

Lamentations 3

3:1-20 Individual Identifies His Suffering

- In these verses God's image as the caring shepherd is flipped

3:1-3 – affliction or poverty was God's rod of judgment (2 Sm. 7:14; Job 9:34; Ps. 2:9; Ps. 89:32; Isaiah 10:5; Micah 5:1)
People are "driven away" and sent to darkness

The subject that is causing all this is clearly God, but his name is mentioned in 3:1-20 only in verse 18

3:4-6 – God's abandonment is compared to the aging process and fragile bones that break (Ps. 51:8; Isaiah 38:13; Micah 3:1-3). These figures of speech are typical of OT lamenting recorded in Ps.32:3-4; 8:2-3; Job 10:21 Eccl. 6:4; 11:8)

3:7-9 – The wall, the chains, the dungeon where he is abandoned.

3:10-11 – The wild beast who tears and dismembered (Jos. 13:8; Amos 5:19; Ps. 10:9; 22:13; Is. 38:13; Jeremiah 49:19)

3:12-13 – God is the skilled archer, the bull's-eye is his people, Judah (Job 6:4; 16:12-13; Ps. 38:2; Lam.2:4)

3:14-15 – People laugh at this individual. Instead of support, he is the object of jokes and silly songs

3:16-18 – Force to chew gravel his teeth are broken. Deprived of PEACE and deprived of PROSPERITY. No splendor.

3:19-20 – His total memory is the suffering, bitterness and affliction of this phase of his life.

3:21-39 God's Past Covenant Behavior is the Reason for a Future Hope

3:21 – With the mention of the Lord's name in verse 18, and the recognition that all that is left is memories of affliction, suddenly the past covenant faithfulness of the Lord is recalled.

With remembrance of the Word of God there is Faith. And, where there is Faith there is Hope.

3:22-24 – Hope in God replaces despair just like Job 1:21; Habakkuk 3:17-18; Romans 5:3; 1 Peter 4:12-13

"GREAT LOVE" is *hesed*, which means "covenant love" or "loyal love," a word that refers to covenant obligations

"COMPASSIONS" is *rahamim* from a word related to the "womb" and speaks of tender, caring motherly love which is always fresh and new and natural

"FAITHFULNESS" is 'emuna from the Hebrew 'mn which is a verb associated with 'amen meaning "so be it," this ends the confession

3:40-51 A Prayer seeking God's Mercy

3:40-42 – the author calls all people to self-examination and assumes they will see they have greatly drifted from the Lord.

3:52-66 A Prayer for Deliverance and Vengeance on Enemies