state much like our nation: civil leaders, preachers and the people were all very corrupt. God was pouring out judgment.

All of this filled Jeremiah’s mind with great sorrow. Listen to the state this brought Jeremiah unto:

**Lamentations 3: 18: And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: 19: Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. 20: My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. Then Jeremiah said, 21: This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.**

When a man speaks of hope, who has suffered what Jeremiah suffered, we can be sure what he says is true. Plus, he wrote by divine inspiration as the Holy Spirit dictated what he should write. This is a man who said, “I have hope of eternal life.” He is going to tell us what his hope was.

Is anybody here interested in knowing what a good hope is? The Scriptures tell us that all who are born of God have “a good hope through grace” (2 Thess. 2:16). Do you have a good hope? Do you have a basis to expect that God will keep you unto eternal life? Scriptures says, “We are saved by hope” (Rom. 8:24).

We are not talking about the proud presumption of simply feeling like you’ll go to heaven when you die. We are not talking about the flippant ways men speak of God today, which has no basis in the word of God. We are not speaking of hopeless despair, either. Believers are given a sure hope, “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Tit. 1:2).

**Proposition:** Hope is not just an empty, baseless, wish but an expectation of life to come. If we would have peace, contentment, and confidence of salvation now and for all eternity, in the midst of a world of trouble and sorrow, it will only be by having a good hope.

So everyone here should be interested in hearing Jeremiah declare what a good hope is.

**I. FIRST, A GOOD HOPE IS IN THE MERCIES OF GOD—Lamentations 3: 22: It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed,...**

The first word Jeremiah mentions when he speaks of his hope is: “It is of the LORD’s mercies.” Jeremiah had no hope in personal merit—but in God’s mercies; not in morality—in God’s mercies; not in works—in God’s mercies.

Some have hope in family relations, in their church, in their religious works, in a feeling and many other vain reasons for hope. Jeremiah had hope in none of those things. His hope was “in the Lord’s mercies.”

### **Only Sinners Need the LORD’s Mercies**

In order to have hope in the LORD’s mercies you must know yourself to be a sinner. Only sinners need to be saved by God’s mercies.

Luke 18:13...the publican,...smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Are you a sinner? A sinner is someone who: knows he can in no way save himself; a sinner is someone who knows he cannot earn a righteousness himself; a sinner is someone who knows he cannot make himself holy; a sinner cannot pay the debt he owes to redeem himself from the curse of the law; a sinner is someone who knows his only hope of eternal life is the mercy of God. Are you a sinner?

God is plenteous in mercy and God delights to show mercy. But only to sinners who cannot save themselves.

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

God’s mercy is that Christ died for sinners, but only for sinners. Christ put away the sin of real sinners by his death, obtained eternal redemption for sinners

Romans 5: 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God’s mercy is that Christ effectually calls sinners to repentance. Are you a sinner? Or are you righteous?

Luke 5:32: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

### **By God’s Mercies We Are Not Consumed**

Get this next part, **“It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed.”**

The only reason we were not consumed when Adam sinned in the garden is because in eternity God merciful chose a people in Christ whom he would save. (Eph 1: 3-6) The only reason we have not been consumed since we have been born or since we have been born-again is God’s providential mercies.

Romans 8:28: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

God called his people in eternity before he called us in time. And all who he called in eternity he shall call in time because he works all things together to do so! Believer, do you realize that everything that comes to pass in this world is brought to pass by God on purpose just for you, just for his elect, both lost and saved? God says,

Jeremiah 29:11: For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we were not consumed in our dead sinful flesh. It is because by God's mercy he regenerated us, called us and keeps us.

1 Peter 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5: Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Not one of God's elect shall ever be consumed because the mercies of God toward his people is sovereign, immutable (unchanging) mercy in Christ.

Psalm 89:28: My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

Psalm 103:17: But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him,...

Believers are not expecting eternal life because we have a right to it by anything we are or have done. The believer's only hope is "it is of the Lord's mercies." A good hope

## **II. SECONDLY, A GOOD HOPE IS GOD'S LOVE—Lamentations 4: 22:...because his compassions fail not. 23: They are new every morning...**

Jeremiah's hope was not his love for God but God's love for him—"HIS compassions."

### **Everlasting, Free, Unfailing Love**

Our compassions fail. But God's love for his people is from everlasting to everlasting. Those God loves, he has always loved and shall always love. His love for his people never changes. It is as infinite as God.

Jeremiah 31:3: The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

God loves us freely—meaning there is no cause in us.

Hoshea 14:4: I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

His love is unfailing—**Lamentations 3: 22: his compassions fail not.** That means God's love for his people cannot be destroyed by anything in his people. That is what our text says, "the reason we are not consumed is because his love fails not."

Romans 11:29: For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

God loves his people in Christ and "Christ shall not fail." So our hope is Christ's love for us. He says to all those for whom he died:

Isaiah 49:16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

You want to talk about our love for him? Well, his love for us is the cause of our love for him.

1 John 4:19: We love him, because he first loved us.

## **New Every Morning**

But though his mercies and his compassions are as old as eternity—**Lamentations 3: 23: They are new every morning:**

Illustration: My great grandmother, Mama Lenice, had a metal water-picture in her refrigerator. It made the water so cold and good. But if the water sat in that picture too long, it became stale. So it is with all our treasures in this life. They appear new for a while but then they become stagnant.

But God's compassions for his people are new every morning. They are not new some mornings but new every morning. Christ is the Fountain of living waters. His mercies and compassions for his people are always new, always refreshing, always quenching our thirst in this dry and thirsty land.

Brethren, his mercies and his compassions are new every morning. So Christ tells us to seek him first. But what do we do? We wake up each morning with just enough time to get dressed then rush out the door into the world.

Illustration: Imagine a soldier in Afghanistan. He awakes. There is his armor all provided for him: a Kevlar vest, his helmet, his weapon. But he wakes with just enough time to put on his shirt and pants then rushes out to the battlefield without his armor or weapon. We would think he was absurd. The enemy is trying to kill him. He's sure to die without his armor and his weapon.

Yet, we do the same thing when we fail to seek him first. God has provided us with full protection, new mercies and his compassions fail not. Therefore, we ought to start each new day putting on the whole armor of God. How? By seeking him in prayer and in his word. By reading a daily article if we need help seeing Christ.

The world would have us give all our time and attention to its pursuits. So we stay up late then sleep late as we can. Then rush, rush, rush to do it all over again. Then we wonder why we are always full of doubts and fears. Why not break the daily cycle? It's foolish for us to keep doing the same thing each day and expect a new result.

God promises, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." So let us seek first things first. With each new day seek ye first Christ and his new mercies and face the evil day dressed in the whole armour of God that you might be able to stand. Paul tells us that,

Ephesians 6: 10: Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13: Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17: And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

We ought to do this and teach our children to do this.

### **III. THIRDLY, A GOOD HOPE IS IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS—Lamentations 3: 23: great is thy faithfulness.**

When asked about their hope, so many people begin speaking of their faith. Not Jeremiah. He said, My hope is **“great is THY faithfulness.”**

- God is faithful **to himself**—he cannot deny himself.
- God is faithful **to his purpose**—“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”
- God is faithful **to his everlasting covenant**--(2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 89:34)—Numbers 23: 19: God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?
- God is faithful **to his Son**—Psa 89:27-36: Also I will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him [for Christ] for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.
- God is faithful **to his people**-- Hebrews 13: 5: Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**

**Illustration:** My father and my mother are faithful to me. A father and mother are usually the most faithful ones to us. But, “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.” (Ps 27: 10)

Most of our doubts and fear is from trying to find hope in our faithfulness to God. If you would have a good hope, look away from self and believe God—GREAT is God's faithfulness!

### **IV. FOURTHLY, A GOOD HOPE IS WHEN GOD IS YOUR ALL—Lamentation 3: 24: The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.**

It means the Lord is All to his people. He is our Reward. Christ is our Inheritance.

#### **Christ is All**

Have you ever considered what all the scriptures says Christ is to us who believe? Christ is our Way, our Truth, our Life, our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification and our Redemption. Christ is our Everlasting Father, our Husband, and our Surety. Christ is our High Priest, our Advocate with the Father, and our Intercessor. Christ is our Provider. Christ is our All!

Professing believers speak of all kinds of things that they hope in. I copied this from Bro. Henry's notes. He did not know who wrote it but it expresses the believer's heart.

**“Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord  
Once it was the feeling, now it is His Word  
Once the gifts I wanted, now the giver I own.  
Once I sought for healing, now I seek Him alone  
Once it was my working, His it now shall be  
Once I tried to use Him, now He uses me.  
Once the power I wanted, now the Mighty one  
Once for self I labored, now for Him alone.”**

The LORD is my portion. He is not part he is ALL my portion! Not when times are good, he is my portion at all times, even the worst of times. The LORD is MY portion.

Can you say that? Is this life all you have? What will you have when you die? You're not taking anything of this life with you.

Job 1:21: And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.

But if God is my portion, when I lose all of this world—and I shall when I close my eyes in death—still I will have All! Heaven for the believer is our triune God in Christ! The reward of our inheritance is Christ! “The LORD is my portion: therefore will I hope in him.” Here is what makes this such a good hope,

Deuteronomy 32:9: the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.

**V. FIFTHLY, A GOOD HOPE IS THE LORD'S GOODNESS—Lamentations 3: 25: The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.**

The LORD is good. He is good in his person and in all his works. But be sure to get what it says: **The LORD is good unto them that wait for him.**

To wait for the LORD is to calmly, quietly, expectantly, trust the LORD to deliver you. We seek the Lord and wait on the Lord quietly, expectantly trusting him to deliver us in every trial, from every enemy, through every sorrow, at all times and in spiritual things and temporal things.

Psalm 27:14: Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psalm 37:9: For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

Isaiah 64:4: For since the beginning of the world *men* have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

### **Not Ashamed**

The reason God is good to them that wait on him is simply because our faithful God will not betray our trust, he will not make us ashamed for trusting him.

Isaiah 49:23: And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

Illustration: Spurgeon and his complaining friend.

And if we are his but we try to make things happen ourselves to save ourselves—he will bring us to wait on him. He promised his remnant in Israel to chasten them...

Isaiah 30: 7: For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still... 15: For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. 16: But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. 17: One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill. 18: And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious

unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD *is* a God of judgment: blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

You may not like to chasten your children. But our children do not like to wait on us. And when the child refuses to hope and wait on our word, that child is begging you to love them enough to correct them. It is less than love to do otherwise. (Read Heb 12) What would happen if God did not chasten us? God chastens those he loves and brings his child to say, **“It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”**

The LORD is good to them that seek him—how? We seek him with these four things:

- Confessing our absolute need of him
- With a sincere heart
- Believing on Christ
- Continually

Then you shall find him. It is because if you can do so, the LORD has first sought you.

Illustration: Every person in scripture who sought the Lord in this way, found him and the Lord was good to them: Blind Bartimeas, the woman with the issue of blood, the leper. He is good, making us the righteousness of God in Christ, only he can!

**V. LASTLY, A GOOD HOPE IS THE SALVATION OF THE LORD—Lamentation 3: 26: It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.**

Salvation is of the LORD. That includes all salvation: salvation of our souls, salvation from all enemies, salvation from dangers and hardships is of the LORD.

### **Lost Sinner and Believers Alike**

It is good for lost sinners to come bowed down to Christ’s feet—to hope and quietly wait for salvation—because salvation is all of the Lord. And it is good for believers to do the same in all our temporal troubles.

If we are in the habit of murmuring and complaining about our troubles in life—we ought to stop it. It is a very great sin against God. They are of God’s hand and they are for our good.

Illustration: I could not get anything to grow in the flower bed to the right of our porch. So I began to dig around in the dirt only to find large rocks which were preventing the plants from taking root. So I took my tiller and plowed the whole flower bed so I could get out all the rocks. As badly as I wanted to see flowers that season I had to wait. But because all the rocks were removed, next season we had a bed full of flowers.

Likewise, sometimes, we must suffer as God plows our ground to remove the rocks that hinder us from growing in grace. But afterward he brings forth sweet fruit. For by it, the LORD teaches us “It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”

### **Waiting While Serving**

Some use this doctrine of “waiting” to excuse themselves from serving the Lord. “Waiting” does not mean that we fail to do what God has put in our hands to do now.

Illustration: I am hoping and waiting on the Lord to give us the ability to get into a new, quiet meeting place. But I am doing the work God has given me to do while I hope and quietly wait on the Lord.

A young man may hope the Lord will one day use him as a pastor to his people. He must hope and wait on the Lord. But whatever the Lord has put in his hand to do at the moment, he ought to do it with all his might while he hopes and waits on the Lord to do what he will. I can assure you we must learn to wait on the Lord first, because as a pastor, all you can do is hope and quietly wait on the LORD.

We find contentment in the Lord when we realize this is the work God would have us to do at this present moment, so that we do it hoping and waiting on the Lord to do as he will, when he will.

### **Waiting to go Home**

It is good for believers to hope and wait until our Lord brings us home with him. We are not of them who draw back. God purposed the salvation of his people. Christ purchased it with his own blood. The Holy Spirit seals it to our hearts. He shall keep us and finish the work. “He that hath begun a good work in you shall finish it (perfect it, shall finish it, shall complete it) in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And the last work, our Lord shall accomplish that too. He shall raise our bodies incorruptible, immortal and we shall reign with him forever! And not one shall be lost!

This is a good hope: God’s mercy, God’s love, God’s faithfulness, Christ our Portion, the Lord’s goodness, and God’s salvation. Now, what is your hope? May the Lord give you this good hope by his grace! Brethren, at all times, good, bad or otherwise, think on these things—call these things to mind and have hope in our God!

**Amen!**