Clips from Psalms

Psalms 97:10-12
Jehovah's Power and Dominion

"O ye that love Jehovah, hate evil: he preserves the souls of his saints; he delivers them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Be glad in Jehovah, ye righteous; and give thanks to his holy memorial name."

The Book of Lamentations

Overview of Lamentations

Lamentations is composed of five poems of deep sorrow that expressed the current state of the people of Judah and the captives. Jeremiah is the apparent author. The prophet's voice, for the most part of Lamentations, is a representation of the people as a whole that were left in Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem. Judah was experiencing the darkest days in the history of God's people. The book's content is as it is titled. The people lament their horrific ordeal with Babylon as they suffer the consequence of sin. God literally beats the remnant into submission with Babylon (see Revelation 15:1). Judah's experience with the extreme violence of Babylon the wise bow their knee to God and exclaim, "Woe unto us! For we have sinned" (Lamentations 5:16).

God's Longsuffering has its Limits

The current state of Judah and Jerusalem was desolation at the hands of the Chaldeans. There comes a time in the life of sinful man that the Lord's longsuffering and patience ends (Lamentations 1:5). Jehovah God will show no mercy or pity upon the disobedient at that time (Lamentations 2:21). A day of "fierce anger and wrath" awaits the one who rejects Jehovah's law (Lamentations 2:1-6) and no sinner shall escape (Lamentations 2:22). Judah had reached such a state of corruption, and therefore, "The Lord hath trodden as in a winepress the virgin daughter of Judah" (Lamentations 1:15). Young, old, male, female, adult, and child were all subject to the sword, famine, and pestilence. Jeremiah had warned the people for 42 years yet to no avail (see Jeremiah 1:1; 25:3ff; 40:1ff). The Apostle John similarly explains to the seven churches of Asia that if the sin committed against God is not repented of they too shall suffer at the hands of an angry God (see Revelation 15:1).
God's Fierce Anger

Over and over Jeremiah warned Judah of God's fierce anger due to their sin. Lamentations records the outpouring of God's anger. Children were dying of thirst and starvation (Lamentations 4:4). Nobles that once ate as kings walked in the streets with their skin barely clinging to the bones in a state of starvation (Lamentations 4:7-8). Many had been slain with the sword (Lamentations 4:9). Mothers and ate their own children to avert starvation (Lamentations 4:10). Judah's virgins were raped (Lamentations 5:11). The princes of Judah had been executed and hung up by the hands for public display (Lamentations 5:13). Judah was now ruled by the Chaldeans and living as servants (Lamentations 5:1ff). As Jeremiah watched God's fierce anger unleashed upon sinful Judah it caused him deep sorrow and pain (Lamentations 2:11; 3:48-49). Rather than repenting of their sins the people asked God, "Why are you doing this to us?" (see Jeremiah 14:19 etc.) During the days of the Roman Empire God's sinful people also experienced the wrath of God. Rather than acknowledging and repenting of their sins they complain and blaspheme the name of God for their misery he has brought to their lives (see Revelation 9:20-21; 16:9-11, 21).

God's Providence

Jeremiah had assured Judah that what they were about to experience (i.e., sword, famine, pestilence, and 70 years captivity) would serve to move them to shame and repentance (Jeremiah 29:8-14). The book of Lamentations records the fulfillment of that prophecy. They understood, at the point of Jeremiah writing Lamentations, that their yoke of affliction lay heavily upon their neck because of their sins (Lamentations 1:14). Judah proclaimed, "Jehovah is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment." (Lamentations 1:18). At Lamentations 1:20 Judah proclaimed, "I have grievously rebelled." And again, "We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast not pardoned." (Lamentations 3:42). Finally, Judah proclaims, "Woe unto us! For we have sinned" (Jeremiah 5:16). It is a painful thing to see people throughout history suffer until their knee is bent in humility to Jehovah God or else destroyed. Interestingly, the consequences of Judah's sin had not changed even though their hearts were now turning back to Jehovah God (see Proverbs 13:15 and Hosea 2:6). Judah continued to experience great sorrow of heart over the loss of loved ones, the temple of God, and the city. Judah's sorrow was heavy and tears were flowing as a river that raged out of control (Lamentations 1:16; 2:18). A heartbreaking people had learned their lesson but not without the Loving Father driving them to this point with drastic and violent measures. This proves that Jehovah God is a God of love. Judah's current state of repentance and sorrow would not have occurred without the Lord's heavy hand upon them through Babylon (please read Jeremiah 5:30; 6:16 for the state of Judah's mind before God's wrath was poured out upon them).

Conclusion

"Dealing" with one you love throughout life is a blessing from God. The Bible reveals actual relationships such as Ruth and Boaz (Ruth 3:10-11; 4:13-17), the worthy woman of Proverbs 31:29-30, and Solomon and the Shulammite (Song of Solomon 2:16). When young unmarried people read these inspired texts they dream of such a day to come. When early young married people read these inspired text some may believe that such love is not possible. When those who have been married for a while read the text they experience divine inspiration's marital bliss. Being married is one of many great blessings in this life that God has grants us. Cherish your marriage and give God thanks for your mate.