

# *It Is Written*

*A weekly publication of the  
Junction Highway church of Christ in Kerrville, TX.  
Vol. 5                      November 19, 2023                      No. 47*

## "HARD HISTORY"

By Jarrod Jacobs

We live in an age when a section of society wishes to destroy or erase aspects of history that they do not like. People have destroyed certain monuments in the past few years because they decided they were "unfit" or not politically correct. Even in the statehouse, many monuments that used to be on display have now been destroyed or moved to areas away from "public" view.

On a personal level, I remember a story about someone in my family who got in so much trouble that his nieces would not allow his name to be mentioned in their presence. I thought about this one day and noticed that it had been perhaps four or five generations since someone in the Jacobs family was given his name. Yes, "hard history" abounds! Some prefer not to talk about it. It is kind of like the song lyric, "Don't mention his name, and his name will pass on."

However, ignoring history does not remove it from existence. Ignoring the past does not mean we will not face similar consequences. George Santayana is attributed with the statement: "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Kurt Vonnegut cut to the chase on this subject when he said, "We are doomed to repeat the past no matter what. That's what it is to be alive." Ironically, Mr. Vonnegut's statement is closer to Scripture than Santayana (Eccl. 1:9-11).

I say these things because when we read the book of Lamentations, we are reading about some "hard history." This book describes Jeremiah's response to the death and destruction brought upon them as a result of Judah's sin (Lam. 1:8). It might seem more "palatable" to ignore the last part of II Kings and the books of Jeremiah, Daniel, and Lamentations. If we do, though, we will ignore parts of the Bible that can teach us some valuable lessons that can help us avoid certain pitfalls. If we ignore this "hard history," do not be surprised to see that we will follow in their steps!

One of the lessons Lamentations teaches us is that we will suffer the consequences of our sins. As Moses said, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). The Jews could not continue in sin without consequences, and the lesson we learn is that neither will we (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:13-15)!

The sad thing is that the destruction through which Jeremiah lived was not a surprise! God had warned in the days of Isaiah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others that the Babylonians were coming and would destroy the people because of sin. The problem was that most people refused to listen and thus were swept up in sin and error and destroyed. Is this not some "hard history"?

Just like today, there were some people who refused to acknowledge past sins and punishments. They chose to bury their heads in the sand, suffering as past generations did. I am speaking about the Jews in Jesus' day. Jesus warned them about the coming destruction of Israel, and they ignored what He said. It seemed impossible that such a thing could happen. They saw the Temple as something that would stand forever. It wouldn't (Matt. 24:2)!

The Jews in Jesus' day were so blind to the past that they actually told Jesus, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man" (Jn. 8:33)! What? Had they never read Daniel? Had they never read Jeremiah? Had they never read the book of Judges? Had they never read Lamentations? Furthermore, were they not aware of their current political situation? These people rejected the "hard history" and told themselves a story they could accept. What was the result? The nation was destroyed in 70. All of the things Jesus said would happen, happened, and they suffered loss just as their forefathers had done to the Babylonians. Yes, even the "hard history" repeated itself because it had

been ignored!

What does this mean to us today? Personally, what does it mean to \_\_\_\_\_? (Put your name in the blank.) Friends, all of us have a past (Rom. 3:23). All of us can think back to times when our lives looked devastated. Perhaps now, you feel like Jeremiah. You lament and regret what you are living. Maybe you are asking yourself, "Does anyone care?" (Lam. 1:12).

Someone cares! The same one who sent His Son to die as a sacrifice for our sins cares (Jn. 3:16). One might ask, "If He cares so much, then why am I hurting?" Like any good father, He allows us to suffer the consequences of our bad decisions. God didn't do this to us. We did it to ourselves. However, thanks be to the God of Heaven, who makes it clear that we do not have to stay here.

Jeremiah noted God's love in the midst of tragedy (Lam. 3:22). He knew God's mercies are "new every morning" and God is faithful (Lam. 3:23-24). Another who praised God's faithfulness was Paul, who had suffered much in his preaching and yet said without hesitation that "God is faithful" (I Cor. 10:13)! Do we believe this?

Yes, this world, our country, and even we as individuals have suffered "hard history" when we think back to sins we have committed. Thanks be to God, Who can erase the guilt of our sins and make us new in Christ (II Cor. 5:17)! Do you want to be renewed? Do you want your sins washed away? If so, follow the Lord's plan of salvation (Heb. 11:6; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:10; I Pet. 3:21). You can leave the devastation of sin and wickedness behind and have a new life in Christ! This life is one of forgiveness, righteousness, beauty, love, grace, and free of regrets.

We will always have some "hard history" in our past, but thanks be to God, we can learn from it and then leave it in the past! Let us not wallow in the past, but let us do better than the Jews in John 8. Let us remember where we came from to appreciate where we are now in Christ!

## *"I'm At Peace With My God"*

By Greg Gwin

It is not uncommon - while trying to rebuke or admonish someone concerning their spiritual condition - to have them reply with this statement: "I'm at peace with my God." For instance, we got this reply from a fella who left the Lord's church and joined a denomination. In another case a Christian, after admitting his homosexual lifestyle, used the same defense. Apparently these folks think that this feeling of "peace" is the absolute standard by which their conduct should be judged. They could not be more wrong!

In ancient Judah, the prophet Jeremiah bemoaned the unfaithfulness of God's people. One of the great problems was that they were oblivious to their lost condition. This was largely due to the fact that "from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." (Jer. 6:13,14) Do you see it? They believed they were at peace with God. Their religious leaders even told them that there was peace with God. But in reality, there was no peace.

People today, like those in Jeremiah's day, are deceived into thinking that they are at peace with God even as they continue in their rebellion against Him. False teachers contribute to the problem with "good words and fair speeches that deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. 16:18)

The only true basis for peace with God is in humble obedience to His will. The apostle Paul urged: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." (Philippians 4:9) Faith and obedience produce true peace. Anything other than that is simply the deception of subjective feelings.