

IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?

Lam.1:12

INTRODUCTION:

Lam.1:12- *“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.”*

1. This lesson is from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the weeping prophet. Christ, also, was known and referred to as the “man of sorrows.” This explains why some thought He was Jeremiah.
2. Jeremiah beheld the city of Jerusalem and wept over her. Years later, the Son of God stood at the gates of the city and wept over her.
3. Jeremiah saw a city that once was filled with ambitiously godly people, a place that, in better days, had been the very heart of the Lord’s cause on earth.
 - a) But what he saw on the occasion of the text caused him to compare her with a widow. The lot of a widow was very hard in those days. Her hair was cut short, her “ornament was thrown off”, she was given “common” food to eat, and was all but despised by the husband’s relatives. The coming of Jesus made a great difference in the lot of womanhood.
 - b) However, the most penetrating thing said by the prophet was about the stoic indifferences of those who were now in & about the city toward these conditions. If they could only be aroused out of their lethargy something could possibly be done to remedy the situation that existed.
4. **THUS THE PROPHET RAISED THIS CHALLENGING QUESTION: IS IT NOTHING TO YOU....?**

I. TO GET OURSELVES INTO A PROPER PERSPECTIVE FOR THIS LESSON, FIRST CONSIDER: “WHAT IS OUR JERUSALEM TODAY?”

- A. OUR JERUSALEM is not a “carnal” city, as that upon which the prophet was looking.
 1. Jeremiah’s ministry took place during the last 40 years of Judah’s existence. It started about five years after the revival we can read about in **2 Kings 23**.
 2. His heart was heavy because the Lord had told him what was going to happen, but none of the leaders of the people, neither spiritual nor secular, would pay any attention to his warnings.
 3. After the Babylonians had conquered the Assyrians, the leaders of Judah chose to make an alliance with Egypt and head there for refuge, but the Babylonians followed to cart them away into captivity.
- B. OUR JERUSALEM today is the CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD!
 1. **HEAVENLY ZION** is the **CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN**. **Heb.12:22**- *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,”*
 2. Jerusalem today is referred to as the “mother of us all”. **Gal.4:26**- *“But the Jerusalem above is free; she is the mother of us all.”*
 3. Earthly Jerusalem was [**and still is today**] very dear to the Jews ... think how much HEAVENLY JERUSALEM should mean to us today!

II. “INDIFFERENCE” WAS THE MOST APPALLING AND HORRIFYING THING THE PROPHET SAW!

- A. As long as people are in this frame of mind there is NO HOPE for recovery.
 1. Until Israel should be awakened from her lethargic, stoic attitude her solemn feasts would be forsaken and her Sabbaths would be mocked.
 2. But, IF THEY WOULD WAKE UP, the abominations of their lack of trust in God and their unholy actions would cease! **THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE CAUSES OF INDIFFERENCE**, and it was as true then, as it is NOW:
 - a) **Love for personal indulgence**. **Amos 6:1**- *“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!”* When concern for the Lord and His cause wanes and we’re only interested in pleasing ourselves --- **WE ARE INDIFFERENT, so far as God is concerned!** [*We are at EASE -- the candle is put UNDER THE BED!*]
 - b) **Too absorbed in worldly affairs**. It isn’t necessarily ungodly affairs, but when our PRIMARY FOCUS is on material things instead of spiritual things --- **WE ARE INDIFFERENT, so far as God is concerned!** [*When we are infused into the world -- the candle is UNDER THE BUSHEL!*]

- c) **An abundance of iniquity.** [This isn't saying that a *little* is ok.] **Matt.24:12-** “*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*” When our lives are just full of the world [viz, lust of eye/ flesh/ pride of life] --- **WE ARE INDIFFERENT, so far as God is concerned!** [*And so finally, the CANDLE HAS GONE OUT!*]

III. INDIFFERENCE IS A MOST SERIOUS DETERRENT TO A CONGREGATION'S EFFECTIVENESS IN DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITIES TODAY!

- A. First, consider **your personal attitude** toward the **PURPOSE** of the gatherings of the Saints who are in this local fellowship.
1. I know it won't surprise any of the members HERE, but in SOME places people don't seem to realize there is a REASON for every service we come together.
 - a) The oversight has a responsibility to **FEED THE FLOCK**. cf. **Acts 20:28; 1 Pet.5:2-** “*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;*”
 - b) The membership has a responsibility to “**PROVOKE and ENCOURAGE and EDIFY**” one another! **Heb.10:24; Eph.4:16.**
 - c) We are to come together to **PRAISE GOD** -- **Eph.5:19; Col.3:16.**
 2. If there were NO OTHER REASONS, such as personal development, or being ready unto good works, or just being a good example, all members would still be obligated to support the comings together, as per **Heb.13:15.**
- B. Next, consider the **Bible School Periods**. We don't need to murder all the teachers and burn down the buildings to kill such an effort --- **JUST LET THEM ALONE AND THEY'LL DIE BY THEMSELVES!** Are you aware of ANYONE who has ever been sluggish about Bible study?
- C. Our assembly services are the very HEART of our activities of praising God and building up one another. Isn't it just AWFUL what all people miss when they fail to attend, whether it's Sunday night or Wednesday night or during a gospel meeting, etc?
- D. Other situations where indifference has eaten the heart out of Christianity is in our care and concern for bearing one another's burdens, OR in lighting up the world around us with the illumination of God's word, AND in supporting His cause in places OTHER THAN our own backyard.

IV. INDIFFERENCE NOT ONLY MAKES THE CHURCH SICK: IT MAKES THE LORD SICK, TOO!

- A. Indifference is the ONE SIN that makes God sick! **Rev.3:15-16.**
1. The indifferent heart is usually the hardest one to penetrate with the Love of Christ or to convince of the need to repent! [It usually has just enough religion to soothe the conscience but not enough to please the Lord!]
 2. A “lukewarm” place is a breeding place for filth and disease. So also is a lukewarm heart, spiritually.
- B. Indifferent people not only condemn themselves, but also they're a stumbling block to others who follow their example.

CONCLUSION: Is it NOTHING to WHOM?????????

1. **ELDERS**: When members are not working, not faithful, spiritually starved, lackadaisical in service to God?
2. **PARENTS**: Children falling into same rut of parents, not ambitious or zealous?
3. **YOUNG PEOPLE**: If old enough to realize your own needs, you're old enough to realize the needs of others ... what are you doing about them?
4. **SINNER FRIEND**: Christ died for you ... provided a **way of escape** for you from the condemnation for your sins. **IS IT NOTHING TO YOU?**
5. **WANDERING CHILD OF GOD**: God loves you still ... He wants you to be saved. **Is it nothing to you?**