

ULC Sermon Study Resource

The People Scattered

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April 3, 2022

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: Have you ever been pulled over? If so, why?

Reading: Lamentations 4:1-22

Outline:

- I. The Violence of Injustice v.1-6
 - a. Jeremiah points out that it's because of how worthy Israel is being God's chosen people that their injustice is so disgusting. More wicked even than Sodom.
 - b. Injustice of any kind, but especially like that displayed by Israel, is so inadmissible because it destroys what has been molded by the Creator
Q: *Why was Israel's offense worse than other injustices?*
- II. Judgment on Injustice v. 11-16
 - a. God's love for Israel did not mean they escaped judgment. It's because of that intense love for His people that they faced the consequences that they did
 - b. If we also choose to participate in those harmful actions, we too will be judged in order to end what God hates: sin and injustice
Q: *Why do people chosen by God still receive judgment?*
- III. Deliverance from Injustice v. 20-22
 - a. Israel receives punishment in the form of their King being captured and carried off into exile by Edom, an enemy nation of God's people
 - b. While we are promised deliverance from permanent consequences of our sin, we still need judgment from God to stay connected to who He is
Q: *How does God guide us through his deliverance?*

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) In what ways have you personally seen God's judgment?
- 2) How did Israel's rebellion cut deeper than those of wicked people like Sodom?
- 3) How does our relationship with God suffer through these sinful actions?
- 4) What comfort can we rely on through the pains of retribution?
- 5) How can we develop a deeper relationship with God through repentance of injustice?

Suggestions for further study:

- Ecclesiastes 3:17 **Q: *In what way is God's judgment peaceful for us believers?***
- Proverbs 28:5 **Q: *How can we know what God's justice means/ looks like?***

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, we recognize what we see in your word: the state of our world. Hearing these words and seeing the mirror that scripture holds up for us of sin and injustice can easily lead us to be disheartened, to despair, and be cynical. It can easily lead us to the belief that what we see is how things will always be. God, we ask that your spirit would work in us to disrupt that cynicism and despair, and work faith in us so our hearts turn back to your Son Jesus. Help us to see the place where you worked your perfect justice, triumphed over injustice, and promised to bring about your perfect peace. Strengthen our faith in these promises, and lead us to see your grace more clearly so we can defend the broken and the weak. In your name we pray, Amen.