

Lamentations 3.1-9 and 19-24

The women looked on as the stone was rolled across the tomb opening bringing to a close a terrible day. The Sabbath was starting and they needed to rush home. As they walked home each was silent in their thoughts of this truly unforgettable day. The day their master, their Lord suffered brutal punishment and was killed on that horrid Roman cross. With it their dreams and hopes were in tatters. How could they go on?

As Christians we remember Good Friday then immediately our thoughts and expectations shift to the celebration of Resurrection Sunday. Yet in between there is the silence of Saturday. The passage from Lamentations 3.1-9 reminds us of these silent in-between times. The writer paints a picture of the suffering they are enduring. One can only imagine at how those first disciples and followers of Jesus must have felt on that Saturday. The questions and doubts that must have flooded through their minds – what had just happened, where was God in this, what did the future hold? Silence.

The Bible is full of these silent moments which Lamentations strongly highlights. Moments between the longing and the fulfilment. Moments that required God's people to dig deep into their spiritual resources to hold on to the promises of God's faithfulness. Abraham and Sarah waiting for the promise of a child. Israel waiting for God to deliver them from Egypt. The exiles waiting to return to their land.

Many of us live in these in between moments – times of struggle with health, finances, relationships. This last corona dominated year has been one such in-between moment – a long waiting for a return to normal. We are also in another time of waiting. Waiting for the return of Jesus when all things will be set right.

In these in-between times it is possible to discover the power of remembering, the power of hope. Lamentations 3.21-23 encourages us with these words: *"Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.'"*

In times of silence, we are encouraged to remember the character, the love, and the faithfulness of God. We are encouraged to look forward with hope because we trust in who God is and what Jesus has done. In times of silence we, like the author of Lamentations, wait. But we wait with hope and expectation based upon who we know God to be. God, in sending Jesus, demonstrated clearly God's own love for us. Christ has risen, Christ is with us and promised to be with us to the end of the age. May we, whatever situation we are in, be encouraged to wait with the hope that God is with us, loves us, is faithful and that God's compassions never fail. May we discover the fresh mercies God has for us each day while we wait.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your faithfulness to us. Jesus, we acknowledge that at times we feel isolated and struggle with life and faith. But we thank you that even in the silent times you are with us and that your compassions never fail. May we have eyes to see and hearts that are open to your mercies every morning. As we wait may our roots grow deeper into you and our hope in you strengthened O Lord. We thank you and praise you Jesus, that in you our hope is secure. Amen.

Song

Out of the Depths I Cry: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VwKPMqxmVgC>

Great is Your Faithfulness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2eQ1oal44wU>