



Mustard Seed Lesson Summary for Sunday, August 5, 2007
Released on Wednesday, August 1, 2007

"Hope and Wait"

MEMORY VERSE:

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."
(Lamentations 3:26)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Lamentations 3:25-33, 55-58

Lamentations 3:25-33

- 25** The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.
27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.
29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.
30 He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.
31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever:
32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.
33 For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

Lamentations 3:55-58

- 55** I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon.
56 Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.
57 Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.
58 O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God sends help to His waiting children at the proper time and that He wants us to be patient and trusting while we wait.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God knows best and always answers our prayers for help at the right time and in the right way.
2. The Lord wants us to believe Him and to wait without worrying for His help to come.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For the "Helping to Remember" section, for each child, you will need half a white paper plate, markers, crayons, stickers and other available supplies for decorating. A lesson activity is also included at the end of this summary to further help with understanding the lesson.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

God's people had forgotten Him and the commandments that He had given them to obey. God sent prophets to remind the people about the things they were supposed to do and to warn them about what would happen if they did not return to the Lord and obey Him. When they did not change and return to the Lord, God allowed their homes to be destroyed and allowed them to be taken far away to a land that was not their own. The people felt sad, angry and confused.

Lamentations contains the Prophet Jeremiah's sad poems about Judah's captivity. This book is a series of five poems expressing grief over Jerusalem's destruction. Even in the midst of their despair, Jeremiah reminds the people that it is never too late to turn from sin and seek God's help. This week's lesson is taken from chapter three where Jeremiah urges the people to wait and hope in God.

TEACHER'S NOTES / TELLING THE LESSON:

1. What does the word "lamentation" mean?

"Lamentation" means "crying" or some type of expression of grief or mourning. The book of Lamentations from the Bible is a sorrowful book written by the Prophet Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. The book is a series of five sad poems expressing grief over Jerusalem's desolation.

2. Why did Jeremiah write the book of Lamentations?

Jeremiah is traditionally thought to be the author of the book of Lamentations. The theme of the book is the desolation that accompanies the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah wrote of the sadness he felt. He spoke to God's people who had already fallen under His judgment. They had not listened to the prophets and had not heeded God's warnings; there was no longer hope for saving their land from destruction. In fact, God had allowed that destruction to come, and Jeremiah cried right along with the people. In Lamentations, he laments the destruction but also calls for the people to hope in God and wait for His help.

3. Why did Jeremiah urge the people to wait on the Lord? (Lam. 3:25-30)

The situation looked hopeless and bleak for the survivors of the Babylonian invasion. But languishing in a state of hopelessness was not the proper response. Jeremiah reminded the people that it was good to wait patiently for the Lord to save them. God would do the right thing at the right time for His people.

The things that they would go through were a part of the Lord's discipline. Because the Lord had brought about their circumstances, it would do them good to wait and sit in silence to think about and learn from their mistakes.

4. Why did Jeremiah encourage the people to hope in the Lord? (Lam. 3:31-33)

Even in the midst of Jeremiah's lament, he still encouraged the people to hope in God.

Jeremiah wanted the people to know that God had not cast them off forever. God would still be good to those who waited for Him and sought after Him.

Admittedly, God had allowed the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and to take the people captives. However, Jeremiah told the people that God did not enjoy disciplining His people. The Lord would have compassion and mercy on His people because of His great love for them. God meets us where we are with grace, compassion, healing and renewed love.

5. What testimony did Jeremiah share to encourage prayer to the Lord? (Lam. 3:55-58)

Jeremiah knew from his own experiences that God still heard and answered the prayers of His people. Jeremiah recalled a time when he personally was the object of violence (Jeremiah 38:6-13). At one point, Jeremiah had been locked up in a dungeon (a dark prison cell). He felt sad, but he called on God there. God drew near to him and urged him not to be afraid.

Because of his experiences, Jeremiah was able to encourage others. Even though he talked about the many sad happenings, he was able to offer hope to the people. Even in their

despair, he wanted them to know that God was listening. He had not thrown His people away. God always hears His people's prayers. Jeremiah encouraged the people to pray to God and wait patiently for God to do good things for them at the right time.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

When you pray and help does not come right away, what does the Lord say to do? Wait and do not worry. Remember what He promised. He is good to His people who really want to please Him. Expect Him to send you the help you need at the best time. Help will come, and it will be good, for He has promised to be good to those who wait for Him.

What are you facing right now that is hard and discouraging? What have you faced in the past that was hard? What have you heard about what others have faced? God has not forsaken you when you go through hard things. He will still help you if you hope in Him. You may not know what He is doing at the moment you pray, but He will help you if you keep hoping in Him and waiting for Him to help.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Distribute the paper plates. Have the children print "The Lord is good" on one side and "Wait for Him" on the other. Let them decorate both sides.

Distribute copies of the activity at the end of the lesson to further enhance learning.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."
(Lamentations 3:26)

The word "man" here means anybody: any man, any woman, any boy, or any girl.

"Salvation" means the kind of help that a person needs. So another way to say this verse would be "It is good for everyone who needs the Lord's help to do two things: expect His help to come at the right time, and wait without worrying."

PRAYER

Father, we thank you for loving us and for being good to us. Thank you for being there for us when things are hard and we feel sad. Help us to never turn away from You in hard times. Help us hope in You and wait for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Turn and Live" from Ezekiel 18:4, 20-23, 30-32.

Lesson Summarized By:

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WORD SEARCH: "Hope and Wait"
Lamentations 3:25-33, 55-58

Find each of the following words.

SILENCE
GRIEF
YOUTH
MERCIES

SALVATION
COMPASSION
SOUL
LAMENT

GOOD
MOUTH
CHILDREN
YOKE

CHEEK
WAIT
HOPE

N A U O S O O K U I I C C S N E U M N H W C I V N C
Y H E S W A I T H F H O H H I M U E I O O L S P M S
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I F O C U I S O M S F H O I O O E C E O M O Y A K O

Word Search – Answer Key for “Hope and Wait” (Lamentations 3:25-33, 55-58)

WAIT H H I
 O E L
 P L E E S E I C R E M
 S E U K N
 O C G R I E F
 S E G
 V C O M P A S S I O N O
 A O
 H T D T
 T I C H I L D R E N
 U O E E
 O N M K
 M A O
 H T U O Y L Y