

## Hope for the Hopeless (Lamentations 3v1-33)

### Background

Lamentations contains five related laments about the fall of Jerusalem in 586BC. In chapters 1 and 2, Jeremiah describes the sorrow of Jerusalem and the fierceness of God's anger. In chapter 3, he remembers God's compassion.

### Questions

In verses 1-18, Jerusalem's troubles are described in terms of an afflicted man.

- Who has afflicted this man? What has been done to him?

These opening verses conclude with very sombre words: "And I said 'My strength and my hope have perished from the Lord.'"

In verses 19-24, the afflicted man turns from remembering his troubles to remembering his Lord:

- What does he ask God to do for him? What is the source of his hope?

This results in a completely different conclusion: "'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'Therefore I hope in Him!'"

In verses 25-33, Jeremiah applies what he has learned:

- What advice does he give to those who are afflicted (25-30)? What is the foundation of that advice (31-33)?

Jesus is both the one who fulfils this lament ("Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows..." Isa 53:4) and the one that guarantees our hope ("He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things." Rom 8:32).

### Application

Even in the most hopeless situation, there is always hope. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

## Lamentations 3v1-33

- <sup>1</sup>I am the man who has seen affliction  
by the rod of His wrath.
- <sup>2</sup>He has led me and made me walk  
In darkness and not in light.
- <sup>3</sup>Surely He has turned His hand against me  
Time and time again throughout the day.
- <sup>4</sup>He has aged my flesh and my skin,  
And broken my bones...
- <sup>18</sup>And I said, "My strength and my hope  
Have perished from the Lord."
- <sup>19</sup>Remember my affliction and roaming,  
The wormwood and the gall.
- <sup>20</sup>My soul still remembers  
And sinks within me.
- <sup>21</sup>This I recall to my mind,  
Therefore I have hope.
- <sup>22</sup>Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,  
Because His compassions fail not.
- <sup>23</sup>They are new every morning;  
Great is Your faithfulness.
- <sup>24</sup>"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,  
"Therefore I hope in Him!"
- <sup>25</sup>The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,  
To the soul who seeks Him...
- <sup>31</sup>For the Lord will not  
cast off forever.
- <sup>32</sup>Though He causes grief, yet He will show compassion  
According to the multitude of His mercies.
- <sup>33</sup>For He does not afflict willingly,  
Nor grieve the children of men.