

SABBATH THOUGHT 2023-12-02—LAMENTATIONS

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

Jeremiah wrote Lamentations to express his despair over Jerusalem and her people following their destruction in 587 BC. He was a prophet of God who witnessed the wickedness, malice, and cruelty of the Babylonians against his people and the Bible records many terrible things that happened to Judah at that time. For example:

EZEKIEL 5:9-10 'And **I [God] will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again**, because of all your abominations. 10 'Therefore **fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers**; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds.

The world has perpetrated evils that are too horrific for us to grasp. History records mankind's inhumanity to mankind knows no bounds. Just read about the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Huns, Africans, Japanese, Germans, Italians, Russians, Chinese, Cambodians, Vietnamese, etc. Even the Anglo nations are guilty. But books cannot really convey the depths of the evil done. But then videos and pictures came along and brought the cruel details of it beginning mainly with WW2. Even so, Vietnam (and Korea to some extent) was really the first time that the public saw mankind's uncensored wickedness, malice, and cruelty almost in real time and it has only gotten worse.

But books and videos are still entirely different from actually witnessing it. I cannot imagine the mind of the perpetrators and the impact to the billions of victims over the millennia. Now there are many almost uncensored videos of the horrors perpetrated upon the Jews during the surprise attack on October 7 this year by Hamas and many of the so-called Palestinians¹. What set this apart for me was the brutality against babies, children, women, and elderly. I know this is not unique in history; but nothing compares to seeing such things (even in videos) and I was not prepared for the impact of such barbarity toward the innocent and defenseless.

After witnessing the horrors of the Babylonians, Jeremiah put his tears into words. As I was reading it, I was struck by how much of what he wrote described what is happening in Israel:

LAMENTATIONS 1:3 Judah has gone into captivity, **Under affliction and hard servitude; She dwells among the [foreign] nations, She finds no rest; All her persecutors overtake her in dire straits.**

Did you know that the Nova music festival during which Hamas and the Palestinians murdered and kidnapped people was a **trance** concert? Have you even heard of that? This

¹ Sabbath Thought article on 2023-11-04 "[Who Are the Palestinians?](#)"

type of music arose in Germany in the 1980s and is characterized by electronic music with 125-150 beats per minute. It is designed to put people into a *trance*. A trance is a state of semi-consciousness in which a person is not self-aware and is susceptible to external stimuli. Does this sound satanic? The next verse squares with the ways of many of the Jews today who have forsaken God, especially the younger generations:

LAMENTATIONS 1:4 The roads to Zion mourn Because **no one comes to the set feasts**. All her gates are desolate; Her priests sigh, Her virgins are afflicted, And she *is* in bitterness.

Then Jeremiah almost describes the attack itself:

LAMENTATIONS 1:5, 7, 9-12 Her adversaries have become the master, **Her enemies prosper; For the LORD has afflicted her Because of the multitude of her transgressions**. Her children have gone into captivity before the enemy. ... 7 In the days of her affliction and roaming, Jerusalem remembers all her pleasant things That she had in the days of old. **When her people fell into the hand of the enemy, With no one to help her, The adversaries saw her And mocked at her downfall**. ... 9 **Her uncleanness is in her skirts**; She did not consider her destiny; Therefore her collapse was awesome; She had no comforter. **“O LORD, behold my affliction, For the enemy is exalted!”** 10 The adversary has spread his hand Over all her pleasant things; **For she has seen the [foreign] nations enter her sanctuary, Those whom You commanded Not to enter Your assembly**. 11 **All her people sigh**, ... 12 **“Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow, Which has been brought on me**, Which the LORD has inflicted In the day of His fierce anger. ... 16 “For these *things* I weep; My eye, my eye overflows with water; Because the comforter, who should restore my life, Is far from me. **My children are desolate Because the enemy prevailed.**”

The response around the world has been mixed but what should *shock* everyone is how many people who are NOT Palestinian or Arab aligned so quickly with the terrorists and even rejoiced in horrors of beheaded children and brutally raped women. Whole countries even in Europe and the Americas have celebrated. Jeremiah, too, witnessed something eerily similar:

LAMENTATIONS 1:17-20 **Zion spreads out her hands, But no one comforts her; The LORD has commanded concerning Jacob That those around him [think of Yemen and Lebanon] become his adversaries; Jerusalem has become an unclean thing among them [think of Qatar, Iraq, Iran, etc.]**. 18 “The LORD is righteous, For I rebelled against His commandment. Hear now, all peoples, And behold my sorrow; **My virgins and my young men Have gone into captivity**. 19 **“I called for my lovers [think of the USA, Britain, Australia, Canada], But they deceived me;** 20 “See, O LORD, that I *am* in distress; My soul is troubled; My heart is overturned within me, For I have been very rebellious. Outside the sword bereaves, **At home it is like death**. 21 “They have heard that I sigh, **But no one comforts me. All my enemies have heard of my trouble; They are glad** ...

Have you ever wondered why Satan has fixated on causing war throughout mankind's existence? History proves that from the beginning there has been continuous fighting among nations. If war is just about a nation trying to conquer another nation, all that is required is to defeat their army. But every war also brings unimaginable barbarity and cruelty against both soldiers and defenseless people. Satan causes war not because he favors one nation over another. Wars usually start because of malice and hatred toward another nation. But Satan's main reason is that it instills malice and hatred in the hearts of both soldiers and non-combatants.

When two soldiers engage and one kills the other, it is considered to be a legitimate and honorable outcome of patriotism and courage while defending ones nation and family. **But when atrocities and cruelties are committed, sorrow becomes outrage and mercy becomes malice and hatred against the enemy. This is what Satan wants—people who are incapable of love.** War is Satan's tool to cause that kind of emotional destruction to as many people as possible. And those who hate then teach their children to hate. You can see this in the hearts of Palestinian children who are taught to hate Jews. One video records a young Palestinian girl about eight or nine saying that she wanted to become a police officer like her uncle so that she could kill Jews. What is really bizarre is that the Palestinians cannot even say WHY they hate the Jews so much. They have taught their children to hate Jews for so long that they do not remember the original offense.

Wars produce nothing but malice and hatred. Soldiers of WW2 that witnessed various horrors—as well as their families—could not reconcile their feelings toward the Germans or Japanese—or both. My grandfather was a doctor in WW2 and stationed at the front line during D-day. He never spoke about that time and it took me many years to recognize that not only had he seen the horrors but he was likely ashamed because he was of pure German lineage. For him, it might have been worse because he saw the cruelties perpetrated by his own people. All I truly know is that he had a lot of suppressed and unreconciled anger and it never went away. This happens in every war.

Just like darkness is the absence of light, hatred is the absence of love and Satan wants to destroy all of mankind from their potential as eternal sons and daughters of God by making them incapable of feeling love. This is exactly why the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by God the Father is so astounding. It was the means by which mankind could become children of God but it was done for the world while it was the *enemy* of God.

When our heavenly King returns to rule over this world, two very notable things will change. First, the people of the millennial reign of Christ will never be allowed to make weapons or train for war—there will be no more war:

ISAIAH 2:4 He [*Jesus Christ*] shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; **They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn [*literally, teach*] war anymore.**

PSALM 46:8-9 Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth [*Day of the LORD*]. 9 **He makes wars cease to the end of the earth**; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.

During the Millennium there will be rebels that survive the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:20; Ezek. 20:33-38), but the people living under the King will be completely defenseless. In fact, Ezekiel prophesied that the rebels will arise once again thinking that they will easily conquer and destroy the “land of unwalled villages; ... a peaceful people, who dwell safely” (Ezek. 38:8-22). But the King will not need an army to protect His defenseless and peaceful people because He will utterly destroy them (also Mic. 4:3):

EZEKIEL 38:22 “And I [*God*] will bring him [*the enemy*] to judgment **with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.**

Even during the Millennium there will be war because of malice and hatred. But have you ever noticed the *hearts* of the people living under the King? When Jesus returns, Scripture says that He will separate the rebels from the other captives when they are rescued—they will “pass under the rod” (Ezek. 20:37). Did you ever wonder what the criteria is for those He brings out of captivity versus those He rejects and scatters? Those He rejects are “the peoples *who* delight in war” (Ps. 68:30) whereas those He saves will:

JOEL 2:12-13 “Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “**Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.**” 13 So **rend your heart**, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

God is seeking people whose hearts are humble, kind, merciful, and loving. He utterly rejects those who are filled with malice and hatred. They will be destroyed, which is why war is a tool of Satan—it causes many to have cruel and malevolent hearts. The resume of all God’s children is they are *becoming* agape love.

Wars like the one in Israel reveal the hearts of people—for good or evil. God’s people are becoming agape love, even toward their enemies. Malice and hatred are not in them even after being victims of or witnessing the worst horrors of mankind. Instead, they receive the gift of salvation because they “**sigh and cry** [*lament*] over all the abominations” (Ezek. 9:4). And war is an abomination.

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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