# Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

*Part 341 – Seeing Affliction Through Destruction In Anger (Lamentations 3:1-66)*

1. Did the writer of Lamentations initially feel that the strength and hope of God was with him?

No: *"(1) I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. (2) He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light. (3) Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day. (4) My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones. (5) He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail. (6) He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old. (7) He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. (8) Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer. (9) He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked. (10) He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places. (11) He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate. (12) He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow. (13) He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins. (14) I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day. (15) He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. (16) He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes. (17) And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgat prosperity. (18) And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: (19) Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall"* (**Lamentations 3:1-19**).

- God wanted His messengers to see (**Ezekiel 8:17**).
- He felt God against him, leading to darkness, etc. (**Psalms 34:16**, **Isaiah 59:9**, **Isaiah 63:10**, **Lamentations 2:4-7**, and **I Peter 3:12**).
- He felt entrapped, which God certainly can do (**Hosea 2:6**).
- His prayers felt useless (**Psalms 80:4** and **Habakkuk 1:1-4**).
- The bear (**Amos 5:18-20**).
- "I was a derision" (**Psalms 44:13**, **Psalms 119:51**, and **Jeremiah 20:7-8**).
- We will see that this is not clear thinking in the next few verses. So, consider: *"For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee"* (**Psalms 31:22**).

2. As the writer of Lamentations recalled things in humility, what happened to his outlook of things?

He regained hope: *"(20) My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. (21) This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. (22) It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (24) The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. (25) The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. (26) It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. (27) It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. (28) He sitteth alone and*

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*keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. (29) He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope. (30) He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach"* (**Lamentations 3:20-30**).

- Being proven can be humbling (**Deuteronomy 8:2**).
- Recalling that not being consumed was the Lord's mercy at play (**Psalms 77:7-11**, **Psalms 130:7**, and **Titus 3:5**).
- The LORD is good unto them that wait for him (**Psalms 27:14**, **Psalms 37:7-9**, **Psalms 130:5**, **Isaiah 40:31**, and **Micah 7:7**).
- Good to bear yoke in youth… Meaning, it is better to suffer and learn from your errors when young and able to be corrected/make corrections (**Psalms 119:71** and **Hebrews 12:5-12**; cf. **Proverbs 8:17**).
- Filled with what they suffered through (**Psalms 123:3**).

3. Would God have cast off Israel forever?

No: *"(31) For the Lord will not cast off for ever: (32) But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies"* (**Lamentations 3:31-32**).

- **Psalms 78:38**, **II Kings 19:34**, **Isaiah 54:7-10**, **Micah 7:18-20**, and **Romans 11:1-5**. The reasons: **Deuteronomy 4:31**, **Acts 3:18-26**, and **Hebrews 7:14**

4. Since the Lord did not seek to crushingly grieve the children of men, what did man not have a right to complain about?

None: *"(33) For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. (34) To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, (35) To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, (36) To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not. (37) Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? (38) Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? (39) Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins"* (**Lamentations 3:33-39**)?

- He did not try or want to destroy them (**Ezekiel 33:11**).
- He did not want to subvert man (**Isaiah 59:15**).
- Who could rewrite God's will (**Proverbs 19:21** and **Isaiah 46:9-10**)?
- The Lord is not a hypocrite (**Deuteronomy 32:4**, **Psalms 92:15**, and **I John 1:5**).
- Complaining for the punishment of sins (**Proverbs 19:3**; cf. **Ezra 9:13** and **Micah 7:9**).
- Aren't we shown that we reap what we sow (**Proverbs 22:8**, **Proverbs 24:12**, **Isaiah 3:10-11**, **Jeremiah 2:19**, and **Galatians 6:7-9**)?

5. What should they have done after searching and trying their ways?

*"(40) Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD. (41) Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens"* (**Lamentations 3:40-41**).

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- **Psalms 119:59-60**, **Ezekiel 18:27-30**, **Luke 15:11-21**, **I Corinthians 11:28-32**, and **II Corinthians 13:5**

6. What caused Israel's fear, snare, desolation, and destruction?

Their transgressions and rebellion: *"(42) We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. (43) Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. (44) Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through. (45) Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people. (46) All our enemies have opened their mouths against us. (47) Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction"* (**Lamentations 3:43-47**).

- Their transgressions were not overlooked or unconditionally forgiven (**Numbers 14:18**, **Lamentations 2:1-22**, **Ezekiel 7:9**, **Ezekiel 18:4**, **Ezekiel 18:20**, **Ezekiel 24:13**, **Nahum 1:3**, **Luke 13:1-5**, **Romans 6:23**, and **Revelation 21:8**).

7. Why was the writer of Lamentations crying, calling on the Lord, and asking God to recompense Israel for their sins in His anger?

He cried from the dungeon for the Lord to give judgment against Israel for their oppression of him as a prophet: *"(48) Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. (49) Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, (50) Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven. (51) Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city. (52) Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause. (53) They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me. (54) Waters flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off. (55) I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the low dungeon. (56) Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. (57) Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not. (58) O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life. (59) O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong: judge thou my cause. (60) Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their imaginations against me. (61) Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD, and all their imaginations against me; (62) The lips of those that rose up against me, and their device against me all the day. (63) Behold their sitting down, and their rising up; I am their musick. (64) Render unto them a recompence, O LORD, according to the work of their hands. (65) Give them sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them. (66) Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of the LORD"* (**Lamentations 3:48-66**).

- Tears for the suffering of the people (**Psalms 119:136**, **Luke 19:41-44**, and **Romans 9:1-3**).
- The words here could [are likely] very easily be Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 13:17**, **Jeremiah 15:17-18**, **Jeremiah 20:7-18**, **Jeremiah 37:16**, **Jeremiah 37:21**, and **Jeremiah 38:6**).

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- If this is Jeremiah, his realization of God witnessing at his request, his suffering. It also fits to his request for vengeance (**Jeremiah 11:19-20** and **Jeremiah 15:15**).
- Thy curse (**Psalms 109:17-18**).
- Persecute, destroy, in God's anger (**Jeremiah 18:23**).

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