

HOPE

IN A
HOUSE
OF BLUES



PRAYING

FOR

OTHERS

- Pray silently for the prayer request printed in your worship guide.
- Our Sixth Grade students
- Our small group led by Brian Nessen
- The Great Southwest Prayer Center
- Neighboring church service this morning at Iglesia Baustia Biblica Fundamental de Katy
- Our mission team serving in Mexico led by Mitch Trotter
- The Makas*ar of Indonesia
- God's will over the upcoming election
- Peace in the Middle East

We ask all this for the glory of Your name.

"For My House Shall Be Called A House Of Prayer For All Nations." Isaiah 56:7

Need Prayer? Monthly prayer opportunities in the Prayer Center.

- **Prophetic Prayer** – 2nd Sundays 10:45AM-12:30PM.
- **Healing Prayer** – 4th Sundays 10:45AM-12:30PM.
- **Public Reading of Scripture** – Book of Lamentations in multiple languages Thursdays 7PM-8PM in the Prayer Center.

Daily Prayer Meeting: Monday-Friday 11AM-NOON live and online at thegreatsouthwestprayercenter.org. **We have special prayer for the Middle East every Thursday at this time.**

Hope in a House of Blues

**“Hope in a House of Blues – Part 1” – Lamentations 1-2
October 13, 2024**

October Sermon Series

HOPE IN A HOUSE OF BLUES		
<i>A 3-Week Experience of Lament with Hope through Music, Art, and the Bible</i>		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
Oct 13	Hope in a House of Blues – Part 1	Lamentations 1-2
Oct 20	Hope in a House of Blues – Part 2	Lamentations 3
Oct 27	Hope in a House of Blues – Part 3	Lamentations 4-5

The Blues

- Charlotte Forten’s diary in 1862.
- Ma Rainey (1886-1939) is considered the “Mother of the Blues”
- A whole genre of music called “The Blues” rose out of this need to express sorrow and loss with such musicians as B.B. King, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Eric Clapton, and Ray Charles.
- University of Michigan study: “People whose favorite songs are happy listen to them about 175 times on average. But those who favor bittersweet songs listen almost 800 times and report a deeper connection to the music associating the songs with profound beauty.”

Today’s Key Verse (Lamentations 1:12)

- We have all felt like this at one time: “Is there any sorrow like my sorrow?” (1:12) Does anyone understand my pain and loss?
- There is something powerfully healing and transforming about acknowledging our pain and loss.
- Susan Cain: “The secret that our poets have been trying to tell us for centuries is that our longing is the great gateway to belonging. Bittersweetness shows us how to respond to pain: by acknowledging it, and attempting to turn it into art, the way the musicians do, or healing, or innovation, or anything else that nourishes the soul. If we don’t transform our sorrows and longings, we can end up inflicting them on others via abuse, domination, or neglect. But if we realize that all humans know – or will know – loss and suffering, we can turn toward each other. When I think of painful events in my life, it is not the sadness that I most remember. It is the union between souls. When we experience sadness, we share in a common suffering. It is one of the few times when people allow themselves to be truly vulnerable. Sadness has the power to create the union between souls that we so desperately lack.”

The Book of Lamentations

- “Lamentations” comes from a Greek verb meaning “to cry aloud.”
- Background: From 588 to 586 B.C., the Babylonian army besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 25). Jeremiah’s repeated warnings to the Jews had been ignored and rejected. People were starving, yet they continued to turn to idols for help (rather than the Lord). Finally, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Babylonians. The city was plundered. The Temple was burned. Jewish prisoners were deported to Babylon in exile. Having witnessed these horrible events, Jeremiah composed these laments.
- The Book of Lamentations consists of _____
_____ over the utter destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians.

Chap	Verses	Acrostic	Theme of This Chapter	Cadence
1	22	1 verse per letter	Lady Zion’s Grief and Shame	Limping Meter of a Funeral Song
2	22	1 verse per letter	Fall of Jerusalem and God’s Wrath	
3	66	3 verses per letter	The Distraught Prophet’s Prayer	
4	22	1 verse per letter	The Siege of Jerusalem	
5	22	No acrostic	Communal Prayer for God’s Mercy	

- The practices of Orthodox Jews (July) and Roman Catholics (Lent).

Learning How to Grieve Well from Lamentations 1-2

1. Healthy grieving involves _____ our losses (1:1-3)

- Warren Wiersbe: “The Jews thought their city (Jerusalem) was impregnable, because the Lord’s house was there. But God would rather His city and temple be destroyed by pagans than to have His name disgraced by the wicked lives of His people. The city is called ‘the daughter of Zion’ who once cared for a large family, but now she is a lonely widow (1:1) who has been taken into exile.”
- Lamentations begins by acknowledging the loss of the Jewish people. Their principal city (Jerusalem) and entire nation have been conquered by the Babylonians, and they have been carried off into exile (2 Kings 25). They begin by acknowledging their losses in great detail and with great emotion.
- Application #1 – Some time in the next 2 days, carve out an hour to list all of the losses in your life. Then, ask a trusted person to listen to you talk through your list as you explain each one. Take note as you share to see whether any of these losses are still raw. Ask your trusted friend to pray with you about these. Perhaps even make any appointment with a good Christian counselor to explore these further.
- Peter Scazzero: “The degree to which I learn to grieve my own losses is in direct proportion to the depth and quality of my relationship with God and the compassion I can offer to others.”

2. Healthy grieving involves _____

(1:12,16,20; 2:11,19)

- John Goldingay: "In Verse 12, Widow Zion is not asking for any action on anyone's part; she simply needs to be noticed. In suffering, one does long to be seen and recognized by other people. Comfort means sharing in mourning with the mourner."
- Application #2 – Read (or listen) to the entire Book of Lamentations in one sitting this week. Allow yourself to feel the loss and sadness as you identify with this book of the Bible. Allow yourself to be understood by Widow Zion. Allow yourself to be seen and recognized by the Lord. Allow yourself to be seen and recognized by another person.
- Phillips Brooks: "If you will preach to people's pain and suffering, you will never lack for an audience."

3. Healthy grieving includes _____

(2:1,5,17)

- Jeremiah unabashedly attributes Jerusalem's destruction and judgment to God. The Bible is full of honest conversations with God.
- **Psalm 10:1** – *Why, O Lord, do You stand far off? Why do You hide yourself in times of trouble?*
- **Psalm 13:1** – *How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?*
- **Psalm 22:1** – *My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?*
- Philip Yancey: "One bold message in the Book of Job is that you can say anything to God. Throw at Him your grief, your anger, your doubt, your bitterness, your betrayal, your disappointment – He can absorb them all. As often as not, spiritual giants of the Bible are shown *contending* with God. They prefer to go away limping, like Jacob, rather than to shut God out. You can't really deny your feelings or make them disappear, so you might as well express them. God can deal with every human response save one: an attempt to ignore Him or treat Him as though He does not exist. That response never once occurred to Job."
- Although God clearly caused Jerusalem's destruction, this does not mean that God directly causes our all of our sicknesses and sufferings, but rather He allows it in a fallen world. It helps to distinguish between three types of God's will:
 - (1) **Sovereign Will** – The providential will of God that cannot be thwarted (Psalm 115:3; Isaiah 46:10; Acts 18:21; Eph. 1:11; Hebrews 2:4).
 - (2) **Circumstantial Will** – Circumstances that God allows in the midst of an evil, sin-filled, fallen world and through which God providentially takes and brings ultimate good and glory (Rom 8:28-30; Gen 50:20).
 - (3) **Commanded Will** – What God commands us to do but which many of us do not do. It is God's will that we obey His commands, but we

do not always obey. Thus, this category of His will does not always happen (Mark 3:35; John 7:17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:16-18).

- The Stages of Grief:
 - 1) **Denial:** “This isn’t *happening* to me!”
 - 2) **Anger:** “Why is this happening to *me*?”
 - 3) **Bargaining:** “I promise I’ll be a better person *if...*”
 - 4) **Depression:** “I don’t *care* anymore.”
 - 5) **Acceptance:** “*I’m ready* for whatever comes.”
- Application #3 – Have I fully progressed through the stages of grief associated with my loss? Are there any honest conversations that I need to have with God?

4. Healthy grieving remembers God’s _____ and has _____ (3:21-24)

- Jeremiah obtains hope by remembering (“calling to mind”) – specifically, calling to mind God’s steadfast love, unending mercies, and great faithfulness.
- Application #4 – With God’s help, I choose to call to mind...
 - God’s steadfast love – He loved me so much that He sent His only Son to die in my place (John 3:16).
 - God’s unending mercies – He has mercifully forgiven me of all my sins through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:7)
 - God’s great faithfulness – He has faithfully provided for all of my needs (Philippians 4:19).

My Application Today – With God’s help and power, I am going to...

- Read (or listen) to the entire Book of Lamentations in one sitting this week. (YouTube: “The Book of Lamentations ESV Dramatized Audio Bible” [22:42])
- Watch The Bible Project’s overview of Lamentations. (YouTube: “Book of Lamentations Summary: A Complete Animated Overview” [7:17])
- Make a list of losses in my life and share them with a trusted person. Take note of any that are still raw. Talk more about them and ask for prayer over them.
- Turn in a picture or object that represents a loss in my life to the House of Blues Art Collection box in the northwest corner of the worship center lobby. You will NOT get this back. Wayne is going to ask God to turn these ashes into a beautiful piece of art. Deadline for turning in is Sunday, Oct 20, at 12Noon. Art will be revealed on Sunday, Oct 27.
- Create a “Bittersweet” playlist of songs that help me go to a place of sadness, longing, melancholy, and reflection. Find a meaningful place to listen to the songs, feel, and pray... giving my life to God afresh.
- Sign up to take GriefShare in January. More information and sign up at [WhatsGrace.org/Care](https://www.whatsgrace.org/care) Registration is ongoing.
- Take some time this week to call to mind God’s steadfast love, unending mercies, and great faithfulness.

WORSHIP & PRAYER NIGHT

YOUNG ADULTS

OCT 14 | 7PM | North Katy Campus

JESUS

CARE CLASSES

Registration Open!

Have you wondered what your next step should be? No matter what you are facing, you are not alone. See what God says!



Visit [WhatIsGrace.org/Care](https://www.whatisgrace.org/Care) for more information and to register.

We offer the following groups to help guide you through some of the most challenging situations you may face, and registration is ongoing!

DivorceCare

Financial Peace

Marriage Matters

Parenting with Grace

GriefShare



Family Christmas Eve Service | Dec 24 at 10am

Auditions will be held Oct 20 at 2pm



Angel Choir
Audition
Sign up

*For 1st-5th grade



Speaking Role
Audition
Sign up

*For 3rd-5th grade



THANK YOU!

Grace Fellowship

We went above and beyond serving our communities all day long last Sunday!
Thank you!

Couldn't make it last Sunday? No Problem!

There's a blood drive on campus **TODAY** from **9AM-3PM**. Giving blood saves lives. It's a simple act of kindness with a potentially huge impact.



Questions? Email
DFarr@WhatIsGrace.org.

