

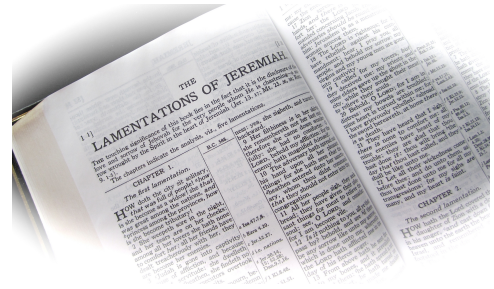
# Christ in All The Scriptures

## Lamentations

### Introduction

In reading the scriptures which deal with the passion of the Lord, it is observed they are divided into at least three groups:

- a) Passages which specifically inform us of the sorrows of the Lord such as Isaiah 53:3 where the Lord is described as, “A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”.
- b) Passages which tell of His expression of sorrow such as when, as I understand the passage, in the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed with, “strong crying and tears” (Heb. 5:7).
- c) Passages which relate to His innermost feeling in His sorrow, “I am as a sparrow alone upon the house top” (Psa. 102:7); “Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me” (Psa. 88:18). It is in this group that I find some of the most plaintive words ever written (ch. 1:12) which is the cry of Israel and is a foreshadow of the Lord. Words which are fraught with intensity due to overwhelming grief, “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.” (ch. 1:12).



### Aspects of Sorrow

It is easy to miss the fact that Christ coming into the world put a fresh and new perspective on everything, including sorrow. Before His incarnation sorrow was always because of sin (and still is), and indicated an individual had done that which was displeasing to God. However, there is another side to sorrow manifested after the Lord came into the scene of time. Because of Christ coming into the world, death, sorrow, and suffering have been made into something which can be beautiful. For those who are redeemed death becomes the entrance to eternal life. Suffering reminds us of the perishing of our outward man which becomes an exhortation to look onward to the new body, and there is a godly sorrow which can result in repentance and restoration to God.

It is a wonderful blessing to know how condescending the Lord became, so completely human that He experienced sorrow in order to be qualified to be our high priest. A high priest who never knew what it was to have ones faith tested in real life suffering could never succor a saint when they suffer for fidelity to God.

### The Sorrows of The Lord

Isaiah 53:3 informs us that Christ was, “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”. His life was one which knew much sorrow. It is my understanding in reading the gospel narratives that there are instances when the Lord must have felt sorrow, sorrows which came from various aspects of living. For instance:

- a) When He saw the ungrateful spirit of the nine lepers who were healed (Lk. 17:17)
- b) When “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (Jn. 1:11)
- c) When He saw the unbelief of the people (Jn. 12:34)
- d) When He dipped the sop in the dish, He knew not only that which Judas was about to do, but also his ultimate end (Matt. 26:23; 27:5; Jn. 13:26)
- e) When His love was rejected and He wept over Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37)
- f) When the disciples displayed an attitude so far removed from Himself (Mk. 10:13-15)
- g) When in the hour of His distress the disciples argued as to whom would be the greatest in the kingdom (Mk. 9:34)

# Christ in All The Scriptures

## Lamentations

### Those Who “Passed By” In Lamentations

The prophet will mention those who “pass by” twice over (ch. 1:12; 2:15). While mention is made of the groups of persons at the cross, the Holy Spirit does draw attention to those who “passed by” and their attitudes. Not all were nonchalant in spirit for there were those who were at or in the vicinity of the cross:

- a) Mary and John the disciple:
  - i) “When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” (Jn. 19:26-27)
- b) The repentant sinners:
  - i) The thief (Lk. 23:42)
  - ii) The centurion (Matt. 27:54)
- c) The mourners:
  - i) “And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.” (Lk. 23:27)
- d) The mockers who mocked Him during the three hours of daylight:
  - i) “A reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him” (Psa. 22:6-8; Isa. 53:3; Mk. 15:29; Lk. 23:39)
- e) The nonchalant who passed by:
  - i) Those which occurred after the three hours of darkness.
    - 1. It is in this time frame I understand the words of Lamentations 1:12-13 refer to: “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. From above hath He sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them”. Why we know this is spoken figuratively, yet it indicates a deep severity that perhaps can only be paralleled with the words of Isaiah, “He hath poured out his soul unto death” (Isa. 53:12).

### The Stark Reality

We thank God for the blessings of speech and other bodily gestures which express deep anguish. Yet, neither verbal expressions, either as a sound or clear words, as with no facial etched with grief, nor wringing of the hands can ever convey the agony of body, soul or spirit an individual is enduring. We all know what it is to suffer physical pain, mental anguish, emotional turmoil, or spiritual grief, but to put into words that which we are experiencing is an impossibility. Therefore, when we consider that which the Lord endured it was an actual experience. The expression, “My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken me” was not just exaggerated words, but was the verbalization of unspeakable agony.

The drinking of that cup or the baptism He endured was never a theoretical narrative. His sufferings were real. The sufferings from the crown of thorns, the lashing of His back, the plucking of His beard from His cheeks, the pounding of the nails into His hands and feet resulted in undiminished agony. His deity never nullified the sufferings and shame in any way. It is in the overwhelming grief and vicarious sufferings there ushered from His lips that plaintive wailing cry: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Psa. 22:1). This is the ultimate of sorrows of the Lord.

# Christ in All The Scriptures

## Lamentations

### The Unfathomable Questioning Statement

- 1) “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Psa. 22:1)
  - a) In musing on this utterance I see two truths coming to focus:
    - i) I cannot help but consider that while it is evident this is the cry of unspeakable grief, is there also the sigh that the worst is now past? The dreadful anguish and soul suffering were now forever gone, never again will the Lord suffer for sins, never again will He experience the forsaking by God, never again know the bruising, chastisement, and wounding for sins not His own, nor the afflicting and smiting by God (Isa. 53:4-5). Thank God He “died unto sin once” (Rom. 6:10); He suffered “once for sins” (1 Pet. 3:18); and is “alive forever more” (Rev. 1:18); glorified at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3).
    - ii) The Lord understood the fear of the resulting persecution that would come on those whom were closely associated with Him. The blind man had been cast out of the synagogue (Jn. 9:34, 35); the disciples all forsook Him and fled (Matt. 26:56) but God was different, He was the God who proclaimed His faithfulness, it was He who said: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee” (Isa. 43:2) but now, God had forsaken Him. The Lord would have understood Nicodemus being reluctant to come out boldly for Him but God never was reluctant to help those in distress, so why now did God forsake Him? In the words of the Psalmist, “but thou art Holy” (Psa. 22:3). God was executing His righteous judgment on Christ. We can sing the words of the hymn:

It was for me, yes all for me,  
O love of God, So great and free,  
O wondrous love, I'll shout and sing,  
He died for me, my Lord and King.

- 2) His description of God.
  - a) Multiple times the Lord called God “Father” but at this time it is “God”. In the first cry from the cross the Lord said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk. 23:34), and the last cry He again called God “Father”, “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Lk. 23:46). This begs the question, “Why this time does He not say “Father” but “God”? Let us be very careful not to mix truths or fail to realize that the Father never forsook the Son, but God forsook the man who was His Son. Mystery of mysteries. Paul and Peter wrote of God being the, “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). Several truths are evident:
    - i) It was not that He had any doubts of His unique eternal Sonship, for Satan had tempted Him on that point and was silenced (Matt. 4:3-6).
    - ii) When the Lord speaks to God calling Him “God”, it is always in connection with His humanity. When speaking of God as “Father”, it is relationship in view, but being a perfect man He lived in the reality of God being His God. God was the supreme object of His adoration, thus He could say, “I have glorified Thee on the earth” (Jn. 17:4). The Lord calls God in the following places:
      1. “Thou art my God from my mother’s belly” (Psa. 22:10)
      2. “I ascend . . . to my God, and your God” (Jn. 20:17)
      3. “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46)
  - b) When the Lord used the personal pronoun “My”, we must be careful not to think of God being His owner, for although the Lord was sent by God, and of Him God says: “Behold my Servant” (Isa. 42:1; 52:13; Matt. 12:18), yet it was never in the sense of ownership. When I speak of “my car” it is mine by ownership, but this is never the way the Lord uses the expression. It is the “My” of relationship, just as a lady could say of a man, “He is my husband”.

## Christ in All The Scriptures

### Lamentations

#### A comfort there is for us in knowing the Lord knew what is to be sorrowful

What a comfort it is to know that the Lord has a tender heart for every saint who knows sorrow. He knew what it was to have heartaches, disappointments, and griefs of every kind. Had He never known sorrow we would not have been able to look up into His sympathetic face or sit close to His heart when our own hearts are breaking. We would never of had One who was able to sympathize with us in the struggles of the Christian pathway. He knew what it was to live amongst men who were casual and apathetic to His cause and that of the Father. Because of His sorrows He has a splendor more wonderful than we can ever understand. Bethlehem and the incarnation was full of the sorrows for, while the angel spoke of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men" (Lk. 2:14), yet it was by the sorrows He would know in life and in death that we would know what it was to have a Savior, a High Priest, and Advocate.

From the perspective of Lamentations, the judgment is past, the three hours of suffering for sin are gone eternally, and the Lord as it were, looking down from the cross on the nonchalant who passed by and to humanity as a whole says: "Is it nothing to you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me." How callous an individual must be if they can look at the suffering Saviour and yet it mean nothing to them. Well ought we to sing in worshipping wonder:

To Calvary, Lord, in spirit now,  
Our weary souls repair,  
To dwell upon Thy dying love,  
And taste its sweetness there.

There, through Thine hour of deepest woe,  
Thy suffering spirit passed;  
Grace there its wondrous victory gained,  
And love endured its last.

Dear suffering Lamb! Thy bleeding wounds,  
With cords of love divine,  
Have drawn our willing hearts to Thee,  
And linked our life with Thine.

. . . *Edward Denny*

---

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia