

Sanity at long last! And now they see God for who He really is. He is eternally sovereign, and He eternally sits on His sovereign throne. This Sovereign, Almighty, Reigning forever God was not made by puny human hands. And finally having the ability to turn their eyes upward, they cry out to this God in confession of their sins, asking Him to save them, to restore them, to renew them to His covenant promises.

Their ultimate hope (confident expectation) for restoration to Him and to the land was in God's faithfulness. They are remembering God's covenant promises. But when a people fall as far into sin as they have, they stop being presumptuous; they stop thinking they could ever deserve anything from God; they are that broken, that contrite, that sorry. So the final word of the prayer leaves this tension totally unresolved. The book ends with this: "Renew our days as of old—unless you have utterly rejected us, and you remain exceedingly angry with us..."

However, no matter the depth of Israel's national sins, the Lord will keep His covenants with His chosen people. "I ask then," Paul writes in Romans 11:1, "has God rejected His people [Israel]? By no means!"

What is sanity?

If "insanity is doing the same things over and over while expecting different results," then sanity is doing _____ things over and over while expecting glorious results. Sanity is consistently apprenticing under Jesus. Sanity is discerning the truth of God's Word and daily living it out. Sanity is turning your eyes upon Jesus, looking full in His wonder-ful face, and keeping them there. Sanity is being Christ-centered to the glory of the Father. **Question:** How sane are you? How well do you see? How spiritually discerning are you? How wise in Christ are You? Wise enough, I pray, to turn your eyes upon Jesus and keep them there.

Lamentations: "O Jerusalem, Who Can Heal You?"

Great Is Her Prayer

Lamentations 5

What is insanity?

How is your life turning out? How's it going for you? Here's a little mental exercise for you: In your mind's eye, turn around. What do you see? Do you see debris? Lots of fallout from a life badly lived according to the world's standards and because you did life your own way instead of your Redeemer's Way. Debris caused by you, because of your sin before the cross was before you, that which you could've controlled if you were surrendered to Jesus. Why is that? What was or is our problem? The layman's definition of insanity—fill in this blank: "Insanity is doing the same things over and over while expecting different _____." According to that definition, how insane are you?

Spiritual and eternal insanity includes the inability to see it's my fault when it's my fault. It's because I cannot see that doing life my way instead of Jesus' way is my problem. Then I remember why I can't see. **2 Corinthians 4:4:** "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers." That's what we see in Lamentations. Blindness. Stone blindness. And the awful results of stone blindness—unbelievers who could not see but thought they saw...until it was too late.

But you know what's really scary... We believers often stumble around in the dark. We have allowed the god of this world to blind our minds. We fail to allow the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Word to illuminate our minds daily. So how sane are you? That depends on how well you see Jesus! That depends on how humble you have become in Christ so He can apprentice you. That depends on how debris-less your immediate life is in your rearview mirror.

One of the greatest statements we can make in life when it's my fault, is to sincerely state, "It's my fault!" Only sane people **can** think that. Only those who are illumined by the Holy Spirit **can** say that. Only humbled people _____ say that. And when we finally arrive at that low place, **great is our prayers!** Finally, after decades of stone blindness, Judah and Jerusalem can see! It only came when they were at their very lowest

spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically. It was only after all was lost because of their insanity that they could pray **this great prayer**. Finally, after four chapters of **terrible lament** because they had received and are continuing to receive the wages of their awful sins, this entire fifth chapter is **their great prayer!**

Look what has befallen them:

1. They have lost _____ (1-6).

Verse 1: Of course, the Lord never forgets, and He always sees. But this introduction to their prayers is a plea for undeserved help. “Lord, we don’t deserve Your remembrance, but please remember us...” Finally, humbled, humiliated, and brokenhearted, the Jews tearfully turn their faces toward heaven to plead with the God they forgot.

Verse 2-6: Their losses:

- Inheritance
- Fathers
- Husbands
- Water
- Firewood
- Freedom
- Rest
- Daily bread

It’s fascinating, how we pursue happiness, we strive for prosperity, we chase after the American dream, but it turns into an awful nightmare. When we pursue what we want, the hard evidence shows that our quality of life is becoming worse. But we still can’t see that what a sinful-wrong-minded pursuit promises it never delivers. It’s not until we are at the precipice edge of losing everything that we finally look up...

2. They are burdened with inherited _____ (7-10).

Their eyes are opening. They’re coming to their senses. Sanity is returning to them. Finally, they are seeing the covenant warning of Exodus 20 in the framework of the Ten Commandments, that “I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of their fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.” This present

generation is not saying they are suffering unjustly for their great, great grandfather’s sins, but there are consequences for their forefather’s sins. And often the greatest consequence is stupidly follow-ing in their sinful _____. Bill M’s astute observation...

This generation of Jews are just like their forefathers. They continue to carry in their beings the sin-virus. They also hate their God and His ways... They are burdened with past sins inherited from their fathers, and suffering because of their own wretched sins.

3. They are being terribly _____ (11-15).

The horrors of foreign occupation. No element of society escaped the hammer of God’s justice. Even the young, those who were Israel’s hope, had been reduced to the status of slaves. Without their notice, blinded by the evil one up until right now, their sinfulness did not bring to God’s wayward people the happiness they had been striving for. Instead, it robbed them of joy and turned their dancing into mourning.

4. Here is the _____ why (16-18).

“The crown has fallen.” The Davidic line of kings wearing the crown in Jerusalem has fallen. The Davidic monarchy has ended, and will not resume until David’s greatest Son comes as King of kings, King Jesus!

Finally, in their brokenness, their contriteness before God, the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem stop rationalizing, stop justifying, stop passing the buck—_____ has finally returned. “It’s our fault. We have only ourselves to blame for our present desolation. For we have sinned.” Have you ever been tempted to pass blame? You blew it, you knew you blew it, but instead taking responsibility for your actions, you blame someone else. And if you do that long enough, you don’t even know you are doing it. “It’s not my fault!” But finally, when you are broken before the Lord, you regain your sanity and take the blame. “Woe is me, because, God, I have sinned!” Finally, the scales fall from our eyes, we pass the buck no longer, in our broken condition, we take full responsibility for our disobedience. That’s a hard, hard time. But finally, we regain what we lost: our _____ minds.

5. And here is their only _____ (19-22).