

“Suffering And Restoration”
Lamentations 4-5
Sermon Series: “Beauty Will Rise”

Introduction: Our nation stands in need of restoration. However, it must begin in the church. Revival that leads to spiritual awakening (2 Chronicles 15, 1 Corinthians 5).

Main Idea: Sin leads to suffering because God disciplines His children when they sin, but repentance is the road to restoration.

1. We can repent because:

A. Of the finished work of Jesus (4:22, John 19:30, Hebrews 7:24-27).

Christopher Wright writes, “And then, out of the blue, a single line of assurance to Lady Zion herself. While Edom’s judgement is yet to come, Judah’s is ‘completed’. *tām* is the first Hebrew word of the last verse of this final acrostic poem in Lamentations (22). ‘It is finished’ would translate it well. Something has been accomplished, completed, ended. The NIV takes it as a ‘precative perfect’—that is, expressing a future event as though already having happened: *Your punishment will end*. However, once again we have the ambiguity that the subject of the verb is simply ‘*awônēk*, which can mean either, ‘your wickedness’, or ‘the punishment of your wickedness’. The implication seems to be that God is declaring that the destruction of Jerusalem and all that went with it for the people, city, temple and king, constitutes the *complete* outpouring of his wrath on the sin of his people. Hence the NRSV and ESV seem preferable: ‘The punishment of your iniquity, O daughter Zion, is accomplished.’ The judgement has been delivered, the punishment fully carried out (cf. v. 11). It is over. It is finished.

Well, not quite. The exile had just begun. But that would not last forever. The second line of that verse assures them, *he will not prolong your exile*, implying that it too will come to an end eventually. And that bald statement is filled out by the words of several prophets who looked forward to a homecoming and a rebuilding— a great reversal in which the enemies of God and Israel would be desolate, while God’s presence in Zion would be re-established forever. The great announcement of Isaiah 40:1-2 lies ahead.”

B. Of the faithfulness of God to keep His covenant (5:1).

2. We can repent by:

A. Asking for grace to repent (5:21).

Jonathan Edwards said, “Despite all your great unworthiness since your conversion, Christ’s grace remains as great or as wonderful as it was in converting you.”

- B. Admitting our sin (5:16, 1 John 1:9).**
- C. Acknowledging that we deserve the consequences of our sin (5:16).**
- D. Actually turning from sin and to God (5:19-22).**