

# His Mercy Is More

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, if we could this morning with the Lord's help, if we could turn to Lamentations chapter 3. Lamentations chapter 3.

And I just want us to consider three verses this morning. Lamentations chapter 3 and if we read from verse 22. What it says there, the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul.

Therefore I will hope in Him. You know, have you ever had a song stuck in your head that you just can't stop singing?

And it doesn't matter what other things may come into your mind or things that you might think about or even things that you might talk about. And yet this song that keeps coming back to you.

[ 1 : 02 ] And of course there are many pop songs that are very catchy and they're very repetitive and sometimes when you hear that song once it gets stuck in your head and you can't get rid of it.

Now I'm not going to mention any particular pop songs because I don't want to be responsible for sticking that song in your head. But you know the song which has been stuck in my head for the past few weeks is not an annoying repetitive pop song.

Rather it's a modern Christian hymn which has beautiful lyrics that present to us the glory of the Gospel. And there's a line in this song which is repeated throughout the song and it's that line that always sticks in your head.

And it's the line, our sins there many, his mercy is more. Your sins there many, his mercy is more. And you know it was Keith Getty who's a Christian singer and a Christian hymn writer.

He once said, we may take in what we hear in sermons but we take home what we sing in church. We may take in what we hear in sermons but we take home what we sing in church.

[ 2 : 17 ] And in many ways that's true because I often find myself singing the last zam that we were just singing as we go out the door from church. And you know but I've been singing this song, this particular Christian song for the past few weeks and this line that's repeated throughout the song, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

It's a wonderful reminder of who our God is and what he does with our sin. And if you've never heard this song I hope you'll listen to it because the lyrics they helpfully remind us about the wonder and glory of God's mercy towards us as sinners.

You know the lyrics of the song they ask, what love could remember no wrongs we have done. On this he end all knowing he counts not their sum, thrown into a sea without bottom or shore, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

Our patience would wait as we constantly roam, what father so tender is calling us home. He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

What riches of kindness he lavished on us, his blood was the payment, his life was the cost, we stood near the debt we could never afford, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

[ 3 : 43 ] And then the chorus which is repeated throughout the song it says praise the Lord, his mercy is more, stronger than darkness, new every morning, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

You know it's a beautiful hymn and you know if there were words that could sum up the book of lamentations and indeed our lives it would be these words, our sins there many, his mercy is more.

And in relation to that I'd just like us to consider these well known verses from the book of lamentations. I want us to consider these three verses in Lamentations chapter 3 and I want us to look at them under three headings.

A sorrowful structure, a steadfast saviour and a saved soul. A sorrowful structure, a steadfast saviour and a saved soul.

So we'll look first of all at a sorrowful structure, a sorrowful structure. I will just read our verses again. It says the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness, the Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore I will hope in him.

[ 5 : 05 ] You know the book of Lamentations is a book that's full of emotion and as the title suggests it's a book full of lament. In fact the book of Lamentations is a book of five funeral poems.

There are five poems of lament and these Lamentations they were written as an expression of the heartfelt emotion and sorrow that was experienced because of the disobedience of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem.

And these poetic Lamentations they were written by the prophet Jeremiah. They are the Lamentations of Jeremiah and Jeremiah wrote these Lamentations in response to all that the people of God had experienced and endured and they really are poetic laments because they're written with a sorrowful structure.

And I say that they're written with a sorrowful structure because a common feature of Hebrew poetry which is what these Lamentations are. A common feature of Hebrew poetry was its structure and as a people the Israelites they loved Hebrew poetry.

But what makes the book of Lamentations unique is that it has what we've called a sorrowful structure because each of these five poetic Lamentations they have been written as an alphabetic acrostic.

[ 6 : 33 ] An alphabetic acrostic. And as you know an acrostic poem is a poem where the first letter of each line it spells out a specific word if you read it vertically.

But in the case of Hebrew poetry the first letter of each line or each verse would be a succeeding letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

So if you were to read an alphabetic acrostic poem it would spell out the whole of the Hebrew alphabet. It would spell out the whole of the Hebrew alphabet and this was a common feature of Hebrew poetry to have poems written as alphabetic acrostic poems.

Many of the Psalms, Psalm 119, Psalm 25 they were also alphabetic acrostic poems or Hebrew poetry.

But the book of Lamentations is unique because it has a sorrowful structure because there's not only emotion that's expressed in these five poems.

[ 7 : 37 ] There's also a lot of thought that has gone into these five poems because all five poems are alphabetic acrostic poems where each verse begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Now there are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet hence the reason why there are 22 verses in chapters 1 and 2 and then also 4 and 5.

Each verse begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. But when you come to chapter 3 there are three verses for each succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet which is why there are three times 22 verses.

There are 66 verses in Lamentations chapter 3. And more than that chapter 3 is the middle chapter of this book and you know the Hebrews they love structure.

They love structure that's why they have this alphabetic acrostic poem. They love structure and this chapter, chapter 3 it's the middle chapter of the book and it has been given three times as many verses as the chapters on either side of it in order to heighten the sorrow.

[ 8 : 57 ] It's an emphasis, it's a structural emphasis to emphasize to us that this book has a structure of sorrow. It has a sorrowful structure and so the book of Lamentations has a sorrowful structure that laments the disobedience of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem.

And these poems of Lament they were written by Jeremiah as this sequel to the events which Jeremiah prophesied throughout his ministry. In fact Jeremiah was the last in a whole line of prophets whose ministry centred upon calling the nation of Israel to repentance.

Because as you know the Israelites they were God's covenant people. They were God's special people and they were to love the Lord and only serve him. But instead of loving the Lord the nation of Israel they turned away from the Lord and they sought to serve themselves and they did that by doing what was right in their own eyes.

And for decades the Israelites they bowed down to idols and they worshiped all these false gods and the more they did it the more they moved further and further away from the Lord.

But you know it was out of love for the Lord, for the Lord's people. It was out of long suffering towards these Israelites that the Lord sent prophet after prophet after prophet to call the Israelites to repentance.

[ 10 : 28 ] And the Israelites they were warned. They were warned by the Lord that if they didn't repent then the Lord would pour out his wrath in judgment.

But you know it didn't matter how many prophets the Lord sent. The nation of Israel wasn't listening. And the same was true with the ministry of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was this young preacher who took his role very seriously and he knew that his message was of the utmost importance. And Jeremiah he felt the burden of his message and he felt it so much that he often preached with tears.

Jeremiah's tears they flowed from his broken heart as he preached to a people who weren't listening to God's word, who weren't repenting of their sins and turning back to the Lord.

That's why Jeremiah is often regarded as the weeping prophet because he wept over the state of his nation. He wept over the hardness of people's hearts. He wept over the fact that this nation had rejected the word of God and despite pleading with the people to turn from their sin and to turn to the Lord in repentance.

[ 11 : 42 ] No one was paying attention. And you know my friend, I believe that Jeremiah was a man whom every minister can relate to.

You know I believe that every minister knows how Jeremiah felt because like Jeremiah every minister knows what it is to weep over the souls that are under his care.

Every minister knows what it is to be burdened because of the hardness of people's hearts. Every minister knows what it is to be burdened because of their congregations stubborn refusal to repent of their sin.

Every minister knows what it is to be burdened for souls that are not seeking the Lord's forgiveness. My friend, every minister knows what it is to have people in their congregation who defiantly and disobediently disregard the danger that they're in.

But you know what people don't realize like those whom Jeremiah preached to, what people don't realize is that disregarding the danger that they're in, it leads to the Lord's wrath being poured out in judgment.

[ 13 : 00 ] And that's what happened to the Israelites, which is what we were reading in 2 Kings chapter 24. The Israelites they disregarded the danger they were in.

They ignored the message to repent. They didn't see the importance of turning back to the Lord. They disregarded the danger they were in and the disobedience of the Jews.

It led to the destruction of Jerusalem. Because as we were reading there in 2 Kings 24, in the summer of 586 BC, the appointed time finally came for the Lord to pour out his wrath in judgment. And the Lord did that by allowing Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. He allowed him to invade Jerusalem and destroy the city and destroy the sanctuary. My friend, when the judgment of God finally came, the Babylonians surrounded the city of Jerusalem so that the Israelites and the king couldn't escape.

And as the Babylonian army moved in, they destroyed the temple. They ransacked the palace. They burned Jerusalem to the ground. There was a scene of destruction, devastation and death.

[ 14 : 14 ] But you know, the sad thing is, the people didn't listen. This is what Jeremiah had promised would happen if they didn't turn to the Lord in repentance.

The Lord, Jeremiah had promised that the Lord would pour out his wrath in judgment. And you know, when you read through these lamentations of Jeremiah, when you read through this sorrowful structure, Jeremiah, he is lamenting at the wrath of God being revealed.

He's weeping over the fact that God has revealed his wrath through the invasion of the Babylonians and that there is now so much sorrow and suffering in the city.

My friend, their sin brought suffering and sorrow. Their sin brought suffering and sorrow because they didn't repent. Their sin brought suffering and sorrow.

And that's what sin does. It always brings suffering and sorrow under the wrath and judgment of God. But you know, but these verses, these three verses in the book of lamentations, what they're reminding us is that out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Savior.

[ 15 : 34 ] Out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Savior. And that's what I want us to see. Secondly, a steadfast Savior.

So we have a sorrowful structure and then a steadfast Savior. A steadfast Savior, we were told in our verses 22 to 24, the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul.

Therefore I will hope in him. As we said, the book of lamentations has a sorrowful structure because it's made up of five alphabetic acrostic poems where each verse, it begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

But in this chapter, there are three verses for each succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which means that these three verses, verses 22 to 24, these verses in Lamentations chapter three, they all begin with the same Hebrew letter.

[16:46] They all begin with the eighth letter in the Hebrew alphabet, which is the letter, Khet. But it's not the Hebrew letter that we need to remember.

It's that out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Savior. Out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Savior.

Because here in these verses, Jeremiah, he's lamenting that the wrath of God has been revealed against the disobedience of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Because as we said, as a nation, the Israelites, they had turned their back upon the Lord, they had turned their back upon the Lord, preferring sin and pleasing self instead of praising the Savior.

And as a consequence, the Lord revealed his wrath in order to bring the nation to its knees. The Lord revealed his wrath in order to bring the nation to its knees.

[17:45] And you know, my friends, sometimes that's what the Lord does with our sin. The Lord reveals his wrath so that we'll be brought to our knees. He reveals his wrath so that we'll be brought to our knees.

And you know, sometimes I wonder if the coronavirus is a result of only a small part of the Lord's wrath being revealed. Because as nations, the truth is, as nations, we have preferred sin and we have pleased self instead of praising the Savior.

We have preferred sin and pleasing self instead of praising the Savior. And these things, they have brought suffering and sorrow into our experience in order to bring us to our knees.

In order to bring us to our knees. And you know, some will say, how can the coronavirus be God's wrath? Because how can a loving God allow so many people to die?

How can He allow so much suffering? How can He allow all this to happen? But you know, the nation of Israel, they ask the same question when the wrath of God was revealed against them.

[18:57] In fact, before the book of Lamentations was called the Book of Lamentations, it was called How. The Book of Lamentations was called How.

Because the Israelites, they, like many others, they wonder, how can a loving God reveal His wrath? How can He allow all this suffering? How can a loving God permit this destruction and devastation and death?

How? But you know, is that not the age old question? How can a loving God send people to hell? How can a loving God reveal His wrath?

How can a loving God bring judgment? My friend, just because God is love and God is loving doesn't mean that He loves everything.

Because God doesn't love sin. God loathes sin. And God loathes all sin, not just the sin of murder or the sin of abuse or the sin of pride or the sin of selfishness.

[20:01] No, as a holy God, God loathes all sin. God loathes our sin. But because God is loving, He does something about it.

And that's the good news, because if God wasn't loving, He wouldn't care about sin. If God wasn't loving, He wouldn't be interested in justice. If God wasn't loving, He would have no concern for what's right.

But it's because God is loving that He loathes sin. It's because God is loving that He's just. It's because God is loving that He brings judgment.

It's because God is loving that hell actually exists. My friend, God loathes our sin. But it's because God is loving that He has done something about it.

And this is where out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Saviour. Because Jeremiah says, the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.

[ 21 : 00 ] His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. My friend, you know, the Lord has every right.

He has every right to loath our sin, to reveal His wrath towards us, to pour out His punishment upon us, to bring justice and judgment against us, and to hurl us into hell for all eternity.

The Lord has every right to do it. And yet in these verses we're given the promise of a steadfast Saviour. And what we're told about this steadfast Saviour is that His love never ceases.

And His mercies never come to an end. His love and mercy is infinite, immeasurable and inexhaustible. His love and mercy is infinite, immeasurable and inexhaustible.

And the fact that His love and mercy never comes to an end is what proves He is a steadfast Saviour. He is a steadfast Saviour.

[ 22 : 08 ] And the thing about Him is that His steadfast love is undeserved. It's unbreakable. It's unrestricted. It's unconditional. And it's unchanging covenant love.

And His mercy, His mercies that never come to an end. His mercy, my friend, means that we don't receive what we deserve.

We do not receive what we deserve because what we deserve, because of our sin. What we deserve because of our sin is that this holy and loving God, what we deserve is that He loathes our sin, that He reveals His wrath, that He pours out His punishment upon us, that He brings justice and judgment against us, and that He hurls us into hell for all of eternity.

That's what we deserve. But because His love and mercy never come to an end, because His love and mercy is infinite and immeasurable and inexhaustible, we do not receive what we deserve.

In other words, my friend, our sins, they are many. But His mercy is more. Our sins, they are many.

[ 23 : 25 ] His mercy is more. And that's the good news of the Gospel, that even though God loathes our sin, God has lovingly done something about it in the Person of Jesus Christ, because it was out of love and mercy that God sent a steadfast savior.

It was out of love and mercy that the steadfast savior lived the life we should have lived and died the death we deserve to die. It was out of love and mercy that the steadfast savior was lifted up upon a Roman cross.

It was out of love and mercy that the steadfast savior became sin for us. And it was out of love and mercy that God revealed His wrath and poured out His punishment and brought justice and judgment against our sin and hurled our hell at the steadfast savior at Calvary.

My friend, the good news of the Gospel is that even though God loathes our sin, God has lovingly done something about it in the Person of Jesus Christ.

God has demonstrated His love towards us. He's demonstrated His love and mercy towards us in that whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[ 24 : 48 ] What a steadfast savior we have. And that He says to us on the pages of Scripture, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

You are my friends. If you do whatsoever, I command you. Do you know my friend Jeremiah is reminding us this morning that out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast savior. Out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast savior. And the love and mercy of this steadfast savior is infinite, immeasurable and inexhaustible.

Because this steadfast savior, He says to us, our sins there many, His mercy is more. Our sins there many, His mercy is more.

And the mercy of this steadfast savior, we're told there, it's new each morning. His mercies are new each morning.

[ 25 : 55 ] Why? Why? Because the faithfulness of this steadfast savior is great. And you know my friend, that means that you have another opportunity this morning to come and embrace this steadfast savior.

Because with this new morning, you have a new mercy and you have a new opportunity. You have a new opportunity to cast yourself upon the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

My friend, through the good news of this steadfast savior, you have a new opportunity this morning to be a saved soul. You have a new opportunity this morning to be a saved soul.

And that's what we see lastly. A saved soul, a sorrowful structure, a steadfast savior and a saved soul. A saved soul.

We'll read our verses again. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.

[ 27 : 05 ] The Lord is my portion, says my soul. Therefore I will hope in Him. You know when we consider these verses, these beautiful verses, we see that out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast savior.

And the promise is that His love and mercy, they are new to us today. The sins of yesterday, they are able to be dealt with. But today is a new day my friend.

Today is a new opportunity. Today is a new beginning. Today is the day of salvation and as the Bible says, now is the accepted time to come and be a saved soul.

But you know how does a sinful soul become a saved soul? How does a sinful soul become a saved soul? Well Jeremiah tells us that it's all about where you place your hope.

Because Jeremiah confesses in verse 24, he says, the Lord is my portion, says my soul. Therefore I will hope in Him.

[ 28 : 14 ] Jeremiah says that he is a saved soul because he can confess from the depths of his soul. The Lord is my portion. The Lord is my inheritance.

The Lord is my righteousness. The Lord is my light. The Lord is my salvation. The Lord is my shepherd. But you know why does Jeremiah have this confession, the confession of a Christian? Why does he have that confession? It's because he can say that Jesus Christ is my hope. He is my confidence. He's my assurance.

He's my rock. He's my fortress. He's my shield. He's my high tower. He's my salvation. And it's not in anything that I've done, but it's all in Him and Him alone.

As the Psalmist says in Psalm 62, he only my salvation is. And my strong rock is He. He only is my sure defence. Much moved I shall not be.

[ 29 : 16 ] And so how does a sinful soul become a saved soul? Well it's if your hope. If your hope is in anything that you have that you do or have done, then you're not a saved soul.

My friend, if your hope is in anything that you do or have done, then you're not a saved soul. If your hope this morning is in being a good person, with a good upbringing and good models and a good standing in the community, then you're not a saved soul.

If your hope of standing before God on the last day and saying to Him that your hope is based in your baptism or your Bible knowledge or your behaviour, then you're not a saved soul.

If your hope is in your religion or your regular sermon watching on a Sunday morning or your reading of Christian books, then you're not a saved soul. If your hope is in your prayers or your purge or even your profession, then you're not a saved soul.

Because if your hope is in anything other than Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone, then you're not a saved soul. If your hope is in anything other than the love and mercy of God shown and demonstrated in the Person of Jesus Christ, then you're not a saved soul.

[ 30 : 36 ] If your hope is in anything other than the cross upon which the Prince of Glory died and what He has done in your place, then you're not a saved soul.

Your hope must be in Him and Him alone. Your confession must be about Him and Him alone. Your salvation must be centred on Him and Him alone.

If it's placed anywhere else, my friend, you're not a saved soul. And so how does a sinful soul become a saved soul? My friend, it's all about where you place your hope.

It's all about where you place your hope because you need to place your hope and confidence in the never-ending love and mercy of Jesus Christ. You need to place your hope and confidence in the infinite, immeasurable and inexhaustible love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

You need to calm, my friend, and cast yourself upon the love and mercy of Jesus Christ because what Jeremiah is reminding us this morning in these beautiful verses is that out of a sorrowful structure shines the promise of a steadfast Savior.

[ 31 : 50 ] And this steadfast Savior is able to transform your sinful soul into a saved soul. And all you need to do is come and place your hope and confidence in Him and Him alone.

My friend, the love and mercy of Jesus Christ, it is new to us today. It's on offer to us today. And today, it's a new day.

Today is a new day. Today is a new opportunity. Today is a new beginning. Today is the day of salvation. And now is the accepted time to come.

Now is the accepted time to come and be a saved soul. Because my friend, come. Come because our sins there are many.

His mercy is more. Come because our sins there are many. His mercy is more. And you know, I just love those lyrics, the lyrics of that hymn.

[ 33 : 01 ] Your love could remember no wrongs we have done. On this end, all knowing, He counts not their son, thrown into a sea without bottom or shore.

Our sins there are many. His mercy is more. What patience would wait as we constantly roam. What father so tender is calling us home.

He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor. Our sins there are many. His mercy is more. What riches of kindness He labished on us. His blood was the payment.

His life was the cost. We stood near the debt we could never afford. Our sins there are many. His mercy is more. Praise the Lord.

His mercy is more. Stronger than darkness. New every morning. Our sins there are many. His mercy is more.

[ 33 : 56 ] Our sins there are many. His mercy is more. My friend, you come. You come this morning because out of a sorrowful structure is shining before us a steadfast saviour who promises to change and transform your sinful soul into a saved soul.

So come. Because our sins there are many. But His mercy is more.

May the Lord bless these thoughts to us and let us pray together. O Lord, our gracious God, we marvel at the wonder of Thy mercy.

That our sins there are many. But His mercy is more. And we thank the Lord that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

We give thanks that we are able to come and to confess our sin. Being assured of the promise that the Word of God who is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[ 35 : 08 ] Bless Thy truth to us we pray. Help us to see our steadfast saviour shining before us in the pages of scripture.

We thank the forum for His faithfulness that we could say, great is Thy faithfulness. O Lord, we thank Thy for Thy goodness to us. Bless us then we pray.

Bless Thy truth to our souls that it would build us up and encourage us to seek the Lord while He is to be found and call upon Him while He is near.

Cleanse us then we pray for we ask it in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen. Well, we're going to bring our time to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 25.

Psalm 25 in the Scottish Psalter, we're singing from the beginning down to the verse, Mark 7. Psalm 25 and as we mentioned earlier, Psalm 25 is an alphabetic acrostic poem and we're each succeeding verse of the Psalm that is a different letter of the alphabet, of the Hebrew alphabet.

[ 36 : 18 ] That's why there's 22 verses in the Psalm that are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. But this Psalm reminds us about the mercy of God, how God is so tender and so gracious towards us that He even chooses to remember our sins no more.

Psalm 25, we're singing from the beginning, To thee I lift my soul, O Lord, I trust in thee, My God, let me not be ashamed nor foes, Triumph for me. I'm going to sing down to the verse, Mark 7, which reads, My sins and faults of youth, Do thou, O Lord, forget, after thy mercy, think on me, and for thy goodness great.

These verses of Psalm 25 to God's praise. To thee I lift my soul, O Lord, I trust in thee, My God, let me not be ashamed nor foes, Triumph for me.

Let us not wait on thee, Thee good to shame at all, But those at wealth and cost, Consent, will shame upon and fall, Surely thy ways, O Lord, Thy bonds, O teach, Thee, and to the beginning, Thy truth, therein my teaching, For thou art all at us,

To me salvation stands, And I upon thee all the day, Expecting to attend, My tender mercy's roar, I pray thee to remember, I'm loving kindness, For thee, I'm paying a fool for ever, My sins and faults of youth,

[ 39 : 59 ] Do thou, O Lord, forget, after thy mercy, think on me, and for thy goodness great.