

Thursday, April 2, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

**"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.**

'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.'

The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him."

(Lamentations 3: 22-24)

The words in the passage above are very comforting words. They are words of reassurance and thankfulness. "God's mercies never come to an end ... they are new every morning ... The Lord is good to those who wait for him." These words must have been written by someone who was feeling very blessed and at a time when life was making sense. How else can you explain such joyful sentiment ... right?

Not quite. These words are from the book of Lamentations. The book of Lamentations was written by Jeremiah the Prophet soon after the destruction of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. In fact, here are the opening words of the book of Lamentations: "How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow has she become, she who was great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces has become a slave. She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks ..."

How could Jeremiah write the words that he wrote in the passage at the top of this page? Did he not know about the tragedy? Did he have his head in the sand? Was he living in denial? Hardly! In fact, Jeremiah was the primary Prophet that God was using to warn God's people of the coming attack by King Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah has been nick-named "the weeping Prophet." God had given him insider information about the coming exile of God's people that would happen around the year 586 B.C. He knew full-well what was going on! In fact, he predicted it!

So how could he go from writing in the first verse of Lamentations: "How lonely sits the city that was full of people!" ... to writing in chapter 3: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end"? I think the answer lies in the fact that as the Prophet of God, Jeremiah knows the heart of God. He knows His ways. He knows that the circumstances of life don't change the nature of God, or His great love for us! It is God's nature to love! It is God's way to come to the rescue of those who place their trust in Him. Jeremiah says, "therefore I will hope in him."

However devastating the circumstances of life may be, God comes to our rescue! You might say, "What about the fact that people have died from this pandemic, and that many more will die?" God rescues believers from that reality as well! Death isn't the end for those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, death is simply a stepping stone to the ultimate blessing of God: eternal bliss with Him in heaven.

Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

God eventually brought the Israelites back from their bondage in Babylonia 70 years later. Why? Because He had a promise to keep with His people. God has promises to keep with us as well. And He won't let us down!

God's Peace,
Pastor Jim