**God in our suffering – Lam. 4**

**Focal Truth: Zion - the suffering city confesses under God’s judgment**

**Observation**

1. **Zion - the city of God was built to reveal the glory of God to the nations**
2. Ps.48
3. Ps. 50:2 – *out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth*
4. **Zion - the city of God has become the city of God’s judgment on sin**

Jer. 4:31 – *I heard a cry as a woman in labor, the anguish as of one giving birth to her first child, the cry of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath, stretching out her hands saying, Ah, woe is me, for I faint before murderers*

Lam. 1:1 – *how lonely sits the city that was full of people!*

Lam. 2:1 – *how the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud of His anger!*

*He has cast from heaven to earth the glory of Israel, and has not remembered His footstool*

Lam. 4:1 -2 – *how dark the gold has become, how the pure gold has changed! The sacred stones are poured out at the corner of every street. The precious sons of Zion, weighed against fine gold. How they are regarded as earthen jars the work of the potter’s hand.*

1. **Zion’s confessions concerning her sinful condition under the judgment of God**
2. Lam.1: 8 -11 – Shamefulness of sinfulness

*She has become an unclean thing*

*They have seen her nakedness*

*She groans and turns away*

*Her uncleanness is in her skirts*

*She has fallen astonishingly*

*She has seen the enemy enter her sanctuary*

***See O Lord, and look, for I am despised – 1:11***

1. Lam. 1: 14 -18 – Bondage of sinfulness

*The yoke of my transgressions is bound, by His hand they are knit together, they have come on my neck*

*He has made my strength to fail*

*The Lord has given me into the hands of those against whom I am not able to stand*

***My virgins and my young men, have gone into captivity – 1:18***

1. Lam. 2:14 – Self - assurance of sinfulness

***Your prophets have seen for you false and foolish visions; and they have not exposed your iniquity so as to restore you from captivity, but they have seen for you false and misleading oracles***

1. **Zion’s confession of sin resulting from the judgment of God**
2. Lam. 3: 40 – 46 – Repentance & Confession of sin

***Let us examine and probe our ways, let us return to the Lord.***

***We lift up our heart and hands toward God in heaven;***

***We have transgressed and rebelled, you have not pardoned – 3:40 – 42***

1. **Zion’s pain from God’s judgement – 4:3 – 10**

*The tongue of the infant cleaves to the roof of its mouth because of thirst*

*The little ones ask for bread*

*The consecrated ones were purer than snow…their appearance is blacker than soot, their skin is shriveled on their bones*

*The hands of compassionate women boiled their own children, they became food for them because of the destruction of the daughter of my people*

1. **God’s wrath on Zion is completed and satisfied – 4:11, 22**

*The Lord has accomplished His wrath, He has poured out His fierce anger; He has kindled a fire in Zion which has consumed its foundations*

*The Lord has done what He purposed He has accomplished His word –* 2:17

*The punishment of your iniquity has been completed, O daughter of Zion; He will exile you no longer* – 4:22

*Behold I will bring to it health and healing and I will heal them, and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel and will rebuild them as they were at first* – Jer. 33:6 -7

1. **Zion’s confession of God’s judgment because of the sinfulness of the prophets & priests 4: 13 – 20**

*Because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who have shed in her midst the blood of the righteous*

*The presence of the Lord has scattered them*

1. **God’s judgment is promised on the nations who have sinned against God** **– 4:21 -22**

*Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, who dwells in the land of Uz; but the cup will come around to you as well, you will become drunk and make yourself naked…but He will punish your iniquity O, daughter of Edom; he will expose your sins!*

**Things to Remember & Do**

1. God will not share His glory
2. Unconfessed sin brings God’s full and complete wrath
3. The judgment of God on sin begins with God’s people – Judgment begins at the house of the Lord – 1 Pet 4:17
4. God’s judgment satisfies the wrath of God for unconfessed sin
5. God’s judgment comes on all who live in sin – 1 Pet. 4:17

*For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God, and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?*

1. Guard yourself from an unrepentant heart
2. Share the gospel with those who are under the wrath of God still living in their sin.