



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

When Storms Come

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Arkansas has been hit with tornados, dear sweet lives have been taken, homes have been obliterated and beloved friends and children of faith have gone to be with the LORD. The pain and loss are real and so very deep, but so is the comfort that God provides. Apart from God we feel alone in our suffering and pain. With God there is hope, and comfort in the suffering.

Lamentations 3:21-26 21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. 22 The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness. 24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him." 25 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him. 26 It is good that he waits silently For the salvation of the LORD.

When disaster strikes it is easy to be dazed and even forget God. That is why I run to this passage like Lamentations 3, when life seems to be turned upside down, and inside out. Jeremiah saw the end of His country, though His warnings were from God, the nation did not receive his message for what it really was, the true Word of God. Jeremiah saw his land sacked and his nation destroyed. All felt lost. Truly the negative consequences would not simply go away, or be reversed. Clearly there was no rewind, neither was there a fast-forward. There was only very real devastation, and there was God. The devastation was real, and would last for the rest of Jeremiah's life. Yet, so is God's lovingkindness in the midst of suffering. What did Jeremiah do? How did He move forward during what felt like crippling pain, loss and sorrow? How did He not simply curl up in a fetal position and stay there? After all the tragedy Jeremiah and his people experienced, he ultimately went back to what he knew to be true about God that He is good and that He is all-wise and all-sovereign, thus He had hope, even though life was going to be hard for a life-time, God's promises were sure, and thus hope was anchored to the character of God.

We can recall God's character and His great promises

Lamentations 3:21-23 21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. 22 The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,

For His compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness.

Even though we like Jeremiah can feel devastated, we can like Jeremiah recall God's character. Hurt people need faithful love; therefore Jeremiah especially recalled God's lovingkindnesses and His compassions. God's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, His compassions never fail! Even in the midst of chaos, God is the believer's source of spiritual, emotional, and physical restoration, healing, rest, strength, peace, and comfort.

We, like Jeremiah can remind ourselves that God is faithful EVERY day. "They are new every morning. Great is Thy faithfulness."

When life gets rough are you more inclined to recall every facet of your challenges, or every facet of God's character? We naturally want to better understand things that seem great, including trials. The good news is that though we will not understand everything there is to know about why things happen, for every challenge we face, there is a corresponding truth about God and His will for us that can help us grow stronger and more mature and complete in the grace and knowledge of God. Despair or grief results when we seem to face trials bigger or more numerous than our ability to provide adequate solutions. It is easy to feel overwhelmed or even blue. However, as believers, God always provides ample provisions of grace to meet our trials. Yet, during times of crisis we usually need some measure of help from the body of Christ.

Do you tend to run toward God or away from God when you need Him most? Do you tend to seek help from others or avoid help for fear of man?

We can recall our position in Christ!

Lamentations 3:24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

Those who are in Christ, have all the grace they need, because they have access to God through His Son.

Ephesians 1:3-14 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him

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before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, ⁸ which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

Through faith in Christ, believers are forever united to Christ, and have EVERY spiritual blessing in the heavenly places including, but not limited to the forgiveness of sins, spiritual adoption, and a rich inheritance. God will display His children as the recipients of His love and mercy throughout all eternity, to the praise of His glory.

We can recall God's past blessings and wait for His future strength

Lamentations 3: 25 – 26 The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him. 26 It is good that he waits silently For the salvation of the LORD.

God has provided a spiritual reset in the seeking and waiting for Him. What father does not love the sound of his little ones calling his name, or the

shepherd the sound of his sheep who call out to him, the groom the sound of his bride calling his name? God loves His children, Christ loves His body, His bride. Those who seek Him find Him, therefore it is good to wait in faith, and in faithful expectation of God's blessings, both now and in the future.

Crises come, but those who renew their hearts, and minds in the love and mercy of God are transformed and strengthened.

Isaiah 40:26-31 ²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high And see who has created these stars, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power Not one of them is missing. ²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God "? ²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. ²⁹ He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. ³⁰ Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, ³¹ Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

Romans 12:1-2 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Can you identify your greatest areas of need during times of crises?

1. Seeing God afresh for Who he is, and what He is like, and all that He promises to those who love Him?
2. Remembering who YOU are in Christ: being encouraged to live for Him who spared not His own life to grant you peace with His Father?

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3. Seeking Him as your 1st love above all others, that you might be strengthened to live for Him & bring Him the glory He deserves?
4. Perhaps your greatest need is to ask Christ to be your Savior and Lord. Do not wait until till death comes.